



# Hiding in the Light: Why I Risked Everything to Leave Islam and Follow Jesus

*Rifqa Bary*

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After four years of hiding my faith from my family, I knew that it was time. I wrote with shaky ha....

## Hiding in the Light: Why I Risked Everything to Leave Islam and Follow Jesus Details

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## **From Reader Review Hiding in the Light: Why I Risked Everything to Leave Islam and Follow Jesus for online ebook**

### **Videl says**

\*Edit\*

I just finished this book and I am thoroughly confused as to what exactly happened. How in the world did this book get such rave reviews? I honestly could not understand some of the things Ms. Bary was talking about. I'll give a detailed review in a day because I have a lot of work to catch up on. I'm so disappointed for letting the reviews sway in my decision of purchasing this book.

----Original post----

Alright, just started this after getting rave reviews from my Christian friends. Seeing as this book has no 1 stars, I bet it's pretty good.

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### **Richard Knobloch says**

#### **An astonishing testament to Christ**

I flew through this book and loved every word. The author's devotion in her faith is an example to all. I know in the future when I am being challenged in life, I will think of this book and what she went through for Christ.

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### **Cindy Nipper says**

An amazing book about a woman's testimony as she turns to Jesus as her Lord and Savior! This is as powerful as Corrie ten Boom! I highly recommend for everyone! I bought and listened to the audiobook the same day! I just couldn't stop listening I was so drawn in!!

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### **Sheri says**

This book grabbed me from the very beginning and kept me reading until the very end. I had to keep reading to find out what happened to Rifqa and her legal battles to be protected from her Islamic family. Her testimony and devotion to Jesus Christ was amazing and God has truly blessed her faith. This is a must read that I would definitely recommend.

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### **Whitney says**

Where to begin with this review? This book left me at a loss for words. To read the story of a young Muslim girl who, after accepting Jesus Christ as her savior and vowing to live for him, must flee her family in fear for her life, would render anyone speechless.

This book was incredible. *Hiding in the Light* tells the story of Rifqa Bary, who was raised in Sri Lanka by devout Muslim parents. She was blinded in one eye as a young child and constantly abused and rejected by her family. After moving to the US, her family still practiced their religion, but Rifqa became curious of her friends who would pray in a way that seemed so easy and genuine, and with a strange word, “amen.” Rifqa came to accept Christ as her savior but was forced to keep it a secret from her family. Eventually her father found out, and told her if she didn’t turn back to Islam from Christianity he would kill her. What came after that terrifying night is something so crazy and surreal that without the grace and mercy of Jesus, and the precious people he put in her life, Rifqa wouldn’t have survived. I really can’t write a review worthy of the emotions this book made me feel, so I can only tell you to read it. It will touch your heart, and remind you of the glory and unfailing love of Christ with each turn of the page.

Thank you to NetGalley and WaterBrook Multnomah Publishers for the opportunity to read this book. All opinions are my own.

You can also read this on my blog:<https://wordswisdomwhitney.wordpress....>

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### **Tara Johnson says**

In the course of a person’s life, there are a handful of books that leave an indelible impression on their heart, forever stamping them as changed. For me, these books consist of *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom, *Embracing Obscurity* along with a small, elite group of others I’ll not mention here. Being a writer, I’ve read many books, most of them consisting of entertaining stories and sweet lessons learned. Good reads but not life-changing. That is, until I picked up a copy of *Hiding in the Light* by Rafqa Bary.

I happened to see a snippet of Rifqa’s story via a Youtube link a friend sent me. I was captivated by this young woman’s journey—a journey taken as a frightened adolescent, abused by her strict Muslim family.

She said her early life seemed happy, joyful until one awful day when her brother threw a toy and damaged her eye. After losing large amounts of blood and after many hospital visits, it was confirmed: Rifqa would be blind in one eye. The brown iris turned into a milky blue. She distinctly remembered from that moment on her family treated her differently. Coldly, as if she were a nuisance. Combine that with being sexually violated by a family member and it became apparent that she had brought dishonor on her family. Never mind that she was just a child and was the victim in both situations. Being a Muslim meant honor, keeping up appearances. And her family told her in no uncertain terms that she had missed the mark.

As she grew, Rifqa noticed the difference between other families and her own—especially the contrast between the loving atmosphere in her friends’ Christian homes and the dark oppression of her own.

Everything changed when a friend invited her to church and she was introduced to Jesus. She gave her life, her hope, her dreams, everything to Him and, in return, He gave her a love unlike anything she’d ever known and an amazing outpouring of courage.

She knew what would happen if she told her family. Her father’s violent temper had been proof enough of that so she kept it hidden...for awhile at least. She would sneak off to church whenever she could, even painstakingly arranging her baptism with a handful of close friends and her pastor, knowing that any slip up in discretion would mean her death. Muslims do not tolerate Christianity. If a Muslim converts, many in their mosques feel the appropriate punishment is an honor killing.

