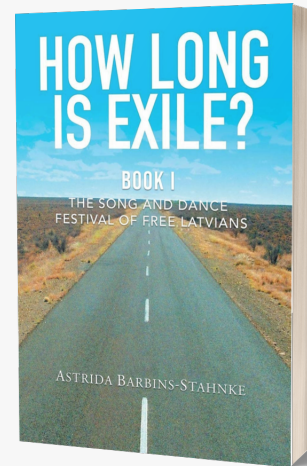


# Strength from Suffering

*A tale of the Latvian people's struggle through the eyes of a widow*

COOKSTOWN, NEW JERSEY, UNITED STATES, October 30, 2020

/EINPresswire.com/ -- When Milda Bērziņa-Arājs lost her husband Kārlis Arājs, a festival with similar people sets her on a path she had no plan on taking. [How Long Is Exile?: BOOK I: The Song and Dance Festival of Free Latvians](#) by Astrida B. Stahnke is the story of the Latvian people's suffering during World War II, and how the division, separation, and strife caused by this event caused both suffering and strength while in exile.



How Long Is Exile?: BOOK I: The Song and Dance Festival of Free Latvians

Astrida herself was a participant in the exile state that the Latvian people went through. Born on March 15, 1935 in Priekule, Latvia, Astrida grew up in her home country. But when the second World War came to their doorstep, things drastically changed. She saw through her eyes how her beloved Latvia was exchanged between Russian-supported communists and Germany for years. This kept on until on October 8, 1944, when they escaped with refugees while both armies were figuratively a stone's throw away from her home.

It is this, and the experiences she went through moving forward that became the backbone of Astrida's book. She channeled through the character Milda her own experiences while in exile. While the book is fictional, the reflections therein, experienced by Milda and the other characters, are drawn from very real experiences and emotions.

This first book of a trilogy that sheds light on the Latvian diaspora will keep any reader hooked to the story up until the end. The brutal reality of the event, the suffering endured by the people, and the strength that they have shown and grown during this time is highlighted in the book, and will both provoke and inspire anyone who opens its pages.

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