



Yellow Star

By Jennifer Roy

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"In 1945 the war ended. The Germans surrendered, and the ghetto was liberated. Out of over a quarter of a million people, about 800 walked out of the ghetto. Of those who survived, only twelve were children. I was one of the twelve." For more than fifty years after the war, Sylvia, like many Holocaust survivors, did not talk about her experiences in the Lodz ghetto in Poland. She buried her past in order to move forward. But finally she decided it was time to share her story, and so she told it to her niece, who has re-told it here using free verse inspired by her aunt. This is the true story of Sylvia Perlmutter—a story of courage, heartbreak, and finally survival despite the terrible circumstances in which she grew up. A timeline, historical notes, and an author's note are included.

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Yellow Star By Jennifer Roy Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 5-9—In thoughtful, vividly descriptive, almost poetic prose, Roy retells the true story of her Aunt Sylvia's experiences in the Lodz Ghetto during the Nazi occupation of Poland. The slightly fictionalized story, re-created from her aunt's taped narrative, is related by Sylvia herself as a series of titled vignettes that cover the period from fall, 1939, when she is four years old, until January 1945—each one recounting a particular detail-filled memory in the child's life (a happy-colored yellow star sewn on her favorite orange coat; a hole in the cemetery where she hides overnight with her Papa). The book is divided into five chronological sections—each with a short factual introduction to the period covered. An appended author's note tells what happened to Sylvia's family after the war. A time line of World War II, beginning with the German invasion of Poland, is also included. This gripping and very readable narrative, filled with the astute observations of a young child, brings to life the Jewish ghetto experience in a unique and memorable way. This book is a standout in the genre of Holocaust literature.—*Susan Scheps, Shaker Heights Public Library, OH*

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Only 12 children survived the Lodz ghetto, and Roy's aunt Sylvia was one of them. But for more than 50 years, Sylvia kept her experience to herself: "It was something nobody talked about." Roy didn't know, and she admits that she didn't want to know. She always avoided Holocaust history. She was afraid of it; when she was growing up, there was no Holocaust curriculum, no discussion—just those images of atrocity, piles of bones, and skeletal survivors being liberated. Her father, too, was a survivor, but he seldom spoke of those years, and with his death, his story was lost. But a few years ago, Roy's aunt began to talk about Lodz, and based on taped phone interviews, Roy wrote her story, presenting it from the first-person viewpoint of a child, Sylvia, in simple, urgent free verse in the present tense. Each section begins with a brief historical introduction, and there is a detailed time line at the end of the book.

Sylvia is four years old in 1939, when the Germans invade Poland and start World War II. A few months later, her family is forced into the crowded Lodz ghetto, with more than a quarter of a million other Jews. At the end of the war, when Sylvia is 10, only about 800 Jews remain—only 12 of them are children. Sylvia remembers daily life: yellow stars, illness, starvation, freezing cold, and brutal abuse, with puddles of red blood everywhere, and the terrifying arbitrariness of events ("like the story of a boy / who went out for bread / and was shot by a guard / who didn't like the way the boy / looked at him"). When the soldiers first go from door to door, "ripping children from their parents' arms" and dragging them away, her father hides her in the cemetery. For years thereafter, she's not allowed to go outside. In 1944 the ghetto is emptied, except for a few Jews kept back to clean up, including Sylvia's father, who keeps his family with him through courage, cunning, and luck. As the Nazis face defeat, Sylvia discovers a few others hidden like her, "children of the cellar." When the Russians liberate the ghetto, she hears one soldier speak Yiddish, and the family hears of the genocide, the trains that went to death camps. At last they learn of the enormity of the tragedy: neighbors, friends, and cousins—all dead. There's much to think about and talk about as the words bring the history right into the present. *Hazel Rochman*

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About the Author

Jennifer Roy is the author of more than thirty books for children and young adults, including *Israel: Discovering Cultures*. A former teacher, she holds a BS in Psychology and an MA in Elementary Education.

Yellow Star is based on the childhood of Jennifer's aunt Sylvia, who provided extensive interviews as the author was writing this book. Jennifer lives in New York.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marie Flynt:

This *Yellow Star* book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is information inside this e-book incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This particular *Yellow Star* without we comprehend teach the one who studying it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't become worry *Yellow Star* can bring once you are and not make your bag space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even phone. This *Yellow Star* having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

Debbie Jackson:

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Sharyl Nettles:

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Luis Gazaway:

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