Even in Darkness: A Novel

Barbara Stark-Nemon
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"Love and devotion [bloom] as redemption for pain and suffering," writes Barbara Stark-Nemon at the conclusion of her emotionally challenging and meticulously researched new novel. The story centers on Klare, a resourceful, intelligent woman with a real-life counterpart in the author's family history, who at eighteen is faced with lethal threats related to her Jewish identity.

Despite the growing presence of Nazism, Klare elects to marry Jakob Kohler, the reserved older lawyer who's captured her imagination. With Klare's brother, Jakob enlists to fight in the First World War, and comes home to find his world no safer for it. Their family grows in time with increased restrictions on Jews, and perceptive Klare must find ways to protect the people they love before a brutal, merciless enemy.

The daring choices of the Kohlers, and those in their immediate circle, involve notorious avenues for escaping Nazism: use of the kindertransport, immigration to Palestine, and crypto-Judaism all find well-drawn places on these pages. With all they lose, the Kohlers still find ways to gain: in redoubled affection, in the certainty of a line that will continue if on foreign soil, and in the knowledge that never, under any pressure, did they lose their integrity for the sake of survival. This is a Holocaust story certain to move readers not only because of the quiet heroism of its characters, but because it rings with truth. *Even in Darkness* is a stunning historical endeavor.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (Summer 2015)