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CAROL MATAS

Carol Matas is an internationally acclaimed author of over thirty novels for children and young adults. Her best-selling work, which includes three award-winning series, has been translated into Spanish, Japanese, Taiwanese, Turkish, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, German, French, Indonesian and Russian.

A graduate of the Actor’s Lab, in London England, Carol first earned a B.A. (English) from The University of Western Ontario. Her teaching experience includes Artists in the School, Manitoba Arts Council. She has been a visiting professor at Bemidji State University, Minnesota, and a Creative Writing instructor, Continuing Education Division, The University of Winnipeg. Carol is an inspiring and passionate speaker who is frequently invited to address children and adults alike across North America.

Carol writes contemporary and historical fiction, as well as science fiction and fantasy. She first began writing historical fiction when her Danish husband told her stories about his parents’ experiences fighting the Nazis in World War II. She has often written about Jewish themes, and is well known for her books concerning the Holocaust, writing Daniel’s Story at the request of The United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. Over the years, her knack for successfully infusing serious and thought-provoking issues into an action-driven format has kept readers of all ages engaged.

The list of awards for her books is pages long, and includes two Sydney Taylor awards, The Geoffrey Bilson award, a Silver Birch award, The Jewish Book Award, as well as the inclusion of her books on many honour lists, such as the ALA notable list, The New York Times Review notable list, The New York Public Library list for the Teen Age, and the Voya books in the middle, Best Book list. She has also been nominated for the Governor General Award twice.
Q&A WITH CAROL

How did your writing career begin?
I was bitten by the theatre bug, and I began to take acting classes. It wasn't long before I decided I wanted to be an actor. I still loved reading though, and when I went away to university I took a degree in English, spending all my extra time acting in university productions. I loved it, but I also loved studying Shakespeare and reading all those great authors. When I graduated I moved to London England for two years to follow my dream and to go to acting school. I then moved to Toronto and began working as a professional actor. I was pretty good, I think, and I got quite a lot of work, but still, as with all actors I did have times when I was out of work. I hung around with a group of actors who happened to be writing in their spare time.

They used to share their stories. I remember one day hearing a story, a fantasy, and thinking it was delightful. I thought I'd like to try to do that. So I went home and sat down at my kitchen table with a sheet of paper. But what to write? I looked at the flowered teapot sitting in front of me. I thought, what if the teapot were magic? What if there were a brother and sister, home alone, fighting? What if they tumbled into the kitchen, knocked against the teapot, and shrunk! I stared at the table, which was beside the window, filled with plants. What if they ended up on the plant table and met the various plants, and what if the plants had personalities, which matched their names, such as Professor Ivy, the scary Spider Plant, etc.

I read this story to my friends a few days later. They liked it! I had so much fun writing it that I decided to write another. This too was a fantasy. The first story I wrote was five pages long. The second was ten. The third was twenty. They kept getting longer and longer. For a couple years I did this strictly as a hobby, never even considering publication.

Why did you pursue writing as a career?
Before I became pregnant I had always intended to return to the stage. However, after Rebecca was born something odd happened. Every time I tried to go back to work she got sick. It was as if she had different plans for me, and it was not to be an actor. Eventually I gave up trying to find acting work and stayed home to take care of her. But I still needed some intellectual stimulation. So, I turned to my writing.

When did you begin feeling like a writer?
I began to send manuscripts out to publishers and received one rejection after another. In fact I believe The Fusion Factor, my book about a kidnapped child, must have gotten at least twenty rejections. When Rebecca was a
little older, I began to think about returning to acting. However, just then I submitted the short story to a Canadian publisher and it was accepted. Now I felt I was a writer. Actually the story was never published but being accepted at that moment made a huge difference to me and was probably the turning point in my career.

**Every writer writes differently, what are the initial stages of your writing?**

First comes the idea — a story and along with the story an issue, ethical or moral, that I want to explore. I start to think about it, live with it. Characters begin to form in my mind. If it is an historical, I begin my research and reading and do my interviews. When I really settle down to work it probably takes three months to do most of my intensive research. I then write the first draft which takes perhaps three or four weeks. I give it to Perry to read. He reads it, we meet, he gives me his thoughts — often a very detailed critique. I rewrite the book, which takes another three or four weeks. Then I send it off to the publisher.

**Where's one place you find encouragement?**

(...). my husband, Per Brask. He has been a huge support to me throughout my writing career. When I write a first draft, I read whatever I've written that day to him, every night. He doesn't criticize much, he just tells me that he wants to know what happens next, and that really helps me keep up my momentum.

