



# Aama in America: A Pilgrimage of the Heart

*Broughton Coburn*

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## **Aama in America: A Pilgrimage of the Heart** Broughton Coburn

The alternately rollicking and profound account of an eighty-four-year-old Himalayan woman's first journey across America--and of the insights she offered her American companions into their country and themselves. Fifteen years after he first met Aama, Broughton Coburn returned to her remote village with his future wife, Didi, and an invitation for Aama to join them on a trip to America. At eighty-four, Aama believed she had become a burden to her grandchildren and therefore welcomed the chance to visit her "adopted son's" country. For Coburn, this was a way to introduce Aama to relatives and friends back home; but for Aama the trip represented something more--a pilgrimage that had been prescribed for her by village priests, an opportunity to gain merit by undertaking a strenuous journey during the final stage of her life. "Aama in America" is a vivid chronicle of what became a twenty-five-state, coast-to-coast adventure. Guided by the perpetual curiosity and deeply spiritual orientation of their ingenious, unpredictable travel companion, Coburn and Didi gradually began to view their country from an entirely new perspective. The more they experienced Aama's unclouded vision of America the more they realized they were not simply traveling twelve thousand miles throughout the United States--they were undertaking an emotional and philosophical odyssey toward a greater understanding of their culture, their country, and themselves. "Aama in America" is on one level an offbeat American travelogue. But on another it is a profound exploration of beliefs, values, and lost spirituality, a rediscovery of the spiritual that lies beneath the surface of America, and a singular account of the meeting of two widely divergent cultures.

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