



Trapped in Russia: An American Family's Struggle to Survive

Karen Wardamasky Bobrow

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On a December evening in 1931, a twelve-year-old boy leaves his familiar life behind as he and his family sail out of New York Harbor on the first leg of their journey to the Soviet Union. His immigrant parents joined thousands of Americans who had been lured by the promises of plentiful jobs in a country not affected by the Great Depression. It proved to be a tragic decision. Years later that boy would tell his children a few stories about his youth, but no one asked him about the details of those years living in Russia. After his death, his daughter began to piece together the puzzle of her father's life. She made it her mission to learn what horrors his family suffered in Russia and the role her dad played in bringing them home. Genealogy research was the key to unlocking the story of her unusual family history. "Trapped in Russia" is the story of that boy, Marty, written by his daughter, Karen. It was originally published as "Do Svidanya Dad."

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Ellie Holmes says

A Special Book

Every now and then you stumble across a book which far exceeds your expectations of it. Do Svidanya Dad Tracing the Story of an American Family Trapped in the USSR by Karen Wardamasky-Bubrow is one of those books. For anyone interested in genealogy or mid twentieth century history, American and Russian history particularly, this book is for you.

The book starts as a letter to a father who has passed away taking with him so much family history. Time and again you hear of family members who never found the time to ask the crucial questions before it was too late and time robbed them of all opportunity. Karen found herself in just such a situation and decided to turn her sadness into a fitting tribute to her father's extraordinary life and salve her conscience along the way.

The book includes the aforesaid letters, a social history and factional sections – a recreation of how things might have been based upon the facts discovered. It makes for a fascinating read. Karen has proven herself to be a fantastic genealogist. Her diligent persistence was rewarded time and time again as new nuggets of information were discovered by her, proving the old adage that the harder you work, the luckier you get.

I found it a gripping and sometimes emotional read about a period of history that I knew little about. I will look out for more books by this author and should she turn her hand to fiction, I am sure she will make a success of that too.