



2009

Shangai Shadows

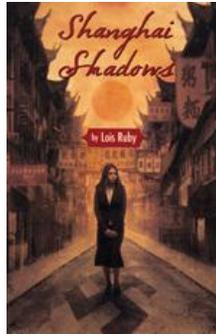
Tessa McMillan

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Ruby, Lois. *Shanghai Shadows*. Holiday House, Inc., 2006. ISBN 9780823419609. \$16.95. 284 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan.

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Significant shortcomings

Genre: Fiction; Historical fiction;

Subject: Jews --China --Shanghai --Juvenile fiction; World War, 1939-1945 --China --Juvenile fiction; Family life --China --Fiction; Books--Reviews;

Ilse, Erich, and their Jewish parents arrive in Shanghai to escape Hitler's domination of Austria. The family wants to go to America, but with no visa the only country that would accept them is China. After their arrival, Ilse is surprised by the thousands of other European refugees living in Shanghai. At first life is bearable, but Japanese soldiers single out Jewish refugees by making them move into a ghetto. In response to their treatment, Erich and Ilse do work for an underground resistance group. Ilse's mother, who hid a past marriage to an American, is placed into an internment camp. Ilse becomes the mother and sole provider for her family. Erich is captured and imprisoned during a resistance mission. Their father sacrifices his beloved violin to get his son out of jail. In 1945 news arrives that Japan is defeated and their armies leave Shanghai. Ilse's mother returns with news that her American husband wants them to come to America to divorce her and give her family a new life after the war. Ilse and her family board a ship to go to America.

Ruby's book is beneficial to help readers learn about this forgotten piece of history. Yet the book has significant shortcomings in character development, story flow, and historical detail. Teachers and librarians can use this book to showcase what other events occurred during World War II, but there is little merit to Ruby's writing style.

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