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A Girl Named Disaster

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

When cholera breaks out in a remote Mozambiquan village, the orphan Nhamo is blamed for provoking the vengeful spirit of a man killed long ago by her father. Destined for a cruel marriage to compensate the aggrieved family, her ailing but wonderfully strong-minded grand-mother Ambuya encourages her to escape by boat to Zimbabwe to find her father's people. Surviving through courage, ingenuity and her knowledge of plants and animals, Nhamo keeps herself mentally alive through telling herself stories which engage with the spirit world of Shona myths and beliefs. While much of the action focuses on the dangers of the lone journey, the story is as much about transversing different worlds of spirit, science and culture. While Nhamo finally feels most at home at a research station with an independent Zimbabwean woman as her role model, she is not likely to turn her back completely on the cultural and spiritual roots of her ancestors. This is a brave, absorbing book by a 'cross-border' American writer who has not only detailed knowledge of the environment but is able to create a diverse array of believable characters and open up in a sympathetic manner some of the difficult questions that will face Nhamo in her own crossing of borders.

Running Order:

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