**Some parents may be reluctant to let their children read stories about the Holocaust at a young age, what advice would you give them?**

The largest, most compelling factor in adults' fear is their children's supposed innocence. Twelve thousand Ontario children voted *Daniel's Story* their favorite book and awarded it the Silver Birch Award. At the award ceremony the adults expressed how pleased they were, but more so, how shocked they were. There seemed to be a genuine chasm between what adults thought children would like and what they did like. One parent approached me and told me that she read *Daniel's Story* and found it so moving and true and yet she desperately wanted to keep it from her eleven-year-old child. He was too innocent. He shouldn't know about these things. Maybe when he's older.

I mentioned this to my then fourteen-year-old son, Sam. His response? There's no way to "work up to" the Holocaust. I can't put it better. Not only is there no easy way to tell this story, adults should not be afraid of children hearing it. Why not?

**What is the purpose of your writing?**

Since writing my first word my goal has always been to tell a good story, and like my hero, L. Frank Baum, delight my readers. Many of my books are considered controversial because I deal with topics I think young people are concerned about, even if they are things adults don't like to deal with. I know I write about heavy topics. But more important is the fact that I write so that who ever is reading won't want to put the book down—they'll want to read after lights out, or after they've been called for dinner. And when they are finished they'll be a little sorry, because they had fun. Few people these days seem to talk about the pleasure of reading, but that is the main reason I write.
The Ghosthunters
Books Two and Three
What happens when a deceased ghosthunter refuses to accept he’s become a ghost himself? He enlists the help of his two grandchildren in his quest to prove the existence of ghosts—and himself. Inspired by a real ghosthunter’s experiences, this trilogy takes the ghost story to a new level.

The Curse of the Evening Eye
CAROL MATAS AND PERRY NODELMAN

The bond between the ghosthunter and his grandchildren grows stronger when a threat from the spirit world turns against them.

The Hunt for the Haunted Elephant
CAROL MATAS AND PERRY NODELMAN

The children realize that if their grandfather proves the existence of ghosts, his restless spirit will be at peace. Should they help the ghosthunter in his final quest and lose him forever?
The Ghosthunters
Book One
What happens when a deceased ghosthunter refuses to accept he’s become a ghost himself? He enlists the help of his two grandchildren in his quest to prove the existence of ghosts—and himself. Inspired by a real ghosthunter’s experiences, this trilogy takes the ghost story to a new level.

The Proof That Ghosts Exist
CAROL MATAS AND PERRY NODELMAN

Ghosthunter Ernest Barnett finds himself transported from the dreaming spires of Oxford to a cottage in Catskills. His two grandchildren discover him chained to his desk working tirelessly on his research. He can see them, and they can see him, but nobody else can see the ghosthunter. His grandchildren, Molly and Adam, find out there are spirits that threaten their parents. Only the ghosthunter can help them save their parents’ lives. This is a rip-roaring ghost story filled with chills, thrills and more than a few laughs.

Excerpt:
Ghosts that kill. Eerie. I wonder why, thought Adam. They must have had a reason—some grudge against the Barnett family that made them want to get rid of all the sons before they became thirty-five. Was it something one of his ancestors did to someone? Was it something to do with revenge, or politics, or money?

Oh my gosh, Adam thought. I’m a son, too! If this continues, it’ll be my turn next—and I only have about 25 years left of my life.

But first, it would have to be Dad’s turn.

Dad!

“I think I’d better go check on Dad,” he said, and he was out of the room and down the hall before Molly or Granddad could say anything.
Past Crimes
CAROL MATAS

Ros races time to uncover the identity and motives of her hidden enemy, the murderer of her late husband.

After her husband is murdered, disturbing dreams and unnerving events cause nineteen-year-old Ros Green to fear that someone is trying to kill her too. With baby Nate in tow, she moves to Palm Springs where, in spite of the beautiful surroundings, the threat grows, and soon others are being harmed.

Excerpt:
You need to throw away all your fixed ideas. Maybe the dreams are filled with clues and have nothing to do with the Inquisition at all. Maybe the Inquisition is a symbol for you - a symbol that represents the evil around you, starting with Saul's death and leading up to this. And maybe somewhere in those dreams are names and faces that your subconscious is trying to get you to remember.

“This book developed because I wanted to write about something that hasn’t been written about a lot—reincarnation. I wanted to write a thriller for young women—something that would be gripping, romantic and scary all at the same time.”
—Carol Matas

World Rights Available
Previously published by Key Porter, Canada
Film Rights Available
Adult

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tla1.com

“Veteran novelist Carol Matas knows that a fast-paced plot is mandatory for youth raised on television. Another rule of writing is that readers identify with characters similar to, yet better than, themselves. In Ros, Matas has created a heroine who will appeal to teenage girls in general and young single mothers in particular.”
—CM Magazine

Children’s Book Centre Our Choice pick
Finalist, Stellan Award (B.C. Teen Reader’s Choice Award), 2008
Rosie
Books Two and Three
The saga of a family who helps start the film industry in Hollywood.

