



# **The Soup Has Many Eyes: From Shtetl to Chicago--A Memoir of One Family's Journey Through History**

*Joann Rose Leonard*

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Our lives are made rich by those who came before us. Like ingredients in a long-simmering soup, they flavor who we are and what we do. In this beautiful, haunting, and larger-than-life memoir, one woman shares with us the humor, heartbreak, and triumph of her Jewish ancestry, to comfort and strengthen us all, whatever our faith.

At home in her Pennsylvania kitchen, Joann Leonard makes soup. In her grandfather's pot, she improvises, using her great-grandmother's unwritten recipe. As she does, amid the fragrant steam rising from the pot comes a stream of memories, half-told tales, and departed ancestors asking that their stories be told.

And what stories they are: of the six strong Axelrood brothers and their families terrorized by Cossacks in their Eastern European village; of a man hiding twenty-eight days under a barn floor to avoid being murdered; of a tiny girl left with others for safety in the flight from savagery and lost for twelve long years; and of new lives made from old in America, "the Golden Land."

As Joann Leonard adds each story to her pot, she creates a rich and universal soup to nourish us all: the story of a woman putting together the fragmented pieces of her own life and recognizing the power of her own Jewish heritage. What she discovers within her cookpot are the extraordinary endurance, remarkable bravery, and lusty humor of her forebears and the joy of an undying legacy of faith that is the greatest gift she has been given--a gift she has been entrusted to pass along to her two adult sons. These pages invite us all to share in this life-giving food.

In a nation where most people's roots lie in faraway lands, **The Soup Has Many Eyes** is a rich, poetic, deeply satisfying testament to the importance of family bonds, spiritual insight, and--most of all--the miracle that happens when we invite the past into our lives.

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