



WHAT A FAMILY!

A FAMILY SAGA

BY MARCIA ZUCKERMANN

**Film & TV rights sold to
UFA Berlin**

Mischpoke!

Novel. German.

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English sample available

»Seldom does one find a family novel narrated in such a lively way ... a vivid piece of contemporary history.« Bücher und Moor, rbb (TV Show)

»Right about noon on March 10th in 1902, nobody suspected that the downfall of the Kohanim family was about to begin.«

Samuel Kohanim, the head of one of the oldest Jewish families in the region of Osche in Western Prussia, is used to a more than average share of sorrow. His wife Mindel, harsh and taciturn, bore him seven daughters. Each of ›seven biblical plagues,‹ as they are known in the village, tests his patience: Selma gets everyone meschugge with her religious quirk; Martha constantly makes up new ludicrous lies; Fanny proves particularly hard to marry off; Elly is a wild child ... – and finally Franziska who is ravishingly beautiful, proud, stubborn and »delivers catastrophes at the flick of a switch«. Yet, there is no heir – their only son dies just after his birth on March 10th.

At the end of the First World War the family seeks refuge in Berlin. While Martha marries into the upper class of the city, with her husband converting to Christianity, Franziska gets into a relationship with the Jewish collier Willy Rubin who is just as charismatic as he is unreliable. Together they move into the working class ›Red Wedding‹. And then there is the protestant Oda, a friend of the family who also ends up in Berlin. Throughout the difficult 1930s, Oda's fate becomes completely intertwined with that of the Kohanim, whose family tree is putting out various new shoots: Jewish, National Socialist, as well as communist.

Marcia Zuckermann has created an amazing Jewish family saga that refrains from going into epic territory. It is catchy, exciting, rich in plot and surprising up to the very last page, claiming its place in the tradition of Jewish storytelling. The line between tragedy and comedy is blurred as its protagonists survive and outwit the bitter blows of fate with unconditional irony towards themselves and that liberatingly sly humor.

Marcia Zuckermann, was born in 1947 in East Berlin. Her Jewish father survived the Holocaust despite being interned as a political prisoner in the concentration camp Buchenwald, while her protestant mother was a communist, active in the resistance. Nevertheless, in 1958, the family had to flee from East Berlin since they were considered dissidents there. Today, Marcia Zuckermann lives and works in Berlin as a freelance journalist and writer.

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