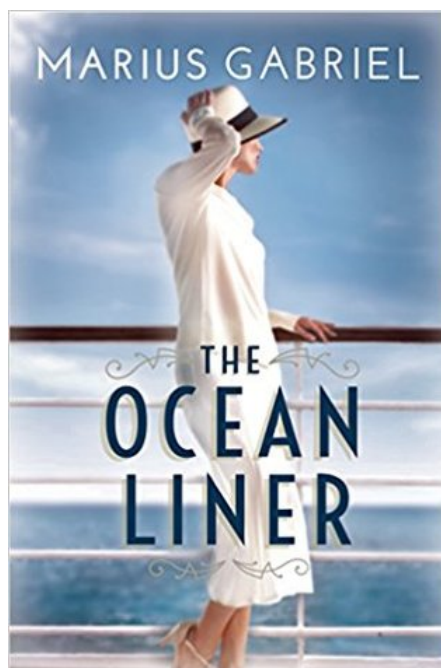




The Ocean Liner

Marius Gabriel

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The Ocean Liner Marius Gabriel

As war engulfs Europe, 1,500 passengers risk everything to find a brighter future.

Cousins Masha and Rachel Morgenstern board the luxury liner the SS Manhattan bound for New York, desperate to escape the concentration camps that claimed the rest of their family. America offers a safe haven, but to reach it they must survive a hazardous Atlantic crossing.

Among their fellow passengers fleeing the war, each with their own conflicts, secrets and surprises, are the composer Igor Stravinsky, making a new start after a decade of tragedy, and Rose Kennedy, determined to keep her four children from harm. Particularly worrying to Rose is her daughter Rosemary, a vivacious but troubled woman whose love for a Californian musician may derail her family's political ambitions. And then there's young Thomas, a Nazi with a secret...

But, under the waves, the Manhattan is being stalked by a German U-boat. Will any of those aboard the ocean liner ever achieve their dream of a new life in America?

The Ocean Liner Details

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From Reader Review The Ocean Liner for online ebook

Connie Fischer says

Le Havre - 1939

Masha (20) and Rachel (23) Morgenstern are German cousins and are aboard the American ship, The Manhattan, headed to the U.S. They realize that the composer, Igor Stravinsky, is boarding the ship, being helped along by Katharine Wolff, an American. Many of the passengers are Jews fleeing the Nazis. Also onboard the ship is Mr. Toscanini, a maestro who has conducted orchestras playing Stravinsky's works. As the ship is having to accept more than its capacity, many passengers discover that they will have to share their cabins with others. Stravinsky has been paired with a young German man, Thomas Konig, dressed in a Nazi uniform.

Southampton

The Manhattan is taking aboard some members of the American Kennedy family. The father, Joe Kennedy, is the U.S. Ambassador to England and Jack Kennedy has come to talk to and comfort the families of The Athenia, a ship that went down after being torpedoed by a German submarine. Jack's sister, Rosemary (20) adores her brother and looks to him to protect her from their mother's constant criticism. Rosemary has spent many years in special schools. She cannot grasp math and has been diagnosed as retarded. The family fears that someone will take advantage of her.

As the ship slowly finishes taking on all the passengers that it possibly can, the voyage to the U.S. begins. We follow Stravinsky who is suffering from tuberculosis but is determined to write more music. Masha and Rachel have both seen their families taken by the Nazis and have also left behind their loves. Thomas is a kind person who is quite taken with Masha but Rachel hates him because he is a Nazi.

The story also focuses on Rosemary Kennedy and a man named Cubby Hubbard with whom she has fallen in love. Her mother is intent that they stay apart because Rosemary is a bit promiscuous and she doesn't want her to get pregnant.

Oh my what a fabulous book! This is what a historical novel is supposed to be. Real people in history are part of this story and we learn many things about them. The nail-biting encounters with German submarines made me hold my breath to see what would happen. I cannot say enough good things about this book. I loved it and hope many people will read it.

