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Song of Survival: Women Interned

By Helen Colijn



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Thrown into the whirlwind of dark forces unleashed with the onset of World War II, a young woman, Helen Colijn, her sisters, and father flee the oncoming Japanese army. Helen Colijn's account of her wartime experiences is a window into a largely overlooked dimension of World War II — the imprisonment of women and children in Southeast Asia by the Japanese and how these prisoners of war responded to their dire circumstances. The conditions were terrible. Food was scarce; medicine unavailable. Held in captivity for three and a half years, more that a third of the women in Helen's camp died of disease or starvation. Yet their courage, faith, resiliency, ingenuity, and camaraderie provide us with enduring lessons on living. Though the prisoners had no musical instruments, they had their voices, and from memory scored classical works for symphony and piano. The music that helped sustain them while in captivity is a lasting and precious gift of these women to a world that has witnessed far too much war.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Helen Colijn was a 20-year-old Dutch woman living with her parents on a small island near Borneo when the Japanese invaded in 1941. Shipwrecked, she and her two younger sisters were captured by Japanese soldiers and shuffled from concentration camp to concentration camp for the duration of World War II. This book chronicles their personal travails and the horrible sufferings of the British and Dutch women with whom they were interned. Perhaps more significantly, it tells the remarkable story of Margaret Dryburgh, a Presbyterian missionary who gave her fellow prisoners a means to survive spiritually: the vocal orchestra. Working from memory, she reconstructed the "Largo" from Dvorak's *Symphony No. 9 in E minor*, and works by Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Ravel, and Grainger--and taught them to a chorus of prisoners. Even the often-brutal Japanese guards were moved by the concerts, Colijn reports. Although this book often glosses over the horrors, it is a moving account of some remarkable women and the music that sustained them.

From Library Journal

Colijn tells the remarkable story of her family's internment by the Japanese in the Dutch East Indies during World War II. Her account grips the reader from the very first pages, relating the events leading up to the family's capture, the tragedy that internment brought, and ultimately their release at the end of the war. The family was separated in captivity, but Colijn and her two sisters were able to remain together with other Dutch, Australian, and English women. Reflections on the hardships of prison life are sobering: Internees relied on a variety of rituals, such as lectures and language study, to carry them through their darkest days. A vocal orchestra was formed to help distract and comfort all involved from the horror they were living through. The "Captives' Hymn," composed by one of the internees, is a testimonial to the faith the women had. *Song of Survival* will bring a new dimension to the courage that was a hallmark of World War II. For public libraries. --Dorothy Lilly, Grosse Pointe North H.S. Lib., Mich.
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Review

"Her account grips the reader from the very first pages." -- *Library Journal*

"... engrossing and inspiring story." -- *Parade*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Laverne Jackson:

What do you concentrate on book? It is just for students because they are still students or the item for all people in the world, the actual best subject for that? Merely you can be answered for that concern above. Every person has diverse personality and hobby for every single other. Don't to be forced someone or something that they don't would like do that. You must know how great along with important the book *Song of Survival: Women Interned*. All type of book would you see on many solutions. You can look for the internet resources or other social media.

Stewart Ramirez:

This Song of Survival: Women Interned book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is actually information inside this publication incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This kind of Song of Survival: Women Interned without we know teach the one who reading it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't be worry Song of Survival: Women Interned can bring any time you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even cellphone. This Song of Survival: Women Interned having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not experience uninterested in reading.

Sarah Luis:

Song of Survival: Women Interned can be one of your starter books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that could increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to set every word into pleasure arrangement in writing Song of Survival: Women Interned however doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one of it. This great information could drawn you into completely new stage of crucial thinking.

Phyllis Thompson:

This Song of Survival: Women Interned is great publication for you because the content that is full of information for you who all always deal with world and get to make decision every minute. This kind of book reveal it details accurately using great arrange word or we can claim no rambling sentences within it. So if you are read this hurriedly you can have whole facts in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but challenging core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having Song of Survival: Women Interned in your hand like getting the world in your arm, data in it is not ridiculous a single. We can say that no reserve that offer you world throughout ten or fifteen tiny right but this e-book already do that. So , this really is good reading book. Hey Mr. and Mrs. hectic do you still doubt that will?

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