



Among the Red Stars

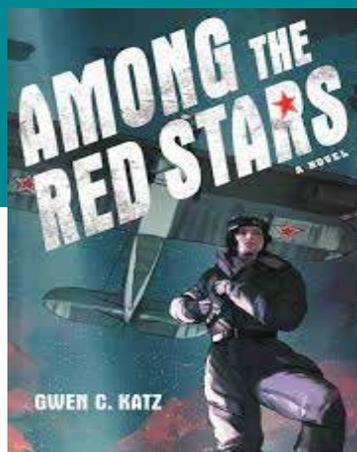
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Garrett, Tessara () "Among the Red Stars," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 39 : Iss. 1 , Article 70.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol39/iss1/70>

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Book Review

Among the Red Stars

Author

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Illustrator

Reviewer

Tessara Garrett

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Young Adult

Pages

376

Year

2017

Publisher

HarperTeen

ISBN

9780062642745

Valka wants nothing more than to be an airwoman like Marina Raskova. When World War II strikes Russia she may finally have her chance to go to war and become a famous fighter pilot! But the Red Army doesn't want her. What's worse, her childhood friend, Pasha, is drafted. Then fortune strikes. Marina Raskova herself is organizing and training all-female air force regiments. Valka enlists and soon finds herself piloting a night bomber. She and her fellow airwomen take to the skies to defend the Motherland and prove themselves as legitimate pilots. War is not what Valka expected, and she soon grows to wonder what she is fighting for. In the end, she faces a choice between betraying her country and saving the life of her dear Pasha. Knowing that she faces a traitor's death, she chooses Pasha.

Among the Red Stars is a coming-of-age story for Valka. She leaves for war with dreams of glory and fame. Those dreams quickly begin to change. She soon starts to question the right and wrong of the sorties she flies. She is scarred literally by fire and figuratively by the questionable morals of the war. At the same time, her relationship with Pasha grows through their letters as they confide their weaknesses, their fears, and their triumphs. In her first letter to Pasha she demands he not call her "Valyushka" because she says, "You know I hate pet names." Yet a year later she refers to Pasha as "my Pashenka." In the beginning Valka would do anything to leave her hometown and Pasha to pursue her dreams. In the end, she would do anything just to save Pasha's life, including abandoning all she's worked for and putting her own life in danger. With each new experience she develops gradually and believably into a true heroine.

*Contains moderate violence.