



Sacrifice of Isaac

By Neil Gordon

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For twenty-six-year-old Luke Benami, life has always been a study in absolutes: black and white, good and evil, truth and lies. A father hailed as a national hero, a pioneer in the birth of Israel. A brother scorned as an army deserter, a criminal on the run. But his father's sudden death will change everything Luke has ever known or believed...about his father, his history, his homeland.

Searching for his estranged brother, Luke finds only Danni's lover in Paris and his business partner in Florence, both claiming to know nothing of his whereabouts. Danni has undertaken his own quest, into the heart of a dark secret that has long haunted the family. It will become Luke's quest too, taking them both into a dangerous world of moral ambiguity, desperate choices, and profound betrayal.

Spellbinding and provocative, *Sacrifice of Isaac* is the stunning debut of a remarkable talent.

From the Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Probing complex issues of heritage and identity while rethinking assumptions about WWII heroism and villainy, this spellbinding tale recounts the dramatic search of a young man and woman for the truth of their intertwined family histories amid elusive legacies of the Holocaust and deadly, present-day intrigue. Luke Benami, a 26-year-old American, is working as a translator for the U.N. when he learns of the death of his father, a famous Israeli soldier, statesman and hero who helped hundreds of Jews flee Austria and escape the death camps. Natalie Hoestermann, 22, who narrates parts of the novel, lives in Vienna with her father, a former Nazi officer. Luke's estranged older brother, Danni, a dealer in stolen or illegal antiquities, has been digging for the untold facts of his father's wartime operation. For different reasons, Luke and Natalie each search for Danni in Paris and get caught up in a web of deception and murder dating back to the war years. First-novelist Gordon artfully balances the gripping suspense of his story whose vividly described venues range from New York to Jerusalem with insightful treatment of his characters' complex reactions to the unfolding events. Braced by careful research, his strong, polished narrative tells a tale that is both entertaining and provocative.

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From School Library Journal

YA-This is neither a thriller nor a suspense novel. But it's both thrilling and suspenseful. The tension results from an intricate mystery that is gradually and satisfyingly unraveled. Luke is the 26-year-old Israeli son of Holocaust survivors. The story opens with the death of his estranged father, a famous general, statesman, and author. That death sends Luke to Paris in search of his long-lost older brother, who deserted the Israeli army 15 years earlier. The search does not end until the last page of the book; along the way, the woman both brothers love is murdered, and Luke kills a man he thinks is his brother. But even more important than those deaths is the brothers' hunt for the horrible moral choice made by their father (the "sacrifice of Isaac") nearly 50 years ago, because that search leads Luke to a deeper understanding of his father, his brother, and the complex relationship among the three. The novel's power is marred only slightly by several flaws: at times, Luke is too bumbling to believe; and the single villain stays offstage so long that the eventual revelation of his villainy makes him little more than a *deus ex machina*. Those faults won't keep any readers from being intellectually stimulated and emotionally moved, and serious teenagers will be especially engaged by Gordon's deep insight into father-son, brother-brother relationships.

Chip Barnett, Rockbridge Regional Library, Lexington, VA

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From Library Journal

Luke gets more than he bargained for when he is called home to Israel upon the death of his larger-than-life father, a general and a hero for having rescued Jews from World War II Hungary. Evidently, his brother, who disappeared years ago after deserting from the Israeli army, is demanding a part of the inheritance. When he tracks his brother to Paris, Luke finds not Danni but his girlfriend, Nicole, and slowly begins to uncover both his brother's shady past and a terrible family secret that has condemned them both from the beginning. Along the way, Gordon—an editor at the New York Review of Books—raises urgent questions about Israel's current political situation and makes readers feel the weight of a young soldier's terrible guilt at killing. As a first novel, this work creaks a bit at the seams—issues can be overstated and phrases repeated to lessening affect, and some characters, like a young Austrian girl who figures in Luke's recovery of his past, seem little more than conceits. But Gordon has effectively blended a well-thought-out thriller with a novel of serious moral import. A strong candidate for most fiction collections.

--Barbara Hoffert, "Library Journal"

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Joel Fallis:

Book is to be different for every single grade. Book for children till adult are different content. As it is known to us that book is very important for people. The book Sacrifice of Isaac ended up being making you to know about other expertise and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The reserve Sacrifice of Isaac is not only giving you more new information but also for being your friend when you experience bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your book. Try to make relationship while using book Sacrifice of Isaac. You never really feel lose out for everything if you read some books.

Maria Asbury:

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