

# R&B: Read and Blog

A BOOK REVIEW BLOG, COMMENTS, THOUGHTS, DISCUSSIONS AND COMPARISONS OF REVIEWED BOOKS WELCOMED. IF YOU ENJOY MY REVIEWS, I INVITE YOU TO FOLLOW ME (SEE LEFT COLUMN). I ALSO HAVE A PAGE WHERE I PUT MY THOUGHTS, ACCESSIBLE BY CLICKING ON MY PYGMY OWL UNDER MY FOLLOWERS IN THE LEFT COLUMN.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2010

## Maps and Shadows by Krysia Jopek



Although this book is a novel, it is a story told from the hearts of four people of a family of five, beginning with the brutal Soviet invasion of Poland, essentially the first day of World War II, followed by the Germans and the subsequent deportation of its former citizens, this book is an eye-opener to what it is like to have no country. For Poland has disappeared from the globe before and is about to be wiped off the map again.

The story is so terrible and the writing so lyrical, the juxtaposition emphasizes both the interrupted and horror-filled lives with the beauty of the writing. This book is about a part of the war that is not often told.

This was a fitting way to tell it. I learned a lot from this small book that larger tomes never told me. Each person, except the youngest, tells their story separately throughout the book. Even though the family is separated several times, you know it is always together in their minds, hopes and dreams. They share a past, present, and a hope for the future even when hope seems lost.

Interspersed throughout the book are poems, beautiful poems. *Krysia Jopek* through her poems and through her novel shows how very talented she is. I am thankful for the opportunity to "know" this family and the hardships faced by the Polish people as they are moved like pawns from the frozen bleakness of Siberia, and thrust into the equally bleak heat of Africa. It is a wonder that anyone survived. And, of course, many did not.

This is a wonderful book of a little-known time at the beginning and running through the entire time of the war. So much could not be said through the ensuing years because of the traumatic events some remember too clearly, and some have put away somewhere where they hope they will never recall it again. I definitely recommend this book on several levels, especially for the writing.

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<http://nightreader-blog.blogspot.com/2010/10/maps-and-shadows-by-krysia-jopek.html>