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Apple Cake and Baklava or: A New Home for Leila

Apfelkuchen und Baklava oder Eine neue Heimat für Leila

review

Leila is the new girl in Max's class in rural Germany, and they soon become close friends. She has fled Syria with her family, having left her beloved grandmother and father behind. Her most cherished object is a walnut from her grandmother's garden. Max is close to his own grandmother, who is very understanding of Leila's situation, having fled her home in Pommern as a little girl. Leila is desperately sad when she loses her beloved walnut and, in a failed attempt, sets out to return to Syria.

Apple Cake and Baklava is a story about otherness, openness and the willingness to come to know one another. Many children will be aware of the latest surge of refugees and their plight. Leila's is a sadly universal and timeless story of leaving behind a home country forever. While set in rural Northern Germany, it could equally take place in most European countries.

This is an absorbing book for older primary and younger middle-school children, and Franziska Harvey's lovely black-and-white illustrations – some small, some full page – enrich the story.

about the author

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