Copy provided by NetGalley in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Sharlene says

Historical fiction set during WWII and takes place on the ocean liner Manhattan as it sails to New York City. I enjoyed the stories of the cousins Masha and Rachel Morgenstern. Their is an interesting cast of characters on board and learning about their stories was intriguing. I would recommend this book to friends and give it a 4 star rating.

Jo Barton says

The story opens in Le Havre, in 1939, and as war starts to infiltrate into Europe, the luxury liner the SS Manhattan takes on passengers who are bound for New York and a safer way of life. All of them have stories to tell and secrets to keep, some of which are revealed even before the ship heads out into the Atlantic.

The story focuses on several of the passengers, some are famous, as the composer, Igor Stravinsky who is fleeing Europe for reasons of his own, and also Rose Kennedy, the stern matriarch of the American Kennedy clan heads home to the United States, taking her younger children, whilst leaving her husband, Joseph, and many secrets, behind in London. Cousins Masha and Rachel Morgenstern are also bound for New York, they are almost penniless except for a hidden stash of gemstones, which they have smuggled out of Germany when they were forced to flee for their lives.

However, even aboard ship safety cannot be guaranteed as deep in the shadowy depths of the ocean a German U-boat stealthily stalks the Manhattan.

This clever mix of using people known to history, there's even a young Elizabeth Taylor on board with her parents, and putting them alongside fictional characters works well and helps to place the story in a specific time frame. I enjoyed getting to know the characters, particularly Rose Kennedy whose formidable personality intimidated everyone she came into contact with on board ship.

The story evolves quite slowly and is perhaps more character focused than dramatic, however, the inclusion of the events on board the German U-boat are rather more daring and the deadly nature of their intent adds some darkness to the story.

The Ocean Liner is a fascinating snap shot of a particular moment in history and the author has done a commendable job of bringing this time alive in the imagination.

Debbie says

I was sucked right into this book from the very beginning. It included such a great cast of characters with great scenes. I really felt like I was riding on that boat and that the people were real.

The name dropping was off the charts in this book. From a composer to a conductor to a child wanna be actress and even a future president's family. It had everything: romance, adventure, action, all set during a world war voyage across the Atlantic. The mutiny on the German sub was especially tense.

For me, the author did a great job making the characters and the story come to life.

Thanks to Lake Union Publishing and Net Galley for providing me with a free e-galley in exchange for an honest, unbiased review.

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

To be reviewed over at Fresh Fiction!

Holly B says

I loved the setting of this novel. The luxury ocean liner, the USS Manhattan was headed to New York and was packed with 1,500 passengers, including some famous ones (Rose Kennedy and her daughter).

It is 1939 and cousins Masha and Rachel Morgenstern were among the passengers who were desperate to escape the concentration camps that their families were forced into to. Thomas is a young Nazi boy who is also traveling with them and his secrets will be revealed along the way.

While I enjoyed this story, it was too slow for me. It was emotional and I was nervous and wanted the passengers to survive the trip. My favorite story was the two cousins and had compassion for them. The pace just did not progress and seemed to stall too many times. I would lose interest and just want to get to the parts that interested me.

Well written and has some interesting characters, but in the end fell short. Too slow paced and not "enough" happening (for this reader). Thanks to Netgalley for this ARC.

Debbie says

Many lives intertwine when very different people board the SS Manhattan to escape war torn Europe for a better life. One of my favorite historical fiction settings, I was really excited to delve into this novel. However, I felt the story fell short in many areas.

Over 1500 passengers are aboard the liner, 'Manhattan,' with the overcrowded ship heading for America. Those on board include Jewish cousins, Rachel and Masha, who are hoping to find safety, a young Nazi with a secret and some 'real' characters, including Arturo Toscanini, Igor Stravinsky and Mrs Joseph Kennedy and three of her children; Rosemary, Patricia and six year old, Teddy.

