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Briar Rose

By Jane Yolen



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A powerful retelling of *Sleeping Beauty* that is "heartbreaking and heartwarming."

An American Library Association "100 Best Books for Teens"

An American Library Association "Best Books for Young Adults"

Ever since she was a child, Rebecca has been enchanted by her grandmother Gemma's stories about Briar Rose. But a promise Rebecca makes to her dying grandmother will lead her on a remarkable journey to uncover the truth of Gemma's astonishing claim: *I am Briar Rose*. A journey that will lead her to unspeakable brutality and horror. But also to redemption and hope.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Windling's Fairy Tale series has produced several excellent fantasy novels inspired by classic fairy tales. This is one of the series's most ambitious efforts, and only a writer as good as Yolen (Sister Light, Sister Dark) could bring it off. Yolen takes the story of Briar Rose (commonly known as Sleeping Beauty) and links it to the Holocaust--a far-from-obvious connection that she makes perfectly convincing. Rebecca Berlin, a young woman who has grown up hearing her grandmother Gemma tell an unusual and frightening version of the Sleeping Beauty legend, realizes when Gemma dies that the fairy tale offers one of the very few clues she has to her grandmother's past. To discover the facts behind Gemma's story, Rebecca travels to Poland, the setting for the book's most engrossing scenes and its most interesting, best-developed characters. By interpolating Gemma's vivid and imaginative story into the larger narrative, Yolen has created an engrossing novel. She handles a difficult subject with finesse in a book that should be required reading for anyone who is tempted to dismiss fantasy as a frivolous genre.

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From Library Journal

A young woman's promise to her dying grandmother leads her on a quest to discover the truth of her own family's mysterious beginnings in this grim retelling of the classic fairy tale "Briar Rose," or "The Sleeping Beauty." In Yolen's modern-day version, the wall of thorns becomes a barbed-wire prison, while the sleeping princess is both victim and heroine. The latest in the "Fairy Tale" series showcases Yolen's skill at transforming the real world into a realm of fantasy. A good selection for adult and YA fantasy collections.

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From Kirkus Reviews

The latest in the Fairy Tales series begins with a provocative premise: retelling the story of Sleeping Beauty as a Holocaust memoir. Rebecca Berlin (Becca), the sweet young heroine, fondly recalls the odd version of Sleeping Beauty that her grandmother (Gemma) often told her and her sisters. Although Gemma always identified strongly with Briar Rose, the sleeping princess, no one had thought it anything but a bedtime story--but when a mysterious box of clippings and photos turns up after Gemma's death, hinting that the accepted version of Gemma's origins is untrue, Becca begins tracing the real story, which bears striking resemblances to Gemma's fairy tale. The trail finally leads Becca to the site of an extermination camp in Poland.... The idea has lots of potential, but Yolen's thin novel fails to integrate the material smoothly. The first half has little tension, since the Holocaust connection is pretty obvious; things pick up once Becca travels to Poland, and the narrative of Gemma's wartime experiences is riveting and moving--but it's all told by a third party at the end of the book; Becca doesn't so much solve the mystery as find a narrator to tell her the story. Meanwhile, overwrought emotions and hackneyed images ("his eyes were so blue she felt cut by them, as if they were ice") don't help, and Becca's relentless goody-goodness grows more than a little annoying. Prolific YA and children's writer Yolen (White Jenna, 1989, etc.) had a good idea here, but didn't follow through. -- *Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Richard Williams:

Reading a book can be one of a lot of task that everyone in the world loves. Do you like reading book thus. There are a lot of reasons why people enjoy it. First reading a guide will give you a lot of new information. When you read a e-book you will get new information simply because book is one of numerous ways to share the information or perhaps their idea. Second, studying a book will make you actually more imaginative. When you examining a book especially hype book the author will bring someone to imagine the story how the personas do it anything. Third, you may share your knowledge to others. When you read this Briar Rose, you are able to tells your family, friends along with soon about yours publication. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a book.

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Damian Woodward:

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