
Somewhere in France: A Novel of the Great War

by Jennifer Robson



About the Book

In the dark and dangerous days of World War I, a daring young woman will risk her life to find her destiny

Lady Elizabeth Neville-Ashford wants to travel the world, pursue a career, and marry for love. But in 1914, the stifling restrictions of aristocratic British society and her mother's rigid expectations forbid Lilly from following her heart. When war breaks out, the spirited young woman seizes her chance for independence. Defying her parents, she moves to London and eventually becomes an ambulance driver in the newly formed Women's Army Auxiliary Corps --- an exciting and treacherous job that takes her close to the Western Front.

Assigned to a field hospital in France, Lilly is reunited with Robert Fraser, her dear brother Edward's best friend. The handsome Scottish surgeon has always encouraged Lilly's dreams. She doesn't care that Robbie grew up in poverty --- she yearns for their friendly affection to become something more. Lilly is the most beautiful --- and forbidden --- woman Robbie has ever known. Fearful for her life, he's determined to keep her safe, even if it means breaking her heart.

In a world divided by class and filled with uncertainty and death, can their hope for love survive...or will it become another casualty of this tragic war?

Discussion Guide

1. If you had the chance to grow up as the daughter of Lord and Lady Cumberland?knowing that you would live in unimaginable luxury but would also be denied an education, the chance to work, and very likely the chance to choose your own spouse?would you do it?

2. Do you feel Lady Cumberland's treatment of Lilly is motivated by sincere concern for her daughter's welfare? Or is it a case of her obsessively adhering to the conventions of aristocratic society, no matter the cost?
3. Do Robbie's motivations in pushing Lilly away after the bombardment of the 51st make sense to you? Do you sympathize with him or do you think he allows tunnel vision to cloud his judgment?
4. What about Lilly's motivations? Is she right to insist on staying at the 51st no matter what? Wouldn't it be reasonable for her to compromise and take up a position elsewhere in France?
5. Before reading *SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE*, if someone had mentioned the First World War to you, what would have come to mind? Has your perception of the First World War changed as a result?
6. *SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE* is set in the recent past, a century ago. Were there any aspects of life in the novel that surprised you by their modernity? Did its characters feel familiar to you, or more like inhabitants of "a different country," to paraphrase a well-known description of the past?
7. Do you think Robbie and Lilly's relationship would have been possible without the war and the changes it brought to British society?
8. Do you think it really would have been possible for Lilly to become friends with women like Annie and Bridget? Could such a disparity in wealth, privilege, and class truly be bridged in that era?
9. How do you think Lilly and her friends were changed by their experiences in the WAAC? Would it have been easy for them to return to ordinary life and the status quo after the war?
10. Do you think the war still matters? Why? It was fought a century ago, every one of its veterans is now dead, and memories of it are fading from our collective consciousness. Should we just leave it to the professional historians and concentrate on more recent events?

Author Bio

Jennifer Robson is the *Globe & Mail* and *Toronto Star* #1 bestselling author of seven novels, among them *THE GOWN* and *SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE*. She holds a doctorate in British history from the University of Oxford and lives in Toronto, Canada, with her husband and children.

Critical Praise

?Utterly engaging and richly satisfying, *SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE* depicts the very best in love and war. Fans of ?Downton Abbey? will devour this novel!?

? Erika Robuck, Bestselling Author Of *CALL ME ZELDA*

Somewhere in France: A Novel of the Great **Publication Date:** December 31, 2013

War

by Jennifer Robson

Genres: Fiction, Historical Fiction, Literary Fiction

Paperback: 400 pages

Publisher: William Morrow Paperbacks

ISBN-10: 0062273450

ISBN-13: 9780062273451