



Someday We Will Fly

Rachel DeWoskin

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Warsaw, Poland. The year is 1940 and Lillia is 15 when her mother, Alenka, disappears and her father flees with Lillia and her younger sister, Naomi, to Shanghai, one of the few places that will accept Jews without visas. There they struggle to make a life; they have no money, there is little work, no decent place to live, a culture that doesn't understand them. And always the worry about Alenka. How will she find them? Is she still alive?

Meanwhile Lillia is growing up, trying to care for Naomi, whose development is frighteningly slow, in part from malnourishment. Lillia finds an outlet for her artistic talent by making puppets, remembering the happy days in Warsaw when they were circus performers. She attends school sporadically, makes friends with Wei, a Chinese boy, and finds work as a performer at a "gentlemen's club" without her father's knowledge.

But meanwhile the conflict grows more intense as the Americans declare war and the Japanese force the Americans in Shanghai into camps. More bombing, more death. Can they survive, caught in the crossfire?

Someday We Will Fly Details

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Author : Rachel DeWoskin

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Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Young Adult, War, World War II

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From Reader Review Someday We Will Fly for online ebook

Librariann says

Maybe it's my fault I've been reading too much WWII fiction lately. I enjoyed this book, but after *The Girl in the Blue Coat and Grenade*, it lacked drive. The premise was great - I had no idea Jews evacuated to Shanghai - but the focus meandered. It was a refugee story, a war story, a lost mother story, a baby with a developmental disability story, an almost-prostitution story, and then, in a bizarre plot twist, an [spoiler] abducted captive story [/spoiler].

A second tier recommendation.

Stephanie Rigdon says

Audio

Paige Green says

Disclaimer: I received this book from Viking Books. Thanks! All opinions are my own.

Rating: 4/5

Publication Date: January 22, 2019

Genre: Historical Fiction

Recommended Age: 16 (trigger warnings for sex trafficking/abandonment)

Publisher: Viking Books

Pages: 320

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Synopsis: Warsaw, Poland. The year is 1940 and Lillia is 15 when her mother, Alenka, disappears and her father flees with Lillia and her younger sister, Naomi, to Shanghai, one of the few places that will accept Jews without visas. There they struggle to make a life; they have no money, there is little work, no decent place to live, a culture that doesn't understand them. And always the worry about Alenka. How will she find them? Is she still alive?

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I thought the book was really good overall. I enjoy WWII books and this one was interesting. I've not had time to do all the research into it, but it seems solid from what I can recall from history books. I liked the characters and thought they were well developed and I thought that the writing was really good. I didn't realize the extent of WWII and I didn't know that Jews were sent to Shanghai. I thought that it was really interesting how the author crafted this story and I was intrigued by all of it.

However, I do think that the plot was too much for the book. Like, it might have been better in a series or duology where the author can expand and slow down the book more so the reader isn't flung every which way while reading the book, but overall I really enjoyed it.

Verdict: A high-flying book!

Becky says

SOMEDAY WE WILL FLY by Rachel DeWoskin

Performers in the Warsaw Circus must flee for their lives from the Nazis. As they flee to Shanghai, Lillia's mother is lost. She and father left with no choice, continue to Shanghai where Jews are being offered safety, but not an easy life. As the Japanese draw ever nearer, life becomes more tenuous and scary.

Well written and researched, this YA novel is also a wonderful read for adults. The Jewish experience in war time China has been little known. This book attempts to rectify that omission and succeeds. Lillia, her father and those she comes in contact with are fully developed characters. The plot is engrossing.

5 of 5 stars

Sasha Rosado says

A book you can't put down! I had no idea that 23,000 Jews had escaped to Shanghai during the Nazi Regime. Lilia's story is one that could have happened with people much like the characters in this book. Surviving and helping her family stay alive as a 14 year old girl was beyond scary, but she did it to the best of her ability. The relationships she built with girls at school, her best friend Wei who was Chinese, and even her nightly job, all helped her continue to grow and learn how to live in a war torn world. From all the human suffering she still found a way to create a masterpiece that would honor those who struggled with her and honor her parents. Truly a great read!!!

Teenreadsdotcom says

The author of FOREIGN BABES IN BEIJING and BIG GIRL SMALL, Rachel DeWoskin, now brings a new novel to the stage --- SOMEDAY WE WILL FLY. This novel captures an unknown moment in history during World War II and the Holocaust: Jewish refugees in Shanghai.

Before May 17th, 1940, Lillia's parents, Bercik and Alenka, were circus performers in Warsaw. Lillia had a healthy younger sister, Naomi, and lived in a comfortable home with her family. On May 17th, 1940, Lillia's whole life is turned over. Because she is Jewish, her mother goes missing and is presumably dead and her comfortable home is gone when her father whisks both her and her sister away on a boat to Shanghai. Although she's far away from the comforts of her home, Lillia fights to live again throughout immense struggle including malnourishment and sickness, heavy loss and a shortage of jobs and money. The lack of money eventually leads Lillia to perform at a "gentlemen's club" without her father's knowledge. To resist against her everyday struggles, she makes puppets reminding her of the good times back in Warsaw and creates a show with them. She also becomes friends and develops a crush on Wei, a Chinese boy. As World War II escalates further when America enters the war, Lillia imagines a better time and place so that she could continue living and not be just alive.

SOMEDAY WE WILL FLY is an intense and immersive novel. Lillia, even in her unbelievable situation, is somehow relatable. Her strong and growing character has you easily entranced by what she'll do next. Each twist and turn leaves you to wonder what would you have done if you were in her place and whether you agree with her actions. As a reader, you continuously fall into the story and wonder how you would act if she was interacting with you. Additionally, her living conditions seem impossible to be true and it leads you to wonder what would happen if you lived in such conditions.

DeWoskin uses very descriptive language and you can always see what is occurring in the novel. It leads you to make your own decisions on what you believe is going on and what should be done. It is also interesting to see what both you and Lillia see and miss, even though she is seeing the same reactions you're seeing around her. It's also fascinating to see what a teenage girl was thinking at the time about the Holocaust when she was hidden from most of the horrors.

If you like connecting with characters and want to learn some lesser-known history, SOMEDAY WE WILL FLY is for you. Lillia, as I mentioned before, is a captivating character. She stands up to conflict and fights to never submit to death, but she still has everyday teenage problems.

Change happens often and more times than not it ends in sadness. This book is emotionally taxing and by the time you're done, your emotions are fraught. By the end you can barely breathe and at the same time you're holding your breath wondering what's going to happen next. I highly recommend this book to be read when you have a day to read all day in bed.

For history fans, learning about the Jewish refugees in Shanghai is fascinating because of how unknown it is to most of us, especially in America. As someone who has learned about the Holocaust, I never knew that Shanghai allowed fleeing Jews into its borders without visas.
