



Seeking Alice: A Novel

Camilla Trinchieri

Excelsior Editions (Jun 1, 2016)

Softcover \$19.95 (230pp)

978-1-4384-6128-1

This novel blends a deeply emotional story with an environment that is captivating in its danger and complexity.

In Camilla Trinchieri's *Seeking Alice*, World War II is a force that makes it difficult for families to stay together. With a careful hand, Trinchieri paints a realistic picture of how love, betrayal, loss, and guilt shape one family in a period when the parameters of daily life shifted constantly.

Alice and Marco are living in Prague with their three children when WWII breaks out. As an Italian diplomat, Marco must toe the Fascist Party line in order to protect his family, but his American wife, Alice, struggles to hide her disgust for the Nazi leaders who come to dinner. As the war continues, the family moves from Prague to Rome, with members separating off one by one, until Alice makes a desperate decision to cross the border into Switzerland with her two daughters. Fifteen years after the war, on the verge of becoming a mother herself, Susie feels compelled to find out what really happened to her mother that pivotal night.

Told through the alternating viewpoints of Alice in 1941 and her daughter, Susie, in 1956, the novel focuses on the complicated roles of women, magnifying those roles with the caustic effects of war. "Wartime is woman's time," says Alice's friend, Ersilia. In many ways she is right. Women must largely go it alone, finding freedoms they hadn't had before and dealing with added burdens, too. Trinchieri deftly shows that balancing roles is difficult, as events affect Alice as a wife and conflict with her needs as an individual, resulting in unintended consequences for her children. Such complications are related evenly with the story showcasing the good, the bad, and the heartbreaking without passing narrative judgment. The characters do enough judging themselves.

This novel blends a deeply emotional story with an environment that is captivating in its danger and complexity. The pace builds slowly over time, until Alice and her daughters' pulse-quickenning attempt to escape over the border into Switzerland. *Seeking Alice* is a fully engaging story that doesn't let go until the final page.

CHRISTINE CANFIELD (Fall 2016)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.