

TREE *of* LIVES

a novel



Gold Award
Florida Author and Publisher
Association President's Book Award

by Elizabeth Garden



Escape

Spang was in the hydrotherapy bath when he noticed Fred hurry through a white door labeled ‘Male Staff Only.’ A window inside the room had been opened, allowing in the beautiful spring breeze, and with it, an opportunity. A mistake on the schedule indicated it was time for Mr. Spang to have the Salt Glow, but he’d already had one.

Fred, the German nurse, was upstairs, positioned in an unused anteroom off the lobby enjoying a cigarette while overhearing his favorite 12 o'clock radio broadcast. He could hear it perfectly from where he stood unseen.

“...A baby boy was born to Colonel Charles and Mrs. Ann Morrow Lindbergh yesterday morning. The baby and his parents are resting and doing well.”

“...In other headlines, Five hundred Nationalist followers of Mahatma Gandhi’s war of civil disobedience were injured during a revolt in Bombay, India this morning.

“...Trading was resumed today, beginning the fourth week of steady decline with stocks falling lower in heavy selling. U.S. Steel and American Telephone and Telegraph have reached new lows for the year.

“...The Graf Zeppelin arrived at midnight over the city of Berlin, Germany for a visit to the World Power Conference.”

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News from his homeland always caught Fred's attention and he leaned in to listen over the distracting sounds coming from downstairs.

Meanwhile, Nurse Farrell was jotting down her patient's temperature on her clipboard. He was feigning to be weak as a kitten after he noticed that interesting white door.

"That's good, Mr. Spang, I think you are much improved."

"I think you are much the fool," was what the watery sound mocked as Farrell unfastened her patient from the hammock.

"Robinson will help you out of the bath," she instructed Spang, but the pitch and timber of the young woman's voice was no match for the crazy echoes of the room, and her canny patient recognized this.

Robinson was thirty feet away and facing the opposite direction, manning the controls that blasted a flinching patient with powerful needles of cold water.

"Robinson, Mr. Spang is ready," she called out to him. Her meek voice again unable to overcome the din of the spray and the multiple echoes in the room, fell short of the young assistant's ears.

Spang, actually not feeling at all listless but rather quite energized by this sudden opportunity, got himself out of the tub while Robinson faced away, preoccupied with the needle spray, and while Nurse Farrell was preparing the salt.

Spang slipped through the white door.

The fresh air wafting in mitigated the stinky melange

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of wet basement, oily ointments, camphor liniments, menthol, coffee enemas and Fletcher's Castoria. Fred's tobacco-steeped street clothes and shoes hung on a hook next to the open window.



TREE *of* LIVES

The inspiring story of Ruth, a promising artist, stymied at every turn by men who seek to maintain power over her. Struggling to make her own life despite the effects of a horrific family secret, this epic is a journey of female triumph over unaddressed family trauma using wit, grit, art, a little luck and a wide open heart. illustrated.

"...a testament to endurance, hope, and success. I googled one of the "secrets" and discovered that it's absolutely true. WOW!"

"...an uplifting tale of the character's indomitable spirit."

"...a spell-binding tale of survival by wits and strength."

"A beautifully crafted story that pulls you along and in."

"A terrific read...family dynamics are at the forefront of this page turner. Highly recommended."

"...lushly detailed descriptive language draws the reader deep into the psyches of fearfully challenged characters."

"The illustrations were as good as the story, which added to the richness."

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