I enjoyed the factual information out forth in this story. It was told well and with great passion. I also loved the storyline of the two cousins traveling to America to escape capture. Their journey was really emotional and I felt a strong connection to their outcome.

What I didn't enjoy was how long it took the story to get going. I had to keep pushing forward even though I felt the story lagging in many places.

Joan Foss says

What a disappointment. Is this his first book? Historical information inaccurate and not vetted by the publisher. For example, Queen Elizabeth was NOT vaulted into becoming Queen when her Uncle abdicated. No one could have had "lunch" with the Queen in 1936. Her Father was King at that time. Some Kennedy information inaccurate. A book that tries to be something it isn't. Not a historical novel, not a romantic novel, not a message/political novel. Enough said.

Deanna Sletten says

This is the fourth novel I've read by Marius Gabriel and I have enjoyed all of them. In this story, he takes us on a journey across the ocean on the luxury liner, the SS Manhattan, on its way to America with an interesting cast of characters who are both real and imagined. We meet cousins Masha and Rachel, escaping Nazi Germany, hoping for a better life. There is also a famous conductor, a renowned composer, Rose Kennedy and her children, including young Ted, and an aging film star, plus so many more. They each have a story, and Gabriel manages to weave each character's tale into one magnificent novel.

Intriguing and beautifully written. You will not want to put this story down.

Karen says

I received this from netgalley.com in exchange for a review.

Cousins Masha and Rachel Morgenstern and many others, some well known, board the luxury liner the SS Manhattan bound for New York. America offers a safe haven, but to reach it they must survive a hazardous Atlantic crossing.

Overall, it was interesting but there were so many different stories crammed into the timeline, the story moved slow.

3?

Belinda Carvalho says

This historical novel is a real 2.5-3 stars in terms of literary quality but still manages to be quite compulsively readable and interesting . Especially as you get towards the end (even though it drags for a bit, when you get to the half way point the liner has not left Cobh!) . I think this would be a great holiday read. It is the tale of varying characters, many famous and wonderful, on an American liner leaving Europe in 1940 and there is all the accompanying tensions of the time : world War 2, refugees, fleeing Europe and the threat of being sunk by a submarine. I was, astonished at the end that the famous characters on the Manhattan really did cross the Atlantic on the same ship. Stravinsky's story was my favourite but the story of Rosemary Kennedy was strikingly sad and intriguing .

I was attracted to this book after seeing a review here and also after seeing the Ocean Liners exhibition at the V&A museum in London. So many details from the exhibition are part of the research for the book and I really enjoyed this element. I may have downloaded The Designer by the author too to read on my holidays. All of his work is available free on Prime at the moment.

Susan says

I have always had a soft spot for novels set on ships, so this had obvious appeal for me. It is 1939 and Europe is in flux, with everyone trying to flee in different directions. Over 1500 passengers are aboard the liner,

‘Manhattan,’ with the overcrowded ship heading for America. Those on board include Jewish cousins, Rachel and Masha, who are hoping to find safety, a young Nazi with a secret and some ‘real’ characters, including Arturo Toscanini, Igor Stravinsky and Mrs Joseph Kennedy and three of her children; Rosemary, Patricia and six year old, Teddy.

Although just getting on board the ship was a challenge for many of the characters, there are more dangers ahead. Ships have been torpedoed and these include passenger ships – shadowing the liner is a U-boat, U-113, led by Kapitan-leutnant Jurgen Todt.

This is an interesting novel, with a good cast of characters. By far the most interesting story to me was that of twenty one year old Rosemary Kennedy, described by her family as ‘vulnerable.’ Although he is warned off by the Kennedy clan, a musician, with the implausible name of Cubby Hubbard, wants to marry her and their story is a moving one. Overall, though, this is a fairly standard historical novel. I received a copy of the this book from the publisher, via NetGalley, for review. Rated 3.5.

