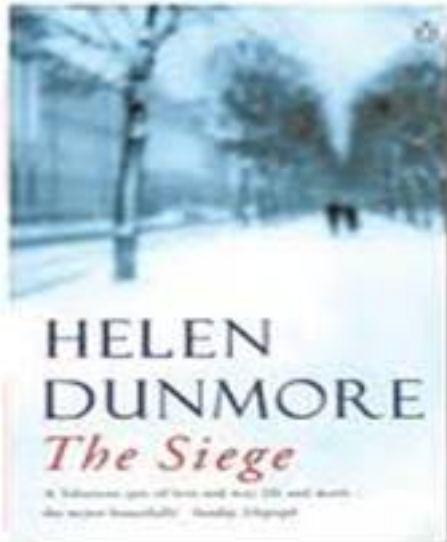

Helen Dunmore

The Siege (The Siege #1)



Title: The Siege (The Siege #1)

Author: Helen Dunmore

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Description

Helen Dunmore follows the lives of four ordinary people, united by love, trying to survive the siege of Leningrad in her powerful historical novel *The Siege. Leningrad, September 1941*. Hitler orders the German forces to surround the city at the start of the most dangerous, desperate winter in its history. For two pairs of lovers - Anna and Andrei, Anna's novelist father and banned actress Marina - the siege becomes a battle for survival. They will soon discover what it is like to be so hungry you boil shoe leather to make soup, so cold you burn furniture and books. But this is not just a struggle to exist, it is also a fight to keep the spark of hope alive... *The Siege* is a brilliantly imagined novel of war and the wounds it inflicts on ordinary people's lives, and a profoundly moving celebration of love, life and survival. 'Remarkable, affecting...there are few more interesting stories than this; and few writers who could have told it better' Rachel Cusk, *Daily Telegraph* 'Literary writing of the highest order set against a background of suffering so intimately reconstructed it is hard to believe that Dunmore was not there' Richard Overy, *Sunday Telegraph* 'Utterly convincing. A deeply moving account of two love stories in terrible circumstances. The story of their struggle to survive appears simple, as all great literature should. . . a world-class novel' Antony Beevor, *The Times* Novelist and poet Helen Dunmore has achieved great critical acclaim since publishing her first adult novel, the McKitterick Prize winning, *Zennor in Darkness*. Her novels, *Counting the Stars*, *Your Blue-Eyed Boy*, *With Your Crooked Heart*, *Burning Bright*, *House of Orphans*, *Mourning Ruby*, *A Spell of Winter*, and *Talking to the Dead*, and her collection of short stories *Love of Fat Men* are all published by Penguin. This edition includes the first chapter of *Betrayal*, the sequel to *The Siege*.

Insightful reviews

Robin Falvey: I wouldn't say I exactly enjoyed this book, that's not the right word. But it does demonstrate a real mastery of language. Helen Dunmore really brings to life the sense of claustrophobia, the closing of the net around Leningrad.

The story of the immense suffering of the people trapped inside the city is beautifully told without ever becoming morbid. A wonderful story of struggle, I felt myself willing the protagonist on, urging her and her loved ones not to give up.

I live in a caravan with no electric and just a wood burner for heat, and though it's nothing like the conditions experienced by the family in the book, the story really chimed with me on that level. The rushing home to cook dinner before it gets dark; reading by candle light; squatting on the floor in the early morning lighting the wood burner, my breath steaming in the cold air. And more than anything the fatigue at the end of the long winter and the first smell of spring - ah the relief!

A great read, I highly recommend it.

Chris Demer: This is a wonderful story of love amid deprivation and war during the siege of Leningrad. All the more meaningful because I have visited St. Petersburg (Leningrad) and taken

the walking tour of the siege.

The Author exquisitely describes the life there - in the summer at the dacha and the planting, writing, drawing. And then the return to the city and the growing awareness that the Germans have surrounded it, constantly shelling, but more importantly cutting off the food supply to millions of people. The death toll that winter was unimaginable-nearly half the city's population. She graphically describes the cold, barren landscape, the piles of snow and frozen bodies left where they fell, and most of all the constant, gnawing hunger. In the end many are saved by the valiant transport across frozen Lake Ladoga of food supplies. But not everyone survives even then...

Highly recommended for the story and the history.

Lara: As I read this book on my couch after dinner, drinking a beer and enjoying the warm summer night, I found myself tensing against a monstrous cold that had become so physical that I couldn't unfeel it despite my knowledge that it was only words on paper.

In *The Siege*, Dunmore weaves together the huge and small stories of the siege of Leningrad in a way that reminded me of *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Book Thief*. It's very effective; the grand descriptions of the land and the cold create a mythical world, and the straightforward lives of the Levin family make that world real and terrible. It was sometimes hard to read, especially while cradling my newborn baby, but so humanely observant that I couldn't put it down.

Dunmore's writing--especially her verbs--astonished me throughout. I want to read everything she's written. (But first I'm going to read *City of Thieves*, at Roses's recommendation, for what looks to be a very different angle on the same damn siege.)

Christiane: It took me decades to get into this tale or even then i used to be by no means totally absorbed by way of it.Maybe it used to be the style, normally straightforward, now and then fantastically poetic, yet oddly detached. much more likely it used to be the characters who remained stereotypical through the book. Even the compulsory love affair that has a tendency to plague books of historic fiction wasn't in a position to breathe lifestyles into the tale because the younger doctor, Andrei, was once much more colourless than the remainder of the personages. even though the e-book supplies an perception into the horrors of the Stalin years and the affliction of the Leningraders through the German siege it used to be too flat and predictable to depart a deep impact on me.

Tom: learn it in summer.Very fascinating (chick-flick) standpoint at the horrendous siege of Leningrad. probably a piece slow, by way of war-book standards, yet that's since it is ready the people, and non-combatants (if that observe has any which means within the twentieth century) at that. i discovered it oddly vivid, waking up chilly and hungry in the midst of the night, regardless of hot temps and an entire belly.Tom

Shelley Fearn: Why does this e-book simply have a 3.87 rating? this is often a tremendous story. Anna, a 22 yr outdated woman, strives to maintain her father, her father's former lover, and her brother alive through the siege of Leningrad in 1941. i do not believe that i have to provide the complete tale away. millions of individuals starved in the course of that first wintry

weather whilst town was once bring to a halt by way of the German army. Outside of the horrors that the electorate of Leningrad endured, Dunmore's writing is apparent and precise. She tells the tale with out sentimentality whereas sporting you alongside as you're riveted via either the tale and the prose. stick with up with the sequel, "The Betrayal" The Betrayal. (I suggested either to a employees member and he or she beloved the sequel even larger than the 1st so learn them both.)

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