



Fire in the Blood

By Irene Nemirovsky

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Here is a missing piece of the remarkable posthumous legacy of Irène Némirovsky, author of the internationally acclaimed *Suite Française*.

Written in 1941, the manuscript of *Fire in the Blood* was entrusted in pieces to family and a friend when the author was sent to her death at Auschwitz. The novel—only now assembled in its entirety—teems with the intertwined lives of an insular French village in the years before the war, when “peace” was less important as a political state than as a coveted personal condition: the untroubled pinnacle of happiness.

At the center of the tale is Silvio: in his younger years he fled the boredom of the village and made a life of travel and adventure. Now he’s returned, living in a farmer’s hovel in the middle of the woods, and, much to his family’s chagrin, perfectly content with his solitude.

But when he attends the wedding of his favorite young cousin—"she has the thing that, when I was young, I used to value most in women: she has fire"—Silvio begins to be drawn back into the complicated life of this small town. As his narration unfolds, we are given an intimate picture of the loves and infidelities, the scandals, the youthful ardor and regrets of age that tie Silvio to the long-guarded secrets of the past.

Némirovsky wrote with a crystalline understanding of the pretensions and protections of society, and of the varied workings of the human heart, in language as evocative of a vanished era as of the emotional and moral ambiguities in her characters’ lives. All of which was evident in *Suite Française*—and abundantly evident again in this powerful, passionate novel.

A Note on the Text

Until recently, only a partial text of *Fire in the Blood* was thought to exist, typed up by Irène Némirovsky’s husband, Michel Epstein, to whom she often passed her manuscripts for this purpose. However, Michel’s typing breaks off at the words ‘I felt so old’ (see p. 37), leaving the novel unfinished.

Did Michel stop typing when Irène was arrested and deported to Auschwitz on

13 July 1942? Or perhaps even earlier in 1942, when she could no longer find a way to get her novels and short stories published? As readers will learn from the Preface to the French edition of this novel found at the back of the book, it is likely that Némirovsky was still working on *Fire in the Blood* in 1942. We know this thanks to the work of Olivier Philipponnat and Patrick Lienhardt, who were commissioned to write a biography of Némirovsky, and who began extensive research into her archive. Two pages of the original manuscript were found to have been in the suitcase that Némirovsky's daughter, Denise Epstein, carried with her from Issy-l'Évêque when she and her sister, Elisabeth, fled after their mother's arrest, and which contained Némirovsky's great lost novel *Suite Française*. And as Philipponnat and Lienhardt trawled the Némirovsky archive at the Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine (IMEC), they discovered, amidst papers given by Némirovsky for safe-keeping to her editor and family friend in the spring of 1942, the rest of the missing manuscript: thirty tightly packed pages of handwriting, with very few crossings out, the beginning of which corresponded to Michel's typed version.

It is an extraordinary collection of papers, which adds to our understanding of Némirovsky's oeuvre. As well as the manuscript of *Fire in the Blood*, it contains Némirovsky's working notebooks dating back to 1933, successive versions of several of her novels including *David Golder* as well as outlines for *Captivité*, the projected third part of *Suite Française*.

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Fire in the Blood By Irene Nemirovsky Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best of the Month, October 2007: As the Nazis advanced on France, celebrated writer Irène Nemirovsky composed two final masterworks: *Suite Française* and *Fire in the Blood*. The first, smuggled out in a suitcase by her escaping daughters when Nemirovsky was taken to her death at Auschwitz in 1942, surfaced more than 60 years later and restored her bestselling status. The other, two pages of which slipped out in that same suitcase, was thought lost--until biographers discovered the rest of the manuscript in papers given to Nemirovsky's editor for safekeeping. A worthy companion to *Suite Française*, it follows three interwoven stories across two decades, when the hot-blooded affairs of youth threaten the cool calm of middle age. Once it has all unraveled, the last line lodges in your heart like a sliver. If only there could have been more. --Mari Malcolm

From Publishers Weekly

When she was writing *Suite Française* in 1940, Nemirovsky, who died in Auschwitz in 1942 before turning 40, was also reworking this novel, newly discovered among her papers. Though composed on a smaller canvas, it is another keenly observed study of human nature, and in this case of Burgundy *paysans*. In a leisurely narrative, middle-aged narrator Silvio recounts three interlocking stories of love and betrayal over two decades. These secret affairs, he says, can be explained only by fire in the blood, the intense passion that can overtake men and women when they are young, highly sexed and vulnerable. Silvio's laconic descriptions of unappeasable desire are seasoned by bitter assessment of the wisdom earned after things cool. Linked through blood and common local history, the characters in this *la ronde* of betrayal exist in a seemingly idyllic community that is always alert for deviations from the social code. Nemirovsky's restraint in unfolding her story contributes to the emotional crescendo at the story's denouement. In its penetrating distillation of manners and mores, this spare and elegant book makes a worthy follow-up to *Suite*. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Bookmarks Magazine

Given the astounding success of *Suite Française*, critics were overjoyed to find another book by Irène Nemirovsky, who wrote about a dozen novels and many short stories during her lifetime. (Though relatively new to American readers, Nemirovsky published a French best seller, *David Golder*, in 1929). *Fire in the Blood*, which survived as a partially typed manuscript, raises inevitable comparisons to *Suite Française*. Reviewers agreed that despite its smaller, less powerful scope and lack of immediacy, the novel is a small gem in its depiction of social relations in the French countryside. A few cited some purple prose, a clunky narrator, and a rather unremarkable love story, but Nemirovsky's insight into human nature more than compensates for these flaws.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carol Frazier:

Book is to be different for each grade. Book for children till adult are different content. To be sure that book is very important usually. The book Fire in the Blood ended up being making you to know about other expertise and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The guide Fire in

the Blood is not only giving you much more new information but also for being your friend when you sense bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your book. Try to make relationship while using book Fire in the Blood. You never sense lose out for everything in the event you read some books.

Jodie Long:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style within this era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. Along with book everyone in this world could share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. A lot of author can inspire their own reader with their story or maybe their experience. Not only the story that share in the publications. But also they write about advantage about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their expertise in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write with their book. One of them is this Fire in the Blood.

Virginia Dunn:

Playing with family in a very park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with close friends is thing that usually you could have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition info. Even you love Fire in the Blood, you are able to enjoy both. It is excellent combination right, you still would like to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout people. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Tracie Berry:

A lot of guide has printed but it is unique. You can get it by web on social media. You can choose the best book for you, science, comedian, novel, or whatever by simply searching from it. It is called of book Fire in the Blood. You can add your knowledge by it. Without leaving behind the printed book, it could possibly add your knowledge and make anyone happier to read. It is most important that, you must aware about guide. It can bring you from one destination for a other place.

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