A Tale of Love and Darkness

A Beautiful And Moving Memoir

Tragic, comic, and utterly honest, this extraordinary memoir is at once a great family saga and a magical self-portrait of a writer who witnessed the birth of a nation and lived through its turbulent history.

It is the story of a boy growing up in the war-torn Jerusalem of the forties and fifties, in a small apartment crowded with books in twelve languages and relatives speaking nearly as many. His mother and father, both wonderful people, were ill-suited to each other. When Oz was twelve and a half years old, his mother committed suicide, a tragedy that was to change his life. He leaves the constraints of the family and the community of dreamers, scholars, and failed businessmen and joins a kibbutz, changes his name, marries, has children, and finally becomes a writer as well as an active participant in the political life of Israel.

A story of clashing cultures and lives, of suffering and perseverance, of love and darkness.

A majority of this autobiography is devoted to Oz's childhood and the stories of his parents and their respective early years spent in distant Eastern Europe before they were forced to flee to Israel. Oz uses several odd means of telling his life story - in first-person, in the third-person voice of his aunts and others, and sometimes through seemingly dreamlike sequences, all used to great effect in hypnotically transporting the reader to the colorful Jerusalem streets of Oz's childhood. Some reviewers state that this book focuses too heavily on his early childhood but that is precisely what I like most and what I believe this book is supposed to be
This life story quietly revolves around and pays tribute to Amos Oz's mother who passed away when he was twelve.

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