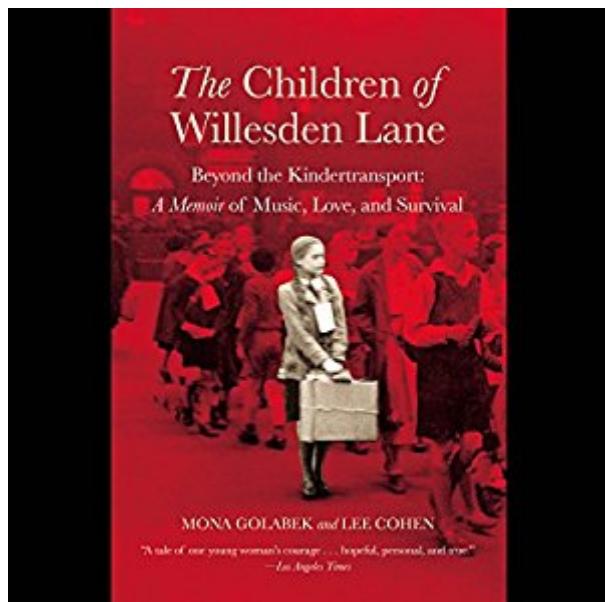


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The Children Of Willesden Lane: Beyond The Kindertransport: A Memoir Of Music, Love, And Survival



Synopsis

Based on the true story of her mother, Mona Golabek describes the inspirational story of Lisa Jura Golabek's escape from Nazi-controlled Austria to England on the famed Kindertransport. Jewish musical prodigy Lisa Jura has a wonderful life in Vienna. But when the Nazis start closing in on the city, life changes irreversibly. Although he has three daughters, Lisa's father is able to secure only one berth on the Kindertransport. The family decides to send Lisa to London, so she may pursue her dreams of a career as a concert pianist. Separated from her beloved family, Lisa bravely endures the trip and a disastrous posting outside London before finding her way to the Willesden Lane Orphanage. It is in this orphanage that Lisa's story truly comes to life. Her music inspires the other orphanage children, and they, in turn, cheer her on in her efforts to make good on her promise to her family to realize her musical potential. Through hard work and sheer pluck, Lisa wins a scholarship to study piano at the Royal Academy. As she supports herself and studies, she makes a new life for herself and dreams of reconnecting with the family she was forced to leave behind. The resulting tale delivers a message of the power of music to uplift the human spirit and to grant the individual soul endurance, patience, and peace.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have never before been reduced to tears by a book.... During the hours I spent reading The Children of Willesden Lane I experienced tears of joy, tears of pain, tears for the human condition and finally the soul cleansing tears of a spirit renewed. I literally cried my way through the last 140

pages of The Children of Willesden Lane while sitting in seat 6C of a nonstop flight from Los Angeles to Houston. Not a simple moistening of the eyes, but a steady stream of tears pouring down my cheeks as I experienced a completely unexpected range of intense emotion. I have read hundreds of nonfiction books and never, absolutely never, have I experienced anything even vaguely akin to this extraordinarily down-to-earth book. The first third of the book feels like getting reacquainted with an old friend. Despite the tragic backdrop of the era, the themes and the setting feel warm and familiar. The character development is just detailed enough to evoke the distinct identities of the major characters without setting them in stone. Instead of nailing down every conceivable detail, Mona Golabek leaves plenty of room for the reader to personalize the lead characters. As I dug deeper and deeper into the storyline, it was uncanny how I began to identify more and more closely with the central characters. It is almost as if the book was crafted to ensure that Lisa, Aaron, Johnny, Gina, Gunter, Hans, Mr. Hardesty, Mrs. Canfield and Mrs. McRae would gradually assume the characteristics of the people who have made profound differences in my life. It is worthy to note that none of the characters are completely idealized.

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