



2018

### Night Witches

Cynthia Frazier

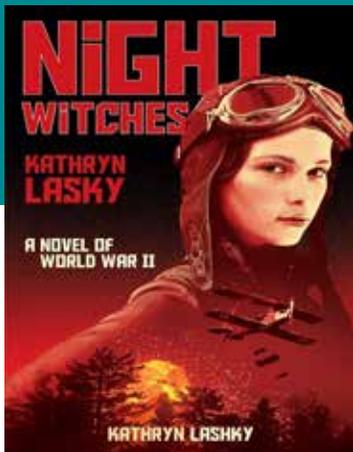
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## Book Review

### Night Witches

#### Author

Kathryn Lasky

#### Illustrator

#### Reviewer

Cynthia Frazier

#### Rating

Excellent

#### Level

Intermediate, Young  
Adult

#### Pages

211

#### Year

2017

#### Publisher

Scholastic Press

#### ISBN

9780545682985

It is 1942 and Russia is being invaded by Germany. The city of Stalingrad is besieged and bombings continue day and night. Valya's family is dead or fighting in the war, leaving only one thing to do. Valya sets off to find her sister Tatyana's regiment, thinking that she can become a pilot also. After harrowing experiences, she finds her sister's unit and joins them in their work of targeting Nazi supply lines and fuel dumps. The planes they fly are slower and lighter than fighter planes and can only hold six bombs at a time. Each plane flies up to eight missions a night, stealthily maneuvering through the air like witches on their brooms - Night Witches, as the German soldiers call them. Valya is faced with the most desperate task of her young life when Tatyana's plane goes down in German territory.

This book spotlights a group of women pilots in Russia during World War II and is a fast-paced adventure story. Kathryn Lasky's characters are believable and well rounded, especially Valya through whose eyes the story is told. The writing is clear and crisp and easily read. However, as an historical fiction novel geared for the middle school to young adult reader, it would have been helpful for the author to include historical facts, dates, or notes about the area and time period. Additional information about or references to where to get material about the Night Witches and a vocabulary of Russian words used in the book would be helpful to an inquiring reader. This book is appropriate for middle school youth and older.

\*Contains moderate violence, mild language, and mild sexual content.