



THE BOOK OF THOMPSON: A Mormon Tragedy (full version)

David J. Larkin Jr.

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Alistair Dodley, an English emigrant, dies in a mining disaster outside Kellogg, Idaho, in 1924, leaving his wife with four mouths to feed, including their twin boys and four-year-old daughter, Doreen. Doreen, who endures the withering criticism of her mother, grows up shy but intelligent in what is essentially a non-religious home. A classmate at school even accuses her of being a “Christ hater.” She longs to escape to a better world with expanded opportunities. Her aunt, a practicing Mormon, helps her. Ruth Conrad, a Mormon girl, loses her high school sweetheart first to a Church mission in Australia and then, in 1944, to World War II, where he disappears during battle, his body never to be found. Ruth is so shaken by her loss that at first she withdraws from the world but is finally brought back to life by Gus Hadley, a charmer and a Baptist. He proposes, and she accepts, on one condition—that he join the Mormon Church. Bobby is the second son of Doreen (née Dodley) and Jessie Thompson—or at least he thinks he is. His great-great-grandfather, Isaac Thompson, joined the Mormon Church in England, sailed to the United States, and crossed the plains by ox cart to Salt Lake City in 1863. It is now 1954, and Bobby, a six-year-old fifth-generation Mormon, is proud to be a member of the only true church on earth—so proud that he takes on a singular task: to convert Queen Elizabeth II to the gospel. There’s only one problem. He’s confused. Why, if his parents have been sealed in the Mormon temple “for time and all eternity” and will live together even after death, do they always fight on earth? Discover what happens as Jessie gets the call to bring Gus Hadley, a so-called “Jack Mormon,” back into the fold, and Bobby tries to unravel the truth of what’s going on between his family and the Hadleys. There is, Bobby finds, a surprise behind every hedge. This full version of THE BOOK OF THOMPSON provides more detail on Bobby’s magical thinking and on Jessie’s view of his past life. The shorter version, also available on Amazon, focuses on the straightforward family drama.

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