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Uprising



Synopsis

The fire at the Triangle Waist Company in New York City, which claimed the lives of 146 young immigrant workers, is one of the worst disasters since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, and the disaster, which brought attention to the labor movement in America, is part of the curriculum in classrooms throughout the country. Told from alternating points of view, this historical novel draws upon the experiences of three very different young women: Bella, who has just emigrated from Italy and doesn't speak a word of English; Yetta, a Russian immigrant and crusader for labor rights; and Jane, the daughter of a wealthy businessman. Bella and Yetta work together at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory under terrible conditions--their pay is docked for even the slightest mistake, the bosses turn the clocks back so closing time is delayed, and they are locked into the factory all day, only to be frisked before they leave at night to make sure they haven't stolen any shirtwaists. When the situation worsens, Yetta leads the factory's effort to strike, and she meets Jane on the picket line. Jane, who feels trapped by the limits of her own sheltered existence, joins a group of high-society women who have taken an interest in the strike as a way of supporting women's suffrage. Through a series of twists and turns, the three girls become fast friends--and all of them are in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory on March 25, 1911, the day of the fateful fire. In a novel that puts a human face on the tragedy, Margaret Peterson Haddix has created a sweeping, forceful tale that will have readers guessing until the last page who--if anyone--survives.

Book Information

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Paperback: 352 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (76 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,958 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Â Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Emigration & Immigration #5 in Â Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > United States > 20th Century #26 in Â Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

I'm not quite sure where to begin with this one. Haddix is an author who I love and trust--a book of hers is one I snatch up and adore (and devour in an hour or so). Now, I tend to avoid historical fiction, but this was Haddix...so I picked it up at the library. The strength of this novel was its characters. Many historical novels I've read (admission--I like the genre more than I first let on) are a little disjointed, because there are key 'real' events that need to be woven in. This one bore a similarity to those, but our three protagonists were a wonderful, wonderful thread that held this package tight. Meet Bella. Immigrant from Italy--she knows nothing of American concepts--who is trying to save up money to send home to her starving family. She is naive but passionate, fiery and kind. Thanks to her cousin, she now has a job at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Meet Yetta. She's the younger sister, and a Russian immigrant. She's been here a little while, also working at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. Yetta is a miniature fireball--especially as the novel goes on. Her heart beats with the rhythm of /strike...strike...strike/. Meet Jane. She's a society darling who isn't quite comfortable in her position...not that she knows it yet. As she learns of the newly-striking workers at the Triangle Factory, she comes to know Bella and Yetta...We, as readers, are immediately cheering on these three oh-so-different girls on, to become friends, to escape society, to save their families, to find romance, to /survive/. Haddix does a wonderful job of making us love them. And that brings me to what I found as the most haunting and wonderful part of the story. Reading this, the threat of the fire is hanging over our heads.

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