



The Butcher's Daughter: A Memoir

Florence Grende

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What was it like to hide with your family in the dense forests of Poland for two long years, as Mameh did, living in a hole in the ground, while alert, always alert, to the sounds of Nazis and their dogs?

How was it to be both hunter and hunted, as Tateh was, taking up arms, bartering for and stealing food, fighting for another day of life, wounded and recovering, while protecting others living in the forest-- the old, the infirm, the children.

And what was it like for the narrator after the war, growing up with these two people, Mameh and Tateh, her parents, who held their stories close. And each of them haunted by the dead? *The Butcher's Daughter*, lays flesh on the bones of their stories.

The Butcher's Daughter is a deeply personal account of growing up in the aftermath of atrocity. It is not only the clearest view we are ever likely to get of the myriad and intimate ways that trauma is inherited and suffering passed on, it is also witness to the fact that the strength it takes to prevail is also part of that inheritance. Luminous and profound, ferocious and sublime, *The Butcher's Daughter* will move you beyond measure.

-- **Richard Hoffman**, author of *Half the House* and *Love & Fury*.

Florence Grende's memoir wields the keen, bracing edge of utter honesty. Faced with the unfathomable suffering of the *Shoah*, as represented by the lives of her survivor parents, she writes of the bits and pieces of rage, endurance, bafflement, grief and the will to live. Here is a story of a woman trying to move forward in the new land of America but who has been raised with the shades of the European dead for company. The terse, poetic prose makes the reader feel what it was like to grow up and live with silences that truly were unspeakable.

--**Baron Wormser**, Poet Laureate of Maine, 2000-2006, author of *The Road Washes Out in Spring : A Poet's Memoir of Living off the Grid, Impenitent Notes*.

In a clear voice that manages to be both haunted and compassionate, Grende reminds us that "Monster and victim can be one and the same." Tackling subjects as harsh as war and family dysfunction, she writes with exquisite attention to sound and prose rhythms, reminding us, as all masterful writers do, that what you say matters because of how you say it. What a stunning debut.

--**Barbara Hurd** , author of *Listening to the Savage: On River Notes and Half-heard Melodies*.

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