

Book: *Promise the Night*

Author: Michaela MacColl

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Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Promise the Night is a wonderful story showing us that you can strive to follow the path you want in life, as long as you have the strength and motivation to push against what society and traditions say you must follow. Based on the real life story of Beryl Markham, first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic from east to west, Michaela MacColl gives us a story of how Beryl Markham grew up to be the non-conformist woman who married three times and became an accomplished racehorse trainer and writer. The story centers around Beryl when she was about 9 yrs old in East Africa and how she strives to be a warrior in the Nandi tribe, even though that is breaking tradition with the Nandi tribe and would also be seen as not appropriate for a lady of British descent. So the story then follows Beryl as she continues to push against the tradition of becoming a decent British woman and continues to learn the ways of the warrior within the Nandi tribe.

I really enjoyed this story as it gave us an idea of how Beryl Markham could have experience when she grew up in British East Africa. The adventure and the perseverance that Beryl shows even at the young age of nine is really inspiring to see, even though there were times where I really did think that she was just being a spoiled brat. Understandably this was to show that she had strong will and spirit and refused to take no for an answer, but at other times I had the feeling that she took advantage of her position as a white woman in Africa to break the traditions of the Nandi tribe and force her way to train as a warrior.

But that's also what makes this novel great is that the reader is then always engaged in the story as you never know what situation Beryl is going to get into next since she is refusing to stay out of trouble's path. It was also really nice to get a look at what it might have been like to grow up in British East Africa during that time and how different it was to growing up in Britain.

I would say that this book would be great for between the ages of 13-17 (at least above the age of 13) as it does get a bit violent in it's story. This would be a fantastic book to give as a gift as it truly is an adventure story and it is also based on a true story which makes it somewhat factual.

Recommendations: *Prisoners in the Palace* by Michaela MacColl, *Fire in the Streets* by Kekla Magoon and *West with the Night* by Beryl Markham