

Irene N. Watts

# SEEKING REFUGE

A GRAPHIC NOVEL



illustrations by **Kathryn E. Shoemaker**

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TRADEWIND BOOKS  
VANCOUVER • LONDON

For Julia Everett and in memory of A. J. Watts, 1927-2015

Thanks to the entire team at Tradewind Books.  
Special thanks to Kathryn E. Shoemaker for once again  
bringing Marianne to life—I.N.W.

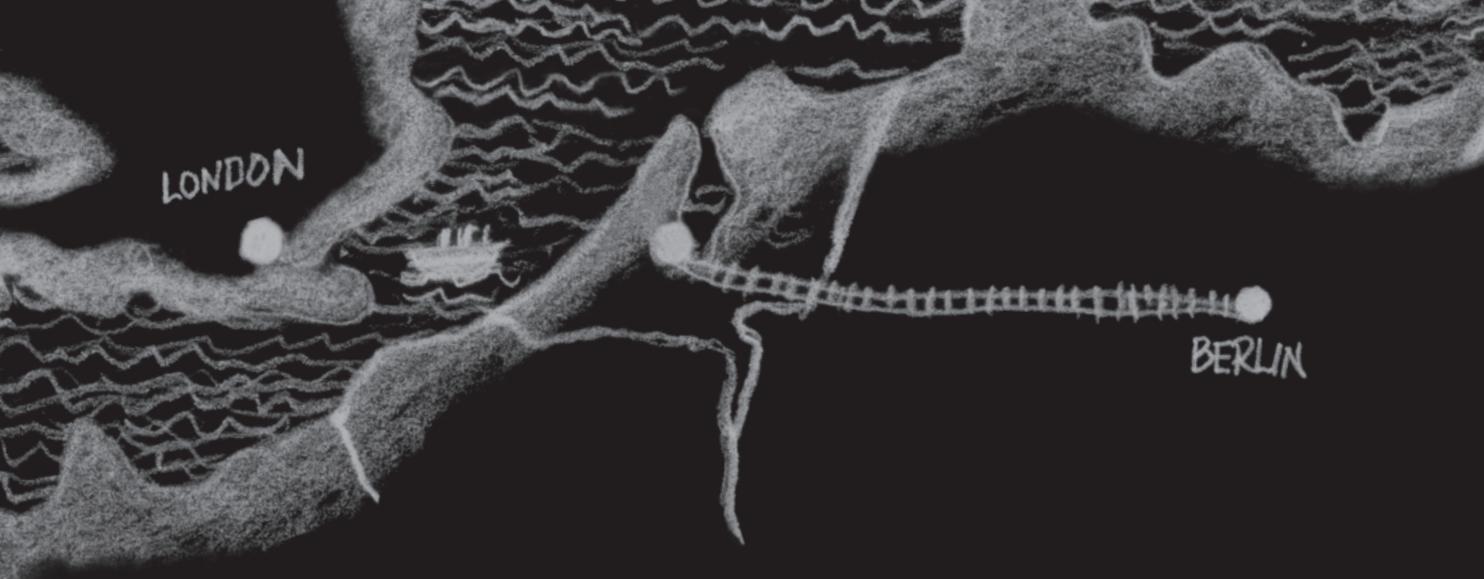
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For Irene, thank you for another great story—K.E.S.



## CONTENTS

Chapter One “ <b>LIKE ANIMALS AT THE ZOO</b> ”	8
Chapter Two <b>WELCOME TO LONDON</b>	20
Chapter Three <b>LOST</b>	36
Chapter Four <b>REFUGEE</b>	50
Chapter Five <b>WAITING FOR WAR</b>	66
Chapter Six <b>EVACUATION</b>	78
Chapter Seven <b>BILLETS</b>	92
Chapter Eight <b>A NEW NAME</b>	104
Chapter Nine “ <b>MAM MEANS MOTHER</b> ”	116
Glossary	133