Tripfiction says

A voyage to a new life in AMERICA

As WW2 breaks out in Europe, the SS Manhattan is preparing to set sail for New York. Chock full of passengers who are trying to escape the mayhem that is rapidly unfolding. The ship leaves Bremen, and picks up passengers in Le Havre and Southampton – before heading to Cobh in Ireland and out into the Atlantic. Many are Jews fleeing in front of the Nazis, many others simply fear for their lives if they stay in Europe. And they are a pretty disparate collection. The lead protagonists are cousins, Masha and Rachel Morgenstern, leaving everything behind them to start a new life. Masha has abandoned her family (at their instigation) to a concentration camp in order to make her escape, Rachel has been abandoned by hers following a stain on her character. The ship is full of famous persons – the composer Igor Stravinsky, the conductor Arturo Toscanini, Rose Kennedy taking her children back to safety in the States leaving her ambassador husband to follow, and Fanny Ward the indestructible (and aging) ingénue and film star. And then there is 18 year-old Thomas König – obliged to share a cabin with Stravinsky because of the overcrowding on the ship. Perhaps there is more to him than appears apparent?

The American (and clearly labelled as such) ship is stalked by a U-Boat as she heads out to The Western Approaches. Will the German captain choose to attack her, or will his own crew point out the folly and ‘dissuade’ him? What will happen to both vessels? A dramatic mid Ocean clash.

The last part of the book is set in the States (OK, the SS Manhattan did make it through safely...) and traces the history of the passengers well into the last decades of the 20th Century. It is in equal measure both touching and fascinating as their stories develop.

The Ocean Liner is not a true story, but it is based on an amalgam of true stories – greatly embellished by the author. Stravinsky, Toscanini, Rose Kennedy, and Fanny Ward all made it to America by sea as the war in Europe began. There are details in Marius Gabriel’s portraits of each that ring very true. Hard to tell sometimes where fiction takes over from fact. For example the story of Rose Kennedy’s eldest daughter, Rosemary’s, battle with mental health and the cruel treatment she received is true – but Rosemary’s passionate affair with Cubby Hubbard is imagined. The truth is woven in alongside perfectly possible embellishments. The relationship between Stravinsky and Thomas König is believable as is Thomas’

infatuation with Masha Morgenstern. It is a device that I thought might be really difficult to pull off – but Marius Gabriel certainly makes it work. But it is always worth remembering that The Ocean Liner is a work of fiction rather than a history text book...!

Highly recommended.

Joy H. says

Added 6/7/18. (Published March 20th 2018 by Lake Union Publishing)

The title sounded interesting. I'm currently reading Gabriel's *_The Designer_*.

This week, June 7, 2018, I started reading this book.

I paid \$5.99 to Amazon for the e-book and \$1.99 to Audible for the Audible version.

So I'm reading the book in 4 ways:

1. Reading on my Fire Tablet
 2. Reading on my "Kindle for PC"
 3. Reading on my "Kindle Cloud Reader"
- and
4. Listening on my Fire Tablet.

Like *_The Designer_*, the book seems very drawn out, with many different characters, fictional and historical.

There's a lot of dialogue. Some of it is interesting. Some of it is boring.

However, the book is keeping my attention.

Bonnye Reed says

GNAB Marius Gabriel brings us another excellent historical novel, peopled with a handful of history's most memorial personages and more folks we also would have liked to have known. These pages bring to life the build up to war in Europe in 1939 with all it's angst and sense of impending doom, as travelers rush to reach home, wherever it might be, by whatever means possible.

These characters, whether 'famous' or fiction, all reflect the humanity and humility that is the best of us, and the basic need in all of us to reach that safe port called home. This was a wonderful trip through time and space, a book I could not put down. It is a book I will want to read again in the long, loosely woven days of winter.

I received a free electronic copy of this historical novel from Netgalley, Marius Gabriel, and Lake Union Publishing in exchange for an honest review. Thank you all for sharing your hard work with me.

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