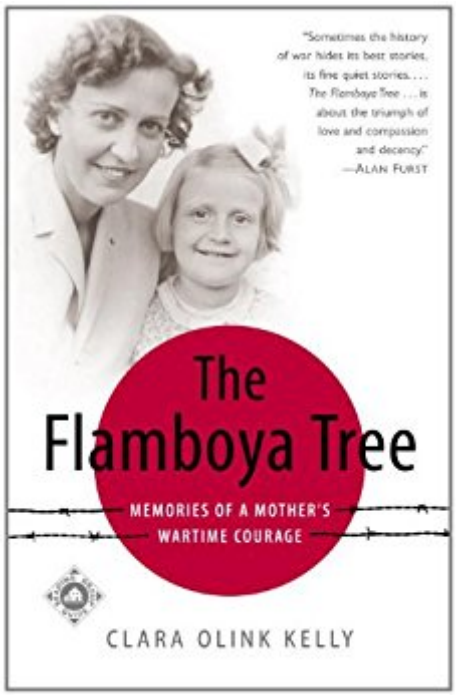
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The Flamboya Tree: Memories Of A Mother's Wartime Courage



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Synopsis

Ã¢â ¬Å“The Flamboya Tree is a fascinating story that will leave the reader informed about a missing piece of the World War II experience, and in awe of one familyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s survival.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Elizabeth M. Norman, author of We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped on Bataan by the Japanese Ã¢â ¬Å“It is a well-known fact that war, any war, is senseless and degrading. When innocent people are brought into that war because they happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, it becomes incomprehensible. Java, 1942, was such a place and time, and we were those innocent people.Ã¢â ¬Â•Fifty years after the end of World War II, Clara Olink Kelly sat down to write a memoir that is both a fierce and enduring testament to a motherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s courage and a poignant record of an often overlooked chapter of the war.As the fighting in the Pacific spread, four-year-old Clara Olink and her family found their tranquil, pampered lives on the beautiful island of Java torn apart by the invasion of Japanese troops. ClaraÃ¢â ¬â„¢s father was taken away, forced to work on the Burma railroad. For Clara, her mother, and her two brothers, the younger one only six weeks old, an insistent knock on the door ended all hope of escaping internment in a concentration camp. For nearly four years, they endured starvation, filth-ridden living conditions, sickness, and the danger of violence from their prison guards. Clara credits her mother with their survival: Even in the most perilous of situations, ClaraÃ¢â ¬â„¢s mother never compromised her beliefs, never admitted defeat, and never lost her courage. Her resilience sustained her three children through their frightening years in the camp.Told through the eyes of a young Clara, who was eight at the end of her familyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s ordeal, The Flamboya Tree portrays her motherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s tenacity, the power of hope and humor, and the buoyancy of a childÃ¢â ¬â„¢s spirit. A painting of a flamboya treeÃ¢â ¬â •a treasured possession of the familyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s former lifeÃ¢â ¬â •miraculously survived the surprise searches by the often brutal Japanese soldiers and every last-minute flight. Just as her mother carried this painting through the years of imprisonment and the life that followed, so Clara carries her motherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s unvanquished spirit through all of her experiences and into the readerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s heart.From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My parents lived through this as well...they are all amazing for having survived while remaining positive and hopeful

really well-written memoir of an unknown (to me) instance of WWII. What these women & families went through! That they survived! Amazing people, all of them.

This book left me with such a mixture of emotions. Very hard to understand the cruelty of mankind.There is so much written, etc. about Hitler, his concentration camps & wartime atrocities, I had no idea that the Japanese had acted in a similar manner. How does anyone get to the point of being completely void of empathy?The strength & love of a mother - amazing.

Sadly few have learnt or understood what transpired in the Dutch East Indies during WW2--the proof is the opening sentence by her grandmother...many still today are ignorant and would rather forget.Bravo Clara Olink Kelly for having the courage to write and document your story. It is a wonderful testament to your mother and her courage to keep her children safe and sound in the most unbelieveable conditions. Some passages are difficult but must be read. Many thanks for a wonderful eye-opening story.

We have heard so much of the European Arena but this story brings to light atrocities that have not been spoken of. What a story of bravery and motherhood. Thank you Mrs. Kelly for sharing this.

Another part of history that so few of us know. Really shows the atrocities perpetrated by the Japanese during WWII. Also, subtly points out how colonial powers treated indigenous people.

I loved this book, it was very well written .The bravery of this mother was amazing.The daugher who was only 5 upon entering theconcentration camp with her mother and siblingstold her story at our ladies luncheon at church.She brought with her the "Flamboya Tree" picture.This book started me reading many more World War 11stories..This was my favorite

A real heartbreaker beautifully told

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