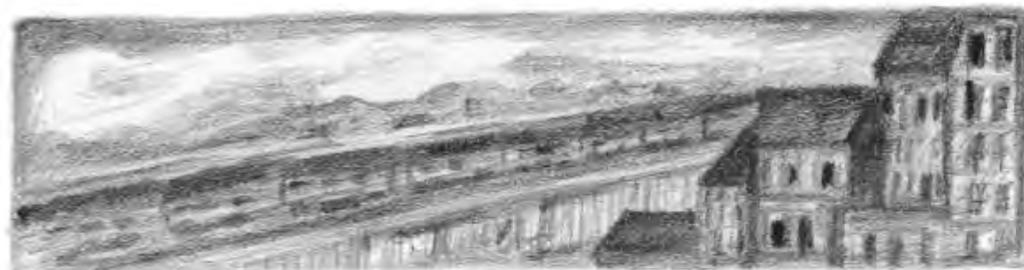


Chapter One • **“LIKE ANIMALS AT THE ZOO”**





LONDON, ENGLAND. DECEMBER 2, 1938



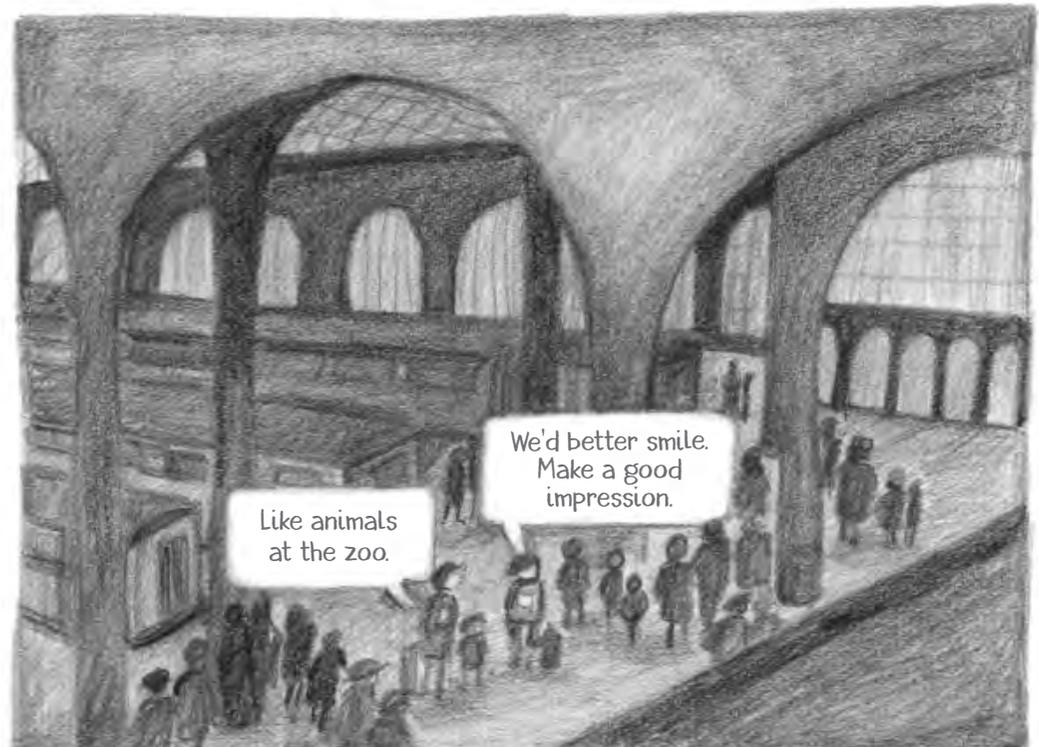
Next stop: Liverpool Street Station. All change.



Stay close beside me, Sophie. Don't get lost.

Mind your backs.

Smile!



Like animals at the zoo.

We'd better smile. Make a good impression.



