BOOK RESUME: BETWEEN SHADES OF GRAY

BOOK SYNOPSIS


Fifteen-year-old Lina is a Lithuanian girl living an ordinary life – until Soviet officers invade her home and tear her family apart. Separated from her father and forced onto a crowded train, Lina, her mother, and her young brother make their way to a Siberian work camp, where they are forced to fight for their lives. Lina finds solace in her art, documenting these events by drawing. Risking everything, she imbeds clues in her drawings of their location and secretly passes them along, hoping her drawings will make their way to her father’s prison camp. But will strength, love, and hope be enough for Lina and her family to survive?

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ “A harrowing page-turner.” — Publishers Weekly, starred review

★ “A gripping story.” — School Library Journal, starred review

★ “Bitterly sad, fluidly written...Sepetys’ flowing prose gently carries readers.” — Kirkus, starred review

★ “Beautifully written and deeply felt...an important book that deserves the widest possible readership.” — Booklist, starred review


“Few books are beautifully written, fewer still are important; this novel is both.” — The Washington Post

“Beautiful...a superb though grueling novel.” — The Wall Street Journal

“An eye-opening reimagination of a very real tragedy written with grace and heart.” — Los Angeles Times

“An engrossing and poignant story of the fortitude of the human spirit in a dark time in Lithuanian history.” — Associated Press

Updated 3.27.2024
Penguin Random House
Contact BannedBooks@penguinrandomhouse.com

*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.
“Please read this small window into a tragedy.” — NPR

“A haunting chronicle, demonstrating that even in the heart of darkness 'love is the most powerful army.’” — The Horn Book

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- A New York Times notable book
- A Carnegie Medal nominee
- A William C. Morris Award finalist
- A Golden Kite Award winner
- A YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults Top Ten selection
- An Alaska Pacific Northwest Library Association Young Reader's Choice Award selection
- A Colorado Blue Spruce Young Adult Book Award selection
- A Georgia Children's Book Award selection
- A Indiana Eliot Rosewater Indiana High School Book Award selection
- A Indiana Young Hoosier Book Award selection
- A Iowa Association of School Librarians Teen Book Award selection
- A Kansas Bluegrass Book Award selection
- A Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Book Award selection
- A Michigan Great Lakes, Great Books Award selection
- A Minnesota Maud Hart Lovelace Book Award selection
- A Nevada Young Reader's Award selection
- A New Hampshire The Flume Teen Reader's Choice Award selection
- A Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Awards selection
- A Pennsylvania School Librarians Association Award selection
- A Rhode Island Teen Book Award selection
- A Washington D.C. Capitol Choices selection
- A South Carolina Book Awards selection
- A Texas TAYSHAS Reading List selection
- A Texas Lonestar Reading List selection
- A Virginia Readers' Choice Award selection
- A Wisconsin Golden Archer Award selection
- A Tennessee Volunteer State Book Award selection

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- Discussion Guide
- Author Study Educator Guide
- Discussion Guide for Ashes in the Snow movie tie-in edition
- ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom: Breaking the silence: an interview with Ruta Sepetys, author of hidden histories
- Letter from 1300 Childrens and YA authors on Book Banning

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