

Title: *Someday We Will Fly*
Author: Rachel DeWoskin
Genre: Historical fiction

Reviewer Name and Grade: Owen M. 8th Grade

Date Reviewed: March 30, 2020

The book *Someday We Will Fly*, is an historical fiction novel about a family who has to flee from Warsaw, Poland in 1940 to escape Nazi persecution by escaping to Shanghai, China. The main characters in this book are Lillia the protagonist, a teenage girl struggling in a world devoid of hope, trying to help her fractured family. Naomi, Lillia's little sister is just learning to talk and walk. Wei, a boy Lillia meets at school who wants nothing more than to learn to speak English and teach at a school.

The book "*Someday We Will Fly*" begins shortly after the Nazi occupation of Poland and the persecution of Jews. The main character, Lillia, and her family must escape before they are captured and killed. Days before they have to flee, Lillia's parents put on an act for the other members of their circus troupe to raise their spirits. In the middle of the act German guards break into the building and try to arrest the people in the audience and in the ring. Lillia and her sister escape with their father but are forced to leave their mother behind. They have to escape to Shanghai without her. After arriving in Shanghai Lillia and her sister and father have difficulties finding work, and money. Lillia is forced to attend school where she meets Wei, a Chinese boy who allowed her to borrow items from the store closet he organizes. Lillia also meets others from Poland and some Americans whose parents help as medical personnel. Lillia thought that her life was finally turning for the better, when her father and sister came down with an unknown disease forcing her to take care of them, and also making her father lose his job, which in turn made it harder to care for the family. Lillia must find work herself to support her family. She finds a place called Magnifique, a dance bar a way away from her house. She stops going to school and works every Saturday from 8 to midnight. Lillia realizes that she has a knack when it comes to dancing for others entertainment, especially with her ballet and acrobatics background. However, in the wake of all this chaos and depression there is the light of Lillia's friends and her new life, devoid of Nazis or any Anti sematic thoughts.

Did the plot of this book keep you interested? This book was very interesting, it kept me up all night hoping that Lillia will be able to find herself in the world.

Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow or just right? In my opinion this book was a very good pace, whenever the character felt nervous or stressed the story sped up in pace, when she was relaxed the story slowed.

What grade level is this book appropriate for? This book is appropriate for people in grades 8 and up.

Who would you recommend this book to? I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys any history or just historical fiction.

What other information do you think would be useful to teens reading this book? I believe that any teen reading this book just needs to remember that things will get better for Lillia, if not at first than at the end.

Five stars. I gave this book five stars because it is just a fantastically well written book, there is excellent dialogue, I love the way they switch from English, to Polish and then back to

English. This book is very interesting because it makes you wonder “*What would have happened if Jewish people escaped to China during World War Two?*”

Reviewer’s Name and Grade: Benjamin W., 9th Grade

Date Reviewed: December 5, 2020

This book takes place in Shanghai, China in 1940. A Polish girl, her father, and her sister flee from their hometown of Warsaw, Poland to escape the Nazis. They are Jewish making them the targets of the Nazis even though they did nothing wrong.

Just days before Lillia’s family plans to leave for Shanghai, German soldiers break into the building where they are giving a secret circus performance. Lillia and her sister Naomi are rescued by their father but their mother goes missing in the attack. With the idea of keeping his children safe, Lillia’s father decides to leave for Shanghai without their mother. Once they arrive in Shanghai, they have trouble finding work, food, and money. Lillia is sent off to school where she meets a Chinese boy named Wei. Lillia enjoys spending time with Wei because it makes her feel less lonely. She also meets some American girls like Rebecca and Sally. Rebecca treats Lillia very nicely and gives her pretty dresses and books while Sally treats Lillia a little more harshly. Additionally, she meets another Polish girl called Biata who she becomes friends with because of their similar background. Just as her life is starting to turn better, Lillia’s father and Naomi suddenly get very sick. Lillia is forced to take care of them and get money in whatever way she can. She stops going to school and ends up finding work at the Magnifique, which is a fancy restaurant where girls dance to entertain the guests. Lillia uses her circus training to impress a man called Mr. Takati who buys dinner for her every time. She also finds out that Wei’s sister works at the Magnifique and is a very good dancer. She suggests that they work on a show together so they can perform it to her mother when she arrives. Then the mysterious illness that infected Lillia’s father and sister strikes again and this time, she feels the full weight of loss as Taube, a grandma figure to Lillia, is taken. Within all this hardship, Lillia still hopes for a better life later and for her mother to return to her. Eventually, she gets word that her mother is still alive and asks Mr. Takati for help. Her mother arrives in Shanghai but will her life ever return to how it used to be like?

Now, I will answer some questions about the book:

Did the plot keep you interested? - This plot definitely kept me interested. There was a lot of action that kept me reading to find out what the results would be. There were also a bunch of plot twists that kept me wondering what would happen next.

Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right? - I think the pace of this book was just right. The pace would be faster whenever there was action but it would slow down when Lillia was caring for her sister or something else. This book spans the time of a couple of years so the author did a good job describing what happened overall instead of each individual day.

What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for? - I think this book is appropriate for kids in grades 7-12. This book deals with some issues like racism and death so it would be too complicated for younger kids to read.

What type of reader would you recommend this book to? - I would recommend this book to readers who like historical fiction and an engaging story.

What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book? - This book has some words that don't form English words because they are Chinese but they are translated directly after using them.

I would rate this book *5 stars*. The plot was really good and easy to follow. This plot was different from other WWII books about Jews as in instead of hiding from the Nazi, they escaped to Shanghai. This made the book more interesting to read.