

The Night of the Burning by Linda Press Wulf. Bloomsbury 2007.

This is a tiny little book but it has an impact that is completely disproportionate to its size.

Linda Press Wulf has woven elements of her family history into a novel that is in many ways a paradigm for the Jewish experience in Eastern Europe in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The main protagonist is Devorah, an incredibly courageous girl, who with her sister survives a pogrom in her village in Poland and is then taken with a group of other Polish orphans to a new life with adoptive parents in South Africa.

Linda Press Wulf evokes the shtetl and the veldt with equal conviction, and the contrasts between the fate of Devorah and her sister Nechama are beautifully and sensitively described.

This is a book for both adults and children and, in a welter of books about the Holocaust, is a fine reminder of the enduring nature of the rest of European Jewish history before the Second World War, of upheaval, adaptation and reconciliation.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh