



The Tulip and the Pope: A Nun's Story

Deborah Larsen

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The story of novelist and poet Deborah Larsen's young womanhood, *The Tulip and the Pope* is both an exquisitely crafted spiritual memoir and a beautifully nuanced view of life in the convent. In midsummer of 1960, nineteen-year-old Deborah shares a cab to a convent. She and the teenage girls with her, passionate to become nuns, heedless of all they are leaving behind, smoke their last cigarettes before entering their new lives. In the same artful prose that distinguished her novel *The White*, Larsen's memoir lets us into the hushed life of the convent. She captures the exquisite peace she found there, as well as the extreme constriction of the rules and her gradual awareness of all that she is missing. Eventually the physical world—the lush tulip she remembers seeing as a girl, the snow she tunneled in, and even the mystery of sex—begins to seem to her an alternative theater for a deep understanding and love of God.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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