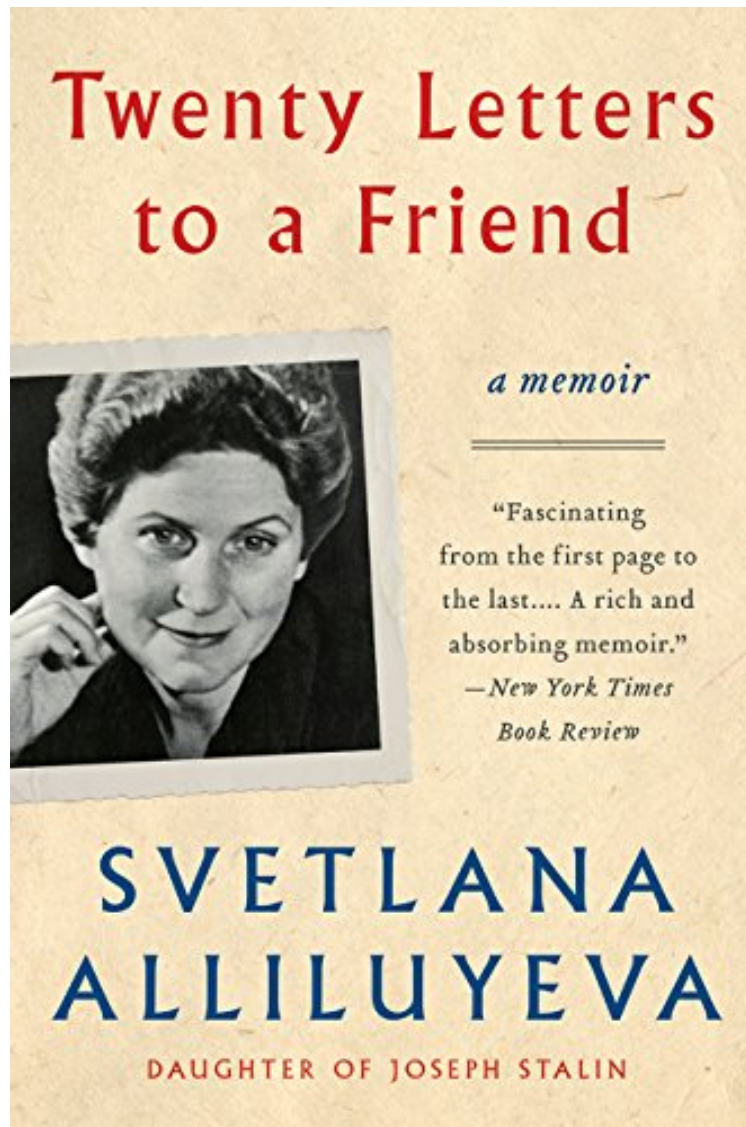


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Twenty Letters to a Friend: A Memoir

Svetlana Alliluyeva

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Svetlana Alliluyeva : Twenty Letters to a Friend: A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Twenty Letters to a Friend: A Memoir:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Required readingBy Kindle CustomerThis is a truly moving memoir and a valuable piece of world history. Should be required reading for our high school world history students since it gives us an inside view of one of America's previously considered most dangerous enemies. This book makes one appreciate freedom even more than we thought possible.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good

readBy Johns YvonneIt was an interesting read, but rather repetitive since it was a daughter's recollection of her father. The account was more personal feelings in a father/daughter setting. It would have been more interesting if there was more of a family historical background of her father and mother which I would lead up to the present read. However, I was glad I did read it.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Two StarsBy mmmProvided less insights into the historical context than I expected.