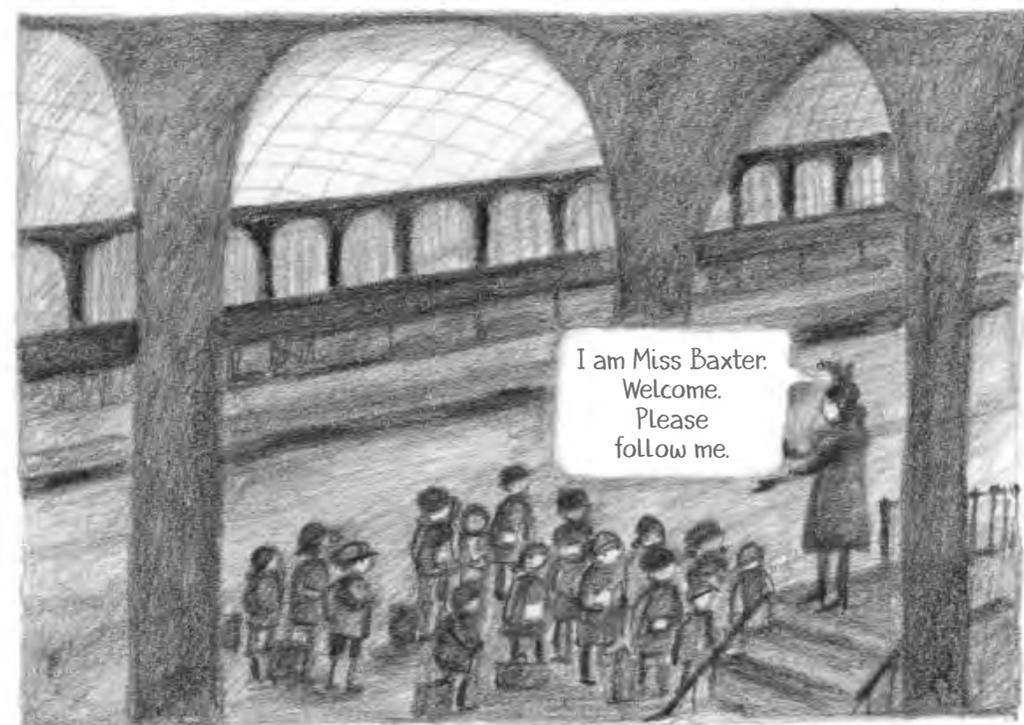
Look at me, Sophie, your face is dirty.

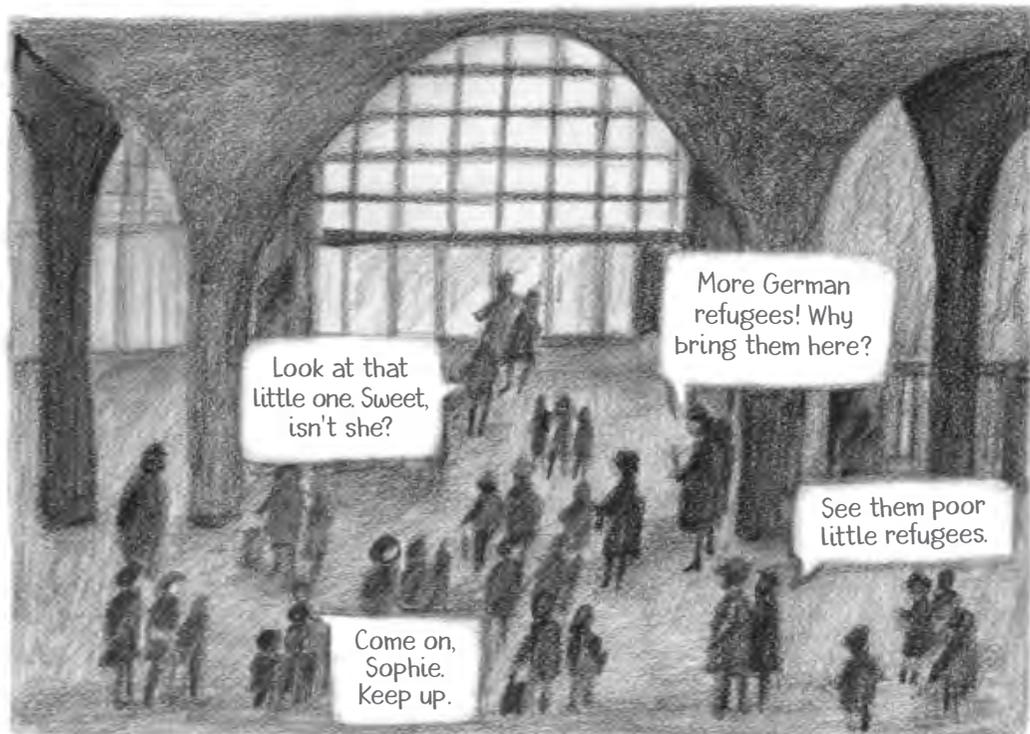


Are we going to our new families now?



