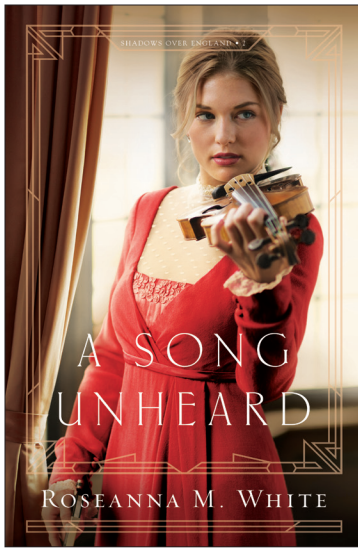




QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH ROSEANNA M. WHITE



A Song Unheard

SHADOWS OVER ENGLAND #2
by Roseanna M. White

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1. Where did you get the idea for *A Song Unheard*?

When I was researching Great Britain during World War I for the first book in the SHADOWS OVER ENGLAND series, *A Name Unknown*, I came across information about the hundreds of thousands of Belgian refugees that flooded the country in the first few months of the war—and specifically about an orchestra composed of Belgium’s best musicians. Two sisters from Wales, Margaret and Gwendoline Davies, devised the idea of funding a refugee orchestra. They actually sent men into Belgium soon after it was invaded by the German army to offer the musicians a safe haven in Wales during the war. They wanted to help provide for them, and also to bring some culture to their small neighborhood. As soon as I read about that, I was intrigued!

2. Both your hero and heroine in this book are violinists. Do you have a musical background?

I do, yes—though not on the violin. I’ve been playing the piano since I was seven. I also learned clarinet during school, for the band, and organ in high school. I’ve been the pianist/organist at one church or another since I was fourteen. So I had a lot of musical knowledge and background to pull from when writing this story, and just needed some input from a violinist to make sure my details about that instrument were correct.

3. What was the most interesting or fun part of the research for this book?

Probably all the beautiful music I got to listen to! I needed to be able to refer to several pieces by name and composer, so first I just wrote the scenes describing what sort of piece I’d need (fast, difficult, soothing, etc.) and then I bought an album of classical violin music and enjoyed listening to it until I found compositions that fit what I needed. Not exactly a hardship, I confess.

4. Did you learn anything that surprised you?

Definitely! I read a book all about the invasion of Belgium in the first days of the war and the occupation throughout it, and it was shocking. I had no idea how similar the practices of the German army during this occupation were to the Nazi regime we all know so much about from thirty years later. More, because the press sensationalized and exaggerated it during the war, it was then totally dismissed afterward, and the world didn’t heed any of the warning signs. Historians now look to Germany’s treatment of Belgium as a direct precursor to Nazi practices. Of course, there were still a few German military leaders who tried to speak reason to the High Command, and I do give them their due as well. We see all of this through the eyes of my hero’s little sister, who, along with their mother, is caught up in the chaos of the invasion when their hometown is burned to the ground.

5. What hope do you leave the readers with in *A Song Unheard*?

Though the world around them is grim and my heroine especially can’t see much reason to trust, faith shines brightest in dark times. In this story, I wanted to show how God will make himself real to each of us in the ways we most need. For some, like Lukas, it’s in sending the right people into our paths the moment we need them. For others, like Willa, it’s in sending us a song when that’s the only Gospel that we’ll let around the walls of our heart. Our Lord isn’t confined to one way of reaching us with the news of His Son, and for that I am so grateful.