



The Night of the Burning: Devorah's Story

Linda Press Wulf

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Devorah's world is shattered by the tragedies of post–Great War Europe: gas poisoning, famine, typhoid, and influenza. Then comes the Night of the Burning, when Cossacks provoke Christian Poles to attack their Jewish neighbors. In 1920, eleven-year-old Devorah and her little sister, Nechama, are the sole survivors of their community. Salvation arrives in the form of a South African philanthropist named Isaac Ochberg, who invites Devorah and Nechama to join his group of two hundred orphans in their journey to safety in South Africa. Although reluctant to leave her homeland, and afraid to forget her family, Devorah follows her sister, who is determined to go to the new country. There Devorah is dealt the greatest blow – Nechama is adopted and taken away from her. In the end, though, Devorah realizes that she is not solely responsible for keeping the past alive, and that she will not betray her beloved parents when she is adopted herself – and finds happiness again.

This gripping first novel, inspired by and based closely on the childhood of the author's mother-in-law, was recipient of the Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award.

The Night of the Burning is a 2007 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

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