Play Ball!
CAROL MATAS

When Rosie’s family moves to Chicago, she works as an usher in her father’s nickelodeon. Her brothers are involved with the fierce rivalry of their baseball team. They are a boy short and her brothers know that Rosie could play but she’ll need to disguise herself as a boy and avoid the bullies on the other team.

Finalist, Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young People Canadian Children’s Book Centre, 2005

Action!
CAROL MATAS

With the success of Papa’s latest baseball film, Rosie’s family moves to Los Angeles to shoot more films starring Rosie. Papa brings home an entire Wild West show to make authentic Westerns. Rosie’s so excited but before she knows it, she causes a terrible accident for the show’s best trick rider. The rider’s son, Zach, fills in and he and Rosie get hopelessly lost in the hills.

Notable Children’s Books Of Jewish Content by the Association of Jewish Libraries, 2004
Hackmatack Children’s Choice Book Award, finalist, 2005
Rosie
Book One
The saga of a family who helps start the film industry in Hollywood.

Gotcha!
CAROL MATAS

At age eleven, Rose Lepidus's main concerns are winning at ring-a-levio, going to school, and staying out of trouble. But when Mama falls ill with pneumonia and Papa throws all the family savings into the nickelodeon business, the burden of caring for her family falls on Rosie's shoulders.

Tall for her age, Rosie is able to pass for sixteen and take Mama's place sewing sleeves at a shirtwaist factory. Her family needs the money. But working conditions are horrible and the factory boss is incredibly strict. The girls are fined for nearly everything—even talking or humming! Within days of starting work, Rosie hears the buzz about a huge strike of twenty thousand shirtwaist workers. It's the strike that Mama's been working toward for ages: a huge push for change in the workplace. Rosie wants to join in, but as the streets become more dangerous, Papa asks his daughter to return to school. And Rosie must choose: follow Papa's orders—or fight with everything she's got.

“The first book in the series I thought was a really important topic because it deals with the beginning of the union movement. The series as a whole is very much about the Jewish immigrant experience in the United States. Even though each book has a very separate plot, all three books are about fear and courage”
—Carol Matas

World Rights Available Ex: US
Previously published by Key Porter, Canada
Film Rights Available
Ages 8-12

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tla1.com

“This good book of historical fiction will be welcomed by elementary teachers and also by their students who will be caught up in Rosie's life and will incidentally learn much about the early union movement in New York.”
—CM Magazine

New York Library's Books for the Teen Age List, 2002
Nominated for the McNally Robinson Book of the Year Award (Older Category), 2004
The War Within

CAROL MATAS

With the historical accuracy for which she is known, best-selling author Carol Matas turns her attention to an unexamined chapter of the Civil War, creating a thought-provoking and heart-racing masterpiece.

Holly Springs Mississippi, 1862:

The Green family own a general store in this small Southern town where they have lived for many years. But ever since the Union army occupied her beloved town, Hannah Green has been furious. Her sister, Joanna, has fallen in love with Captain Mazer of the Union—the same Union that has been fighting against her brothers in the Confederate army to destroy the Southern way of life.

Now General Grant has issued General Order #11, which commands all Jews to evacuate the territory under his command. The Greens are forced to follow the Union army to Memphis. For the first time Hannah and her family face discrimination simply because of their religion. She begins to realize that not everyone believes the basic truths she has always accepted. While the battles rage around her, Hannah begins to fight another war—the war within—which could destroy everything she has ever believed.

“A book called Jews in the Civil War included a chapter about Ulysses S. Grant and his expulsion of Jews from the territories he controlled. This struck me as ironic since part of the motivation of the North was the freeing of slaves. And yet, how could they then justify discriminating against the Jews? It became even more interesting when I realized that Jews had owned slaves. Did they not see that they were practicing discrimination even as they railed against people discriminating against them? And had they forgotten that they celebrated their own escape from slavery every year at Passover?

What became the central question for me as I wrote this book was how do we escape from the prisons that are our minds?”

—Carol Matas

World Rights Available Ex: Canada
Published by Scholastic Canada
Film Rights Available
Ages 8-12

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tlal.com

“This is a thoughtful novel, sympathetically portraying the conflict inherent in any two-sided situation—and what situation does not have two sides!

Highly Recommended.”

—CM Magazine

Books For the Teen Age, New York Public Library, 2001
Sydney Taylor Honour Book, 2001
Geoffrey Bilson Honour Book, 2001
Finalist, McNally Robinson Book for Young People, 2001
The Oppenheim Toy Portfolio
Platinum Award, 2002
Finalist, Lamplighter Award, 2003/2004
Rebecca

CAROL MATAS

Friendship can be a powerful force, one that can overcome discrimination and hate. Two young girls discover just how strong their friendship is in the face of such aversion and prejudice against Jewish people.

