

# **Touched by Fire**

Irene N. Watts

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"Let them burn. They're a lot of cattle anyway."

A factory-owner's response regarding the use of fire drills in March 1911.

Touched by Fire, Irene N. Watt's exquisite new novel, explores one family's journey as they flee from the pogroms of Russia in 1905, where the Cossacks burn villages to the ground, to Berlin, Germany, where Jews have a hard time living and working in peace, to the streets of the Lower East Side in New York. Teenage Miriam gives a first-hand account of the excitement everyone feels about going to America, the "Golden Land," the journey in steerage, the arrival at Ellis Island, and the discrimination the immigrants feel while seeking employment. When Miriam finally lands a job at the Triangle Shirt Waist Company as a cuff setter, she believes her future in the New World is finally secure. But on March 25, 1911, the fire that starts from overflowing bins of material scraps rages into what becomes known as the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, and Miriam's life is forever changed.

From the Hardcover edition.



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