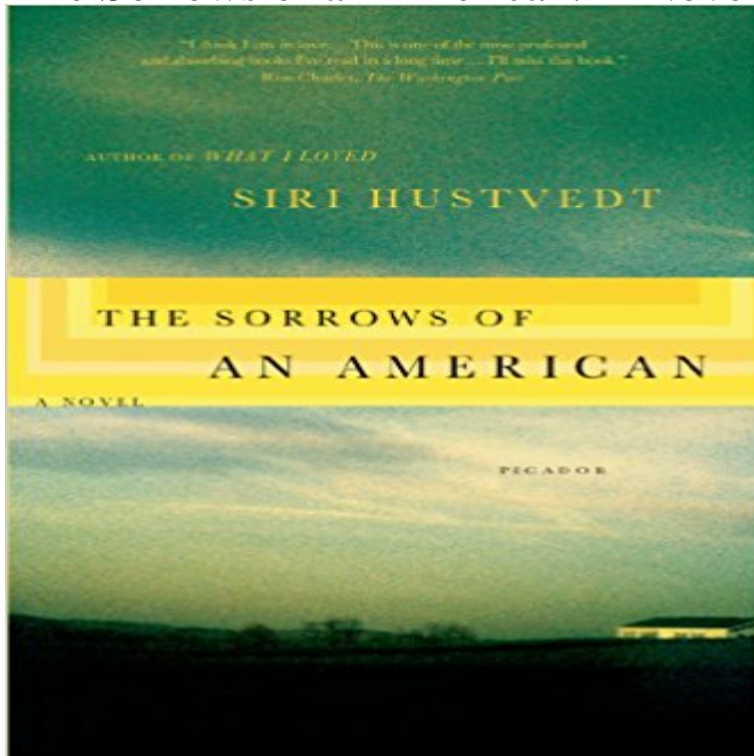


The Sorrows of an American: A Novel



The Sorrows of an American is a soaring feat of storytelling about the immigrant experience and the ghosts that haunt families from one generation to another. When Erik Davidsen and his sister, Inga, find a disturbing note from an unknown woman among their dead father's papers, they believe he may be implicated in a mysterious death. The Sorrows of an American tells the story of the Davidsen family as brother and sister uncover its secrets and unbandage its wounds in the year following their father's funeral. Returning to New York from Minnesota, the grieving siblings continue to pursue the mystery behind the note. While Erik's fascination with his new tenants and emotional vulnerability to his psychiatric patients threaten to overwhelm him, Inga is confronted by a hostile journalist who seems to know a secret connected to her dead husband, a famous novelist. As each new mystery unfolds, Erik begins to inhabit his emotionally hidden father's history and to glimpse how his impoverished childhood, the Depression, and the war shaped his relationship with his children, while Inga must confront the reality of her husband's double life. A novel about fathers and children, listening and deafness, recognition and blindness; the pain of speaking and the pain of keeping silent, the ambiguities of memory, loneliness, illness, and recovery. Siri Hustvedt's exquisitely moving prose reveals one family's hidden sorrows through an extraordinary mosaic of secrets and stories that reflect the fragmented nature of identity itself.

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