When Rifqa’s secret came out, that’s exactly what her father threatened to do: kill her to retain the family

honor.

Oh, and one thing I forgot to mention...all this transpired while living in America.

I was spellbound reading Rifqa's story. When her secret came out, she determined to endure death for Jesus at the hands of her father but when friends discovered the grave danger she was in, they spirited her away. Two years of legal battles ensued as her parents tried to regain custody of her, along with a terrifying cancer diagnosis but God kept her safe, bringing valiant men and women into her life every time the journey took a twist for the worst. On her eighteenth birthday, Rifqa walked out of the courtroom free. She was no longer a minor and her parents lost any control over her.

Sadly though, Rifqa must always and forever live in some amount of hiding. She can tell no one where she lives and has to take extra measures to ensure her privacy. Failure to do so would likely mean her death at the hand of 'honor-seeking' Muslims.

When I finally closed Rifqa's story at two a.m., I slipped between my cool sheets but I could not sleep. I felt spoiled, enjoying the luxury of a soft bed, cold air-conditioning and unparalleled freedom while an ocean away my Christian brothers and sisters were fleeing for their lives. Some of them, at that very moment, likely praying for the grace to die well...to not deny Jesus in the face of certain death. Just like Rifqa.

Instead of falling into the comforting arms of sleep, I prayed. Prayed for Christians all over the world, suffering with the cold steel of a weapon pressed to their temple. I prayed for my lukewarm Christian friends to wake up and realize that though our freedoms are being stripped, we should cherish each and every one, making the most of every single opportunity to worship in public, to proclaim our Lord in public, to live for Him...not just in private but in public. And I prayed for those women and children trapped in hopeless cycle and dark oppression of Islam, desperate for even a snatch of freedom.

Persecuted Christians an ocean away would give up everything for the opportunity to attend church openly yet our own services are filled with empty pews. Even the once faithful who would attend every time the doors were opened throw away those precious opportunities, making a dutiful Sunday morning appearance but little else. How many oppressed believers throughout the world are desperate for just a page or two of God's written word, yet many of us have several Bibles, most of which are dusty? It's a tragedy.

It's a privilege that Rifqa pursued with every fiber of her being, a freedom that almost took her life. Please, my brothers and sisters, let us not squander our freedoms.

Thank you, Rifqa. You've taught me much and reminded me what is truly important in life: Jesus and Him alone. God bless you, my sister.

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## Hayden says

A book like this is hard to review. Honestly, how can a person "critique" someone's very personal story? I wanted to read this book because I have a vague memory of seeing/reading Rifqa's story on the news back in 2009, and wished to know more.

*Hiding in the Light* is not a long book, but the story inside of it is life-changing. The author's testimony is often hard to read, full of mistakes and God's grace, but ultimately a powerful one. It's also a book that can't help but affect the reader: if Rifqa was willing to do so much to follow Christ, at the risk of losing her family and even her life, how petty our own fears about sharing our faith become!

Overall, I highly recommend this book to any Christian for encouragement, and to any reader for a hard look at the inevitable clash between Islam and Christianity.

I received this book free from the publisher in exchange for my honest review.

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### **Rachel says**

This is an amazing book detailing the grace of God in reaching a young Muslim girl in the midst of her tormented life. Ms. Bary uses occasionally melodramatic language, but effectively portrays both the terror of her decisions and the joy and peace that God's Word consistently brought to her. I was convicted about my own easy faith, and reminded of how much others have paid to worship as I so easily do. I highly recommend!

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### **Samantha Bartley says**

I wasn't sure if this book was going to be a devotional, or a bible study when I first got my hands on it. What I didn't realize was it was actually the incredible testimony of a girl only years older than myself. I was not only amazed, but shocked to learn about the hardships Rifqa went through as a teenager. She went through more in two years than most people go through in a lifetime. It was incredible to hear her inspirational story of how she was able to find God while living amidst the Muslim traditions and cultures. I've never realized how blessed I've been to not have to hide my faith from my family. She went through so much, and handled everything by putting it in God's hands. Such faith to possess...especially for someone who seemed to have it so bad. This book has definitely inspired me to delve more into the scriptures. Knowing the word of God got her through so much, I want to have the same faith she holds. This was an incredible book that I would recommend to anyone who needs a boost of encouragement during times of trial and pain.

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### **Bob says**

*Summary: A memoir of Bary's turning from Islam to Christianity during her teens, her flight from her family when she feared for her life, and her subsequent struggles to prevent the courts from forcibly returning her to her family.*

Seven years ago, the story of Rifqa Bary was big news where I live. This teenager, from a Sri Lankan Muslim family had run away from her family after converting to Christian faith, and had taken shelter with a Florida family she met on Facebook. The news coverage showed caring and concerned parents trying to regain custody of their daughter, a diminutive teen age girl who felt her life was in danger, and court proceedings and actions in Florida and Ohio.

