



by  
btb (Random House)  
August 2016 / 256pp  
Fiction

This book is outside of the five-year window for guaranteed assistance with English language translation. We suggest getting in touch with the relevant funding body for an informal conversation about the possibility of support. Please refer to our recommendations page for books that are currently covered by our funding guarantee.

## The Apricot Girl

### *Das Marillenmädchen*

#### review

All her life Elisabetta has lived in the same house in Vienna. Every year she makes apricot jam from the fruits in her garden, in a ritual that binds her to her past. She is the only surviving member of her Jewish family. Her parents and sisters were deported by the Nazis when she was eleven. Memories of her happy childhood haunt Elisabetta, and her sisters' ghosts keep her company. More recently, another tragedy has marked her: Elisabetta's daughter, her husband and their daughter Rahel fell victim to an arson attack by neo-Nazis and died in a fire.

When passionate young dancer Pola moves in with her, Elisabetta's secluded life is changed as an initially awkward but gentle companionship grows between the two women. They slowly discover that they're connected more closely than they think. Pola met Elisabetta's granddaughter Rahel when they were both children, and the ensuing devoted friendship defined her life: Pola and Rahel shared a unique bond. When Pola's brother joins a group of neo-Nazis and realises that his sister's friend is Jewish, the consequences are severe. Family secrets and conflicts have to be uncovered before Pola and Rahel can make peace with the past.

Elisabetta is an unusual narrator: old, ugly and angry, obsessed with apricots and in constant communication with ghosts. Hers is a remarkable and original narrative voice. But Pola, too, is unforgettable. Her beautifully rendered relationship with Rahel is an example of the all-encompassing passion female friendships can

inspire.

*The Apricot Girl* is a novel about women and the connections they make: Elisabetta's close relationship to her dead sisters who keep her company and Pola's friendship with Rahel define them more than their romantic relationships with men. A moving and tragic tale of life and friendship, managing to break with all the stereotypes of the Holocaust and its aftermath within literature, this is the first novel for adults from acclaimed YA writer Beate Teresa Hanika. Elegantly written, allusive and powerful, this dark and unique tale is reminiscent of bestsellers Katharina Hagen's *The Taste of Apple Seeds* and Doerte Hansen's *Old Country*, as well as Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan novels.

## rights information

Verlagsgruppe Random House (Alemania)

Contacto: Gesche Wendebourg

[gesche.wendebourg@randomhouse.de](mailto:gesche.wendebourg@randomhouse.de)

[www.randomhouse.de](http://www.randomhouse.de)

**Derechos de traducción vendidos para:** Holanda (Cargo/De Bezige Bij), España (Suma/PRH)