

= Yellow Star (novel) =

Yellow Star is a 2006 biographical children 's novel by Jennifer Roy . Written in free verse , it depicts life through the eyes of a young Jewish girl whose family was forced into the Żódź Ghetto in 1939 during World War II . Roy tells the story of her aunt Sylvia , who shared her childhood memories with Roy more than 50 years after the ghetto 's liberation . Roy added fictionalized dialogue , but did not otherwise alter the story . The book covers Sylvia 's life as she grows from four and a half to ten years old in the ghetto . Sylvia , her older sister Dora , and her younger cousin Isaac were three of only twelve children who survived . After the war , Sylvia moved to the United States , married , and only much later told her story to Roy . Since its publication in 2006 , the book has received multiple awards , starred reviews , and other accolades , and has been made into a likewise well @-@ received audiobook .

= = Background = =

Yellow Star is the outgrowth of Sylvia Perlmutter Rozines ' recollections of life in the Żódź ghetto . Perlmutter Rozines , then Sylvia Perlmutter , was a four and a half year old child when she and her relatives were confined to the ghetto in late 1939 . The ghetto was liberated the day before she turned 10 : more than half her life had been lived in the ghetto . The book relates the events of those five and a half years , as an adult Sylvia recalled them years later . The title derives from the yellow badge that Sylvia was forced to wear. but nobody knows it .

More than 50 years after the events described in the book , Perlmutter Rozines began telling her story to family members , starting with her son , Roy 's cousin Greg , who told Roy 's sister Julia , who told Roy . Roy tape recorded the conversations between herself and Perlmutter Rozines , and used those conversations as the basis for the book .

Yellow Star is written in free verse , after Roy struggled with how to authentically express Perlmutter Rozines ' experiences to children in a way that did not seem stiff or detached . Roy cites Karen Hesse 's Newbery Medal -winning *Out of the Dust* as an inspiration for the book 's voice . Roy edited Perlmutter Rozines ' various recollections together into chronological order , and penned narrative introductions to each chapter describing the war 's events outside the ghetto . While the book is substantially based on Perlmutter Rozines ' recollections , it is classified as historical fiction since Roy included fictionalized dialogue .

= = Plot = =

In 1939 , the Nazis invaded Poland and forced that nation 's second @-@ largest community of Jews , 270 @, @ 000 strong , into one section of the city of Żódź , which they later walled off to form a ghetto . Before the invasion , Sylvia and her family lived in Żódź . When her father heard rumors of the impending German invasion , the family traveled by buggy to Warsaw . The family was unable to find work or housing in Warsaw , so they returned to Lodz . When the Germans did invade , they forced Sylvia 's family to relocate , along with other Żódź @-@ area Jews , into a segregated section of the city : a ghetto . The book relates Sylvia 's explanations of what life in the ghetto is like : her friends , people around the ghetto , jobs , and her schedule . It relates how Sylvia 's family is forced to sell her doll , leaving her with rags and buttons as her playthings .

When the other Jewish children were sent to Chelmno , Sylvia 's family smuggled the children from cellar to cellar . The book also relates tragic events : one of Sylvia 's friends disappears , and another is killed and burned in an extermination camp . The ghetto is liberated one day shy of Sylvia 's tenth birthday , on January 19 , 1945 . Sylvia , her older sister Dora , and a younger cousin , Isaac , were three of only twelve children who survived .

= = Aftermath = =

An extensive " Author 's Note " details the fate of the people Sylvia interacted with in the Ghetto ,

including how the survivors in her immediate family settled initially in Paris . Afterwards , she emigrated to the United States , Americanized her name , married David Rozines (another Holocaust survivor) , and settled in upstate New York as Sylvia Perlmutter Rozines . As of 2006 , Sylvia , now widowed , had moved to Maryland , and volunteers at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington , D.C. She gave a videotaped interview to the Shoah Foundation , which records the personal recollections of Holocaust survivors .

= = Reception = =

Yellow Star received starred reviews in Publishers Weekly and Booklist . The Publishers Weekly review commended the book for " the lyricism of the narrative , and Sylvia 's credible childlike voice , maturing with each chapter , as she gains further understanding of the events around her " . Another reviewer praised the format , saying the " free @-@ verse format suits the young narrator and subject matter well " and concluding that " Readers searching for an accessible Holocaust novel will be absorbed by this haunting story based on true events " . Library Media Connection 's review praises Roy for her age @-@ appropriate language : " When Sylvia witnesses the shooting of people in the street , author Jennifer Roy captures the fear of the moment without graphic descriptions " . Yellow Star was selected as a " fiction and poetry honor book " in the 2006 Boston Globe @-@ Horn Book Awards , an American Library Association Notable Children 's Book for Older Readers in April 2007 , and won the 2009 William Allen White Children 's Book Award , selected by vote of sixth-through eighth @-@ graders in Kansas .

Yellow Star was made into an audiobook read by Christina Moore in 2007 . A Booklist review noted that " Moore 's ' vroom sput @-@ sput pop ' to mirror Nazi motorcycles , booming bomb sounds , and transition to a scratchy voice to reflect the youngster 's oncoming sickness more than make up for a few technical glitches , including evidence of page turning and distracting breathing sounds . "

Roy , whose other works include children 's educational materials , hosts a variety of Yellow Star " Guides for Teachers and Book Groups " on her website .