Rebecca has always loved being part of a big family. When disaster forces them to leave their farm and move to the city, she is comforted by the fact that they are at least together. But life in 1912 Winnipeg isn't easy. Until work and housing are found, shy Rebecca is sent to live with strangers: the Kostaniuks, a Ukrainian family.

To her surprise, Rebecca finds a friend there. Sonia likes the same books as Rebecca, and laughs at the same things. Their friendship is stronger than Mr. Kostaniuk's negative attitude toward Jews, and the suspicions of the other Jewish girls at school. It gets them through illness, fire, and schoolyard brawls. But can it overcome the disapproval of Rebecca's entire family?

“This book starts off loosely based on my own family history. My grandmother came to Canada with 12 other siblings and lived in rural Saskatchewan. The family went to town one day. When they got home they found their homestead burned down and lost everything. Because of that, some of the younger children had to go into foster care in Winnipeg—where they moved—because they couldn’t support all of the children. A lot of the story is fictionalized but I interviewed relatives who actually lived in that time period so I think it’s very accurate. Rebecca is placed with a non Jewish family and discovers a deep seated anti-Semitism but also forges a deep friendship with one of the daughters in that family—much to the dismay of the two families and the community at large.”

—Carol Matas

Finalist, Manitoba Book for Young Readers, 2001
Finalist, Margaret McWilliams Award, Manitoba Historical society
Finalist, Hackmatack, Children’s Choice Award
Finalist, Manitoba Readers Choice Award
In My Enemy's House
CAROL MATAS

This novel presents an unflinching account of Marisa's dilemma as a Jew living a lie in order to survive, and will give readers a new perspective on the nature of good and evil.

With the Nazis ready to herd the remaining Jews of her town into a ghetto, and with her family either scattered or dead, Marisa, a Polish Jew whose blonde hair and blue eyes make it easy for her to pass as a Christian, takes the papers of a Polish girl and in that disguise goes to Germany in a desperate attempt to survive as a Polish worker. After traveling to Weimar, Marisa finds work as a servant for the Reymanns, a wealthy farming family who treat her with dignity and respect. Their daughter Charlotte becomes fond of Marisa and tries to befriend her. Marisa's life with the Reymanns may seem safe—the Reymanns appear fair—but she can't ignore the fact that Herr Reymann is a high-ranking Nazi official and Charlotte attends the League of German Maidens. Marisa is hiding in plain sight in her enemy's house.

Excerpt:
They kept peppering her with questions, and even though she had tears running down her face she answered them all correctly.

The man thrust the papers back at her. "All right. I suppose you just have the bad luck to look like one of them."

I felt like saying, "Look at Hitler. Dark hair, dark mustache, he doesn't look like his Aryan ideal." But of course I said nothing.

"All of the people I interviewed had had to hide their identities in order to survive. If discovered they certainly would have been murdered, and each of them told stories of others they knew who had trusted a German friend, boyfriend, or girlfriend with their secret and had been betrayed and handed over to the authorities. I was able through their stories to explore what was happening right in the heart of Nazi Germany. And to ask some very difficult questions about what we are capable of as human beings, for good and for evil."
—Carol Matas

Finalist, McNally Robinson Book of the Year Award for young people
Book for the Teen Age, New York Public Library Children’s Book Centre Our Choice, 2000
The Edge of When

CAROL MATAS

What will the future look like?

Rebecca worries about the things a normal 12-year-old girl would worry about: starting junior high, her friends, her family. But when she witnesses a kidnapping and finds herself transported into a terrifying world of the future, Rebecca not only must find her way home - she must figure out a way to alter the course of history.
Cloning Miranda
Books Two and Three
A thought-provoking YA series about cloning.

The Second Clone
CAROL MATAS

In *The Second Clone*, Miranda discovers that not only is she a clone of her parent’s beloved daughter who died, there is a second clone which is being kept in reserve in case Miranda develops the same disease that killed her sister.

The Dark Clone
CAROL MATAS

In *The Dark Clone*, Miranda’s life is threatened when the scientist who created her wants to go public with his research.

“Matas delves into a very controversial field—cloning. She addresses the key questions behind the controversy, ‘Does a clone have rights?’ and more importantly, ‘Is it human?’”
—CM Magazine

World Rights Available Ex: Canada, Russia
Published by Scholastic Canada
Film Rights Available
Ages 8-12

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tla1.com

Film Rights Available
Ages 10+

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tla1.com
Cloning Miranda
Book One
A thought-provoking YA series about cloning.

Cloning Miranda
CAROL MATAS

Cloning Miranda, The Second Clone and The Dark Clone are the first three novels in a thought-provoking YA series about cloning.

Thirteen-year-old Miranda has beauty, talent and smarts. But after her vision goes blurry at a dance rehearsal she learns she has a rare and deadly disease. Suddenly her world changes: