

# Hope from the reading

created by Isabelle Müller



## For Isabelle Müller it was the first reading in

North Germany. Quiet, with moved and very attentive, the visitors were almost breathless

In the cozy music room of Victor's Residenz Margarethenhof in Laatzen, the bestselling author from Kapfenhardt near Pforzheim took the residents on an hour-long reading about her life, which she chronicled in her autobiography "Phoenix Daughter – Hope Was My Path." In it, the author recounts her extraordinary life story, including stops in France, Germany, Kazakhstan, and Vietnam.

After a warm welcome from the assistant to the residence director, Eric Seiler, the audience's emotion was visibly evident at times during the reading. Right at the beginning, the author described the adventurous life of her mother, Loan, who was born in Vietnam and left her family forever at the age of just twelve. When discussing the subject of poverty, which Isabelle Müller later experienced firsthand as the fifth child of a Frenchman and a Vietnamese mother in France in the 1960s, the former war generation was reminded of experiences from their own childhood. The older audience could therefore clearly empathize with how little Isabelle must have felt when she was publicly teased by her schoolmates in the schoolyard because of her clothes from the landfill.

"Love has many faces," the 45-year-old author continued. When she told the story of her classmate Nadège, who had given her five chocolates for Christmas because her mother believed no one should be left without a present at Christmas, some were visibly moved. Some episodes made the mostly stunned audience laugh, while others silenced them. "Phoenix Daughter" is not only about exclusion and racism, love and hate, but also about the nine years of sexual abuse by Isabelle's father. "Was your father a drunk? Did you hear the...

"I needed drugs to process this?" someone wanted to know.

"My father wasn't an alcoholic, and no, I did it on my own, without any psychological support," the petite woman answered confidently, to the great astonishment of many. They could hardly believe that a person could endure such sustained violence against body and soul on their own.

The author was guided throughout her life by her great love for her mother, Loan. Her wisdom and inner strength instilled in her the Asian belief in higher heavenly powers and in herself. "Today, I have risen above my terrible experiences," said Isabelle Müller. With her book, she can now help other people survive crises unscathed and not break down in despair.

"What could be more beautiful for a child than to see their mother smile like that?" Isabelle Müller concluded the chapter in which her mother reunites with her brother Le and sister Thao in Vietnam after 50 years. With loud applause and a bouquet of flowers, the author was warmly bid farewell for this successful afternoon. With shining eyes and best wishes for the future, those present then had her book signed.