In this riveting, New York Times–bestselling memoir—first published by Harper in 1967—Svetlana Alliluyeva, subject of Rosemary Sullivan’s critically acclaimed biography, *Stalin’s Daughter*, describes the surreal experience of growing up in the Kremlin in the shadow of her father, Joseph Stalin. Svetlana Iosifovna Alliluyeva, later known as Lana Peters, was the youngest child and only daughter of Joseph Stalin and Nadezhda Alliluyeva, his second wife. In 1967, she fled the Soviet Union for India, where she approached the U.S. Embassy for asylum. Once there, she showed her CIA handler something remarkable: A personal memoir about growing up inside the Kremlin that she’d written in 1963. The Indian Ambassador to the USSR, whom she’d befriended, had smuggled the manuscript out of the Soviet Union the previous year—and returned it to her as soon as she arrived in India. Structured as a series of letters to a “friend”—Svetlana refused to identify him, but we now know it was her close friend, Fyodor Volkenstein—this astounding memoir exposes the dark human heart of the Kremlin. After opening with Stalin’s death, Svetlana returns to her childhood. Each letter adds a new strand to her remarkable story; some are wistful—romanticized recollections of her early years and her family—while others are desperate exorcisms of the tragedies that plagued her, such as her mother’s suicide and her father’s increasing cruelty. It is also in some ways a love letter to Russia, with its ancient heritage and spectacularly varied geography. Candid, surprising, and utterly compelling, *Twenty Letters to a Friend* offers one of the most revealing portraits of life inside Stalin’s inner circle, and of the notorious dictator himself.

“Fascinating, revealing, profoundly human, and significant.... The letters move relentlessly on through deepening tragedy, dark happenings, and deaths.” (Los Angeles Times, ORIGINAL EDITION)“Svetlana...has considerable literary talent.” (Elizabeth Hardwick, *New York of Books*, ORIGINAL EDITION)“Compelling reading from first page to last.... To be Stalin’s daughter and to remain human is an admirable accomplishment, and this remarkable book, written with grace and human compassion, is a testimony to a remarkable woman.” (Houston Post, ORIGINAL EDITION)“She is a shrewd observer of character, and her analysis of her father’s psychology...is chillingly convincing.... Has an unexpected power to stir speculation and to evoke a strange but vitally significant era.” (Baltimore Sun, ORIGINAL EDITION)“Fascinating from the first page to the last.... A rich and absorbing memoir.... An illuminating and haunting portrait... Stalin comes vividly to life.... To be Stalin’s daughter and to remain human is itself admirable.” (New York Times Book , ORIGINAL EDITION)“It is a testament which, someday, one must hope, Russians will be free to read—and will then be grateful to Svetlana Alliluyeva for the witness she has so courageously and movingly borne.” (Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Atlantic*, ORIGINAL EDITION)From the Back CoverIn this riveting, New York Times bestselling memoir—first published by Harper in 1967—Svetlana Iosifovna Alliluyeva, subject of Rosemary Sullivan’s critically acclaimed biography, *Stalin’s Daughter*, describes the surreal experience of growing up in the Kremlin in the shadow of her father, Joseph Stalin. In 1967, she fled the Soviet Union for India, where she approached the U.S. Embassy for asylum. Once there, she showed her CIA handler something remarkable: a manuscript about her life that she’d written in 1963. The Indian Ambassador to the USSR, whom she’d befriended, had smuggled the manuscript out of the Soviet Union the previous year. Structured as a series of letters to a “friend”—Svetlana refused to identify him, but we now know it was her close friend, the physicist Fyodor Volkenstein—this astounding memoir, also in some ways a love letter to Russia, with its ancient heritage and spectacularly varied geography, exposes the dark human heart of the Kremlin. Each letter adds a new strand to her story; some are wistful, while others are desperate exorcisms of the tragedies that plagued her life. Candid, surprising, and compelling, *Twenty Letters to a Friend* offers one of the most revealing portraits of life inside Stalin’s inner circle, and of the notorious dictator himself. About the AuthorSvetlana Iosifovna Alliluyeva (1926–2011), later known as Lana Peters, was the youngest child and only daughter of Joseph Stalin and Nadezhda Alliluyeva. In 1967, she defected and became a naturalized citizen of the United States. She returned briefly to the Soviet Union in 1984, but then moved back to the United States and died in Wisconsin in November 2011.