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A cache of discovered documents. A nail-biting escape. A story that resonates in these fraught times.

In 1940, thousands of Jewish refugees descended upon sunny Lisbon, desperately scrambling to acquire visas to escape Nazi-occupied Europe. Among them were Elsa and Saly Levi, a young German-Jewish couple who thought they had found safety in neutral Belgium—until Nazi bombs began to fall. Their eyes were fixed on America, but anywhere would do, as long they were far from the Nazis' reach. But there were others to consider: Saly's parents were trapped in Vichy France, and Elsa's mother in Berlin. Sister Erika in Palestine had suddenly grown silent, and brother Gerhard was interned in England.

In the Wake of Madness captures heartache and hope as history unfolds, from the pre-war period in Germany to 1950 New York. Armed with a wealth of personal documents, the author pieces together the nail-biting details of her family's escape. Her journey takes the reader to Germany, Belgium, Vichy France, Portugal, New York, Japan, Chile, Britain and Palestine as WWII scattered loved ones across the globe.

Like many immigrants, Denny's parents didn't speak much of those dark days. But as Elsa neared the end of her life, the stories came tumbling out. Decades later, her daughter unearthed boxes of papers and embarked upon her own journey to learn the secrets of those indecipherable letters.

Despite the inevitable heartaches, *In the Wake of Madness* shines a light on the courage born of necessity and the fierce desire for ordinary life.

Parallels to today's global tensions and political challenges are chilling – and the author includes a serious list of discussion questions that should keep any book group or classroom engaged. With the global rise in antisemitism and other forms of hate, combined with a growing appetite for authoritarianism even in the United States, *In the Wake of Madness* feels more relevant than ever.

The book has garnered praise from wildly different corners. #1NYT bestselling author Victoria Alexander says "I know this family survived but the writing was so vivid, I held my breath on every page." Colonel Eric Knapp, Instructor at the U.S. National War College, says the book "illuminates the immense struggles and heartbreaking dilemmas faced by so many in response to the rising tide of totalitarianism and war." Author Daniel Seymour writes, "Prepare for a stirring journey! Denny has offered a historian's eye for detail of her own family's escape from Nazi Germany." From Robin Lawton, Linfield University Professor Emerita: "A cautionary tale for these fraught times, and an uplifting human story."

The author is available to speak with local book groups or other interested organizations in the Portland area.

In the Wake of Madness: My Family's Escape from the Nazis by Bettie Lennett Denny, Amsterdam Publishers, release February 5, 2024. Ebook available on Amazon.com. Print-on-demand at most brick and mortar bookstores and on-line.

Bettie Denny is the author of *Burying My Dead*, an award-winning historical novel set in Portland, Oregon, and *Angel Unfolding*, a social drama set in Montana. A product of Queens, New York, Denny's career in television and community affairs took her to Omaha, Nebraska. She now resides in her adopted home of Portland, Oregon where her family has lived since 2006.

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