



Jephthe's Daughter: A Novel

By Naomi Ragen

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The pampered daughter of a wealthy Hasidic businessman, Batsheva Ha-Levi grows up in the affluent suburbs of Los Angeles. But everything changes when she turns eighteen and finds that her loving father has made a secret vow which will shatter her life, forcing her to marry a man she hardly knows and sending her to the exotic, golden city of Jerusalem. On her wedding day, she enters a strange and foreign world steeped in tradition and surrounded by myth. Shackled by ancient rules, she soon understands that to survive she will have no choice but to fight for her freedom, to reconcile her own need to live in the modern world with her ancestral obligations, and to choose between the three men who vie for her body, her soul, and her love.

Now a classic listed among the one hundred most important Jewish books of all time*, *Jephthe's Daughter* is bestselling author Naomi Ragen's beloved first novel. With poignancy and insight, it takes readers on a groundbreaking and unforgettable journey inside the hidden world of women in the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community.

**100 Essential Books For Jewish Readers*, Rabbi Daniel B. Sync and Lindy Frenkel Kanter

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Jephte's Daughter: A Novel By Naomi Ragen Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #245016 in Books
- Published on: 2010-02-16
- Released on: 2010-02-16
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .33" h x 1.26" w x 5.55" l, .95 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 464 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Abraham Ha-Levi, a wealthy Los Angeles businessman, is the sole heir to a 300-year-old Hasidic dynasty. Believing himself unworthy to take on the mantle of leadership, he makes a solemn vow to God to continue the distinguished lineage through his only child, Batsheva. When he marries her off at 18 to a young Talmudic scholar, Isaac Harshen, they live in the ultra-fanatic religious quarters of Meah Shearim in Jerusalem. Beautiful and intelligent, Batsheva struggles valiantly to be a true daughter of Israel, obedient to her husband and the laws of Hasidic life. But her inquisitive nature and desire for secular knowledge (her favorite books are *Anna Karenina* and *Women in Love*) challenge Isaac's narrow view of her role as wife and mother. When his abusiveness threatens their young son's well-being, she makes a dramatic escape, winding up in London, where she falls in love with a man studying for the priesthood. Batsheva's Jewish faith survives her spiritual and intellectual quests, and she returns to Jerusalem to confront Isaac, demanding freedom for herself and her child. Ragen's impeccable knowledge of Jewish law and lore allows us a deep understanding of orthodox Jewish life from a woman's point of view. Despite eloquent writing and vivid characters, however, her first novel falters under convenient plot machinations that compromise the full development of its religious and emotional themes. 100,000 first printing. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

The world of Orthodox Judaism is lovingly portrayed in this first novel describing the conflicts of Batsheva Ha-Levi. Trapped in an arranged marriage to Isaac, a cruel, hypocritical zealot, Batsheva flees the Hasidic community of Jerusalem for the sophisticated world of London. Yet despite the myriad temptations in her new life, she refuses to compromise her faith, even for a new love. Ragen presents the cloistered Hasidic community in all its contradictory aspects: the rigidity of its piety; the serenity of its religiosity; the fanaticism of some adherents; and the wisdom of its great leaders. With its exotic ambience and attractive heroine, this is sure to be popular. Andrea Caron Kempf, Johnson Cty. Community Coll. Lib., Overland Park, Kan. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Review

"An emotionally potent book." ?*Kirkus*

"Eloquent writing and vivid characters." ?*Publishers Weekly*

"Ragen weaves the religious issues throughout the plot so that they become part of the suspense, giving this skilfully rendered page-turner... real substance." ?*Jewish Week*

"First rate." ?*Susan Isaacs, author of Long Time No See and Past Perfect*

"Terrific!" ?*Jacqueline Briskin, author of The Naked Heart*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sandra McLean:

Often the book Jephthe's Daughter: A Novel has a lot details on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of help. The book was compiled by the very famous author. Tom makes some research prior to write this book. This specific book very easy to read you can get the point easily after looking over this book.

Jessica Bowman:

Does one one of the book lovers? If so, do you ever feeling doubt while you are in the book store? Attempt to pick one book that you just dont know the inside because don't assess book by its handle may doesn't work at this point is difficult job because you are scared that the inside maybe not since fantastic as in the outside appear likes. Maybe you answer could be Jephthe's Daughter: A Novel why because the wonderful cover that make you consider with regards to the content will not disappoint anyone. The inside or content is definitely fantastic as the outside or cover. Your reading 6th sense will directly show you to pick up this book.

Kathe Waller:

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George Chadwick:

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