Soon.







Waiting's horrible, isn't it?

Sophie Mandel and Miss Simmonds.

That's you, Sophie. Wake up.

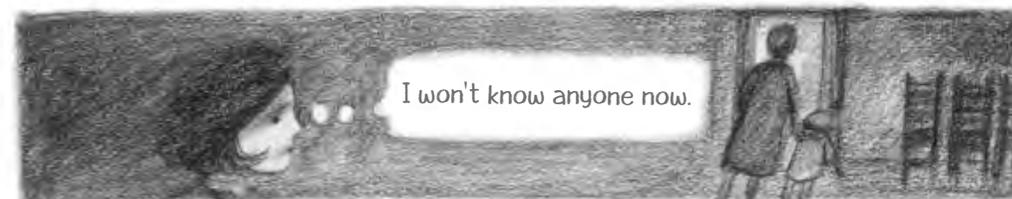


Hello, Sophie. I am Aunt Margaret. Your mother's friend. You are going to live with me.

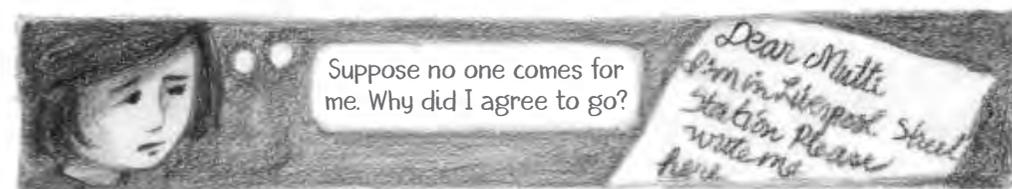
Marianne?



She looks nice. Goodbye, Sophie.



I won't know anyone now.



Suppose no one comes for me. Why did I agree to go?

Dear Muttie  
I'm in the post. Speed  
station please  
write me  
Aunt



ONE, TWO, THREE.



Is your name Leah Stein?



Ich heiße Marianne...  
Sorry—my name is Marianne Kohn.



Your name isn't here. See Miss Martin. She speaks German.



An orphan got measles. I was offered her place.



Please no send back! Gestapo. I am Jewish.

Don't be afraid. You won't be sent back.

Are they whispering about me?



You are safe now. Why didn't you stay at the hostel with the other orphans when you arrived?

I am not an orphan. I just travelled with them.



I've put your name on my list. Now you're official!

Sank you.

I am Mrs. Abercrombie-Jones. Is this girl Leah Stein?



**E**LEVEN-YEAR-OLD **MARIANNE IS FORTUNATE.** She is one of the first two hundred Jewish children in the heroic rescue operation known as the Kindertransport, which arrived in London, England in December 1938.

Life in the new country seems strange. Marianne's few words of English and her attempts to become an ordinary English girl are not enough to please her foster mother, who wanted a girl as a domestic servant. She deeply misses her family that she had to leave behind.

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Marianne finds herself being evacuated to Wales. She is shuffled from one unsuitable home to another—but there is a surprise in store, and Marianne's courage and resilience is finally rewarded.

The Kindertransport, which ultimately saved almost 10,000 children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia in the nine months preceding World War II, was a triumphant human effort. Marianne's story is based on the kind of events that were actually experienced by the children. Author Irene N. Watts was one of them, arriving on the second Kindertransport in December 1938 at the age of seven.

**IRENE N. WATTS** was born in Berlin, raised in the UK and emigrated to Canada. She is the author of numerous award-winning books and plays for children and young people, among them *Goodbye Marianne* and *No Pets Allowed*. She lives in Vancouver.

**KATHRYN E. SHOEMAKER** is the illustrator of many books for children, among them *A Telling Time* and *My Animal Friends*. She teaches children's literature at the University of British Columbia.



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