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Lost in America

Pat Frade

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Sachs, Marilyn. *Lost in America*. Roaring Brook Press, 2005. ISBN 1596430400. \$16.95. 150 pp.

Reviewer: Pat Frade

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Historical Fiction;

Subject: Immigrants--Juvenile fiction; Jews-United States--Juvenile fiction; Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)-France--Juvenile fiction; Books--reviews;

The story begins in 1943 in France. Fourteen-year-old Nicole decides to spend the night at her friend, Françoise's house before Françoise's family leaves for Switzerland. The next day Nicole arrives home to an empty house and is told by neighbors that the Gestapo came during the night and are looking for her. She hides in her school and a teacher helps her until the war is over. A concentration camp survivor finds Nicole and informs her that her parents and little sister died in Auschwitz. The only extended family she has is in the Bronx, so at 17 she travels to New York to be with them. Unwelcome by her extended family, Nicole finds this new environment difficult. She must work even though she is unskilled. Nicole finds comfort with Françoise and her family who have also immigrated to New York. Nicole struggles to be a "real American girl", while being haunted by memories of her family. The history represented in the story is authentic. This book gives a realistic look at what life may have been like for Holocaust survivors who came to America looking for a safer life. It reveals that many Americans felt untouched by the war and didn't want to know about it. Readers will learn from this book, which is based on the life of one of the author's friends.