This book tells Rifqa's side of the story. It is the story of a child growing up with Sri Lanka who, even at an early age, had a sense of the warm loving presence of God, was raised with the strict observances of Islam and came to America after an incident of sexual abuse by a male kin, a shameful occurrence not for him but for her. They lived first in New York City, and then in a suburb of Columbus, Ohio. She tells a tale of domestic violence where male rage had to be borne by women. She lost the sight in one eye when her older brother threw a toy at her. She claims she was slapped about by her father for the tiniest infractions. At one point, she cried out for God, whoever God was, to show herself to her.

Through school friends, she began to learn about Christianity, started reading the Bible, and unbeknownst to her parents, attended a church. Eventually, she was baptized in a creek not far from, but hidden from her home. She continued to participate in Christian services and events, taking ever greater risks, while deceiving her parents as to her whereabouts until finally they became suspicious, began to threaten her, and limit her activity.

Things came to a head while her father was on a business trip, cut short by warnings from her Islamic Center to the family, that she needed to be dealt with. Given her father's temper and threats, she fled, with the help of friends, taking refuge with a Florida couple she knew from Facebook. When the couple realized their own legal situation of harboring a runaway, they notified the authorities, beginning a long battle in both Florida and Ohio to keep Rifqa out of the custody of her parents, marked by several attorneys who were zealous advocates for her, and ultimately succeeded in keeping her in state custody, first in Florida, then in Ohio, until she turned 18.

Close to the time that she turned 18 she was discovered with a rare form of deadly uterine cancer. After surgery and beginning chemo, she decided to refuse further treatment and a hysterectomy. At this time, the cancer has not recurred and she is a college student studying philosophy and political science with the possible hope of becoming a lawyer.

I had several responses to this book. Throughout, I was struck by the deep faith that sustained this young woman through prison, fear for her life, court proceedings, difficult foster care situations, and cancer. A recurring theme were passages from scriptures and an accompanying "witness of the Spirit" that brought peace and courage. There is an undeniable genuineness of Christian experience and wholehearted dedication to Christ evident in this story.

I struggled with the deception of and flight from her parents. It troubled me that most of the Christians advising her before her flight were peers or just a few years older. It is clear to me that she made a free and un-coerced choice to embrace Christianity and had strong convictions about pursuing that faith. I don't know if she would have listened to adult counsel had it been present. She goes against one pastor's advice to wait until she was 18 to be baptized. I found myself wondering if both the threats from the family, the flight, getting others caught up in potential legal liabilities, and the protracted court fights might have been averted.

There is also her portrait of her parents, in marked contrast to how they presented themselves publicly. Here, I'm inclined to believe her narrative, given how hard it must be growing up in her culture to speak against one's family in any way. Were the threats and danger to her life real? I do not fully understand honor-shame cultures but sense she was on good grounds to have the fears she did and to do everything in her power, having fled, to avoid being returned to this situation. However, I would not want to see this one family's unfinished story used in a Muslim versus Christian polemic. That said, as I argued a few days ago, I believe it is a universal human right to be able to change one's beliefs and to follow the dictates of one's conscience and that honor and shame needs to be re-framed within a commitment to such rights.

Finally, I found troubling the descriptions of juvenile detention and foster care in both of the states where she sought shelter. I was thankful for the zealous advocates whose efforts prevailed against political and bureaucratic maneuverings that would have put her at risk of harm. I hope some of those who have oversight of these services will read this book and take a hard look at whether children really are being protected who need protection.

Rifqa Bary lives in an undisclosed location. The book title represents her sense of continuing to live in hiding and yet to be in the light of Christ. I hope for the day when she need no longer hide and that she continue to walk in the light no matter what she faces.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from the publisher via Netgalley. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 : "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

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### **Annelise says**

This book was amazing. She is such an inspiration.

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### **Anne says**

Beautiful story of how a young(age 15) Muslim woman defied her family to find faith in Jesus Christ. Threatened by her fundamentalist father she flees to friends in Florida where she is embroiled in a court fight to win her right to practice as she feels is right. Highly recommended.

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### **Lisa Jacobson, Club31Women says**

I'm not sure where I was in 2009, but I somehow missed Rifqa's story back then. Coming to her story now, however, I found it to be a fascinating and touching testimony - and very well-told too. I appreciated this glimpse in Rifqa's life and challenges as a girl who came to Christ after being raised in a strict Muslim home. Very insightful and touching too.

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### **Staci says**

Hiding in the Light is about a teenage girl from a Sri Lankan Muslim family giving her heart to Jesus at age 12. She is able to hide this from her family for a number of years. When her conversion comes to light, her parents are furious.

Rifqa's story is inspiring and suspenseful. Highly recommended!

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### **LeeAnn says**

Read in one day. enough said

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