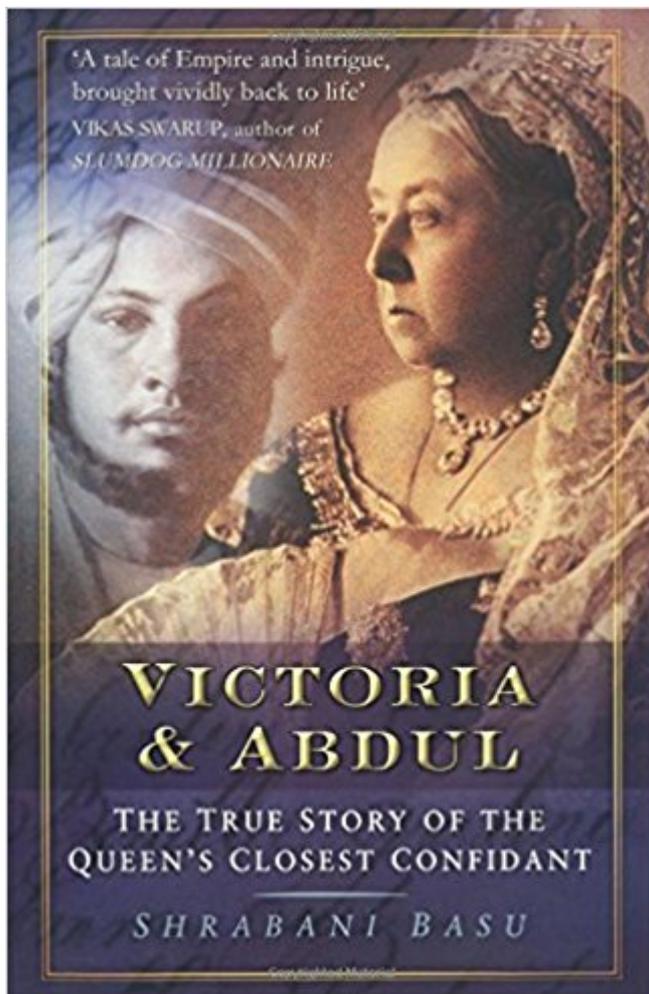


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Voctoria & Abdul



Synopsis

Tall and handsome Abdul Karim, a former assistant clerk at Agra Central Jail, arrives in England at the age of twenty-four to serve at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Becoming a personal attendant to the Empress of India, within a year, he establishes himself as a power to be reckoned with at the English court, instructing the queen in Indian languages and affairs. Their intense and controversial relationship leads to turmoil in the royal household. Victoria and Abdul examines the amazing journey by which a young Indian Muslim came to play a central role in the heart of the great British Empire and his influence over its queen at a time when independence movements in the subcontinent were gaining great momentum. Amidst the political intrigue and conflict that influence this period, the novel tells the story of a tender love between an Indian servant and his elderly queen, a love that survived all attempts to destroy it.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Victoria & Abdul is a wonderful account of Queen Victoria of England with one of her closest confidante's Abdul Karim. The author Shrabani Basu has obviously researched the topic, in depth and her work has paid off. This book is quite capturing and gives a wonderful look into the personality of Queen Victoria, as well as, the amazing rise and fall of Abdul Karim's social status and power. In 1887, Queen Victoria requested for some Indian servants to be on attendance as she expected many of the Indian Royals for her Jubilee Celebrations. Along with Abdul, another servant Muhammed Buksh came. However, as soon as Queen Victoria saw Abdul, she was almost in awe of him. Almost immediately, he was singled out to become her Hindustani (Urdu) tutor and as he must have hardly known English, he was given tuition for that. From being a hand help, he started

doing secretarial jobs and soon afterwards became known as The Munshi. Prior to Abdul coming to England, the Queen had a servant, John Brown, with whom she was extremely close. There have been strong suggestions throughout history that they may have had a sexual relationship and might have married secretly, as well. As would have been obvious, the Household disliked him. He was a rude, coarse man but was completely devoted to the Queen. Unfortunately for her, John Brown died in 1883 and left a void in her heart which seemed to heal after Abdul's arrival. The household became jealous of Abdul's position and they all tried desperately to open the Queen's eyes to his faults. But no matter how hard they tried, she was completely blinded by Abdul. Abdul was obvious of the power he held over the Queen and in fact, he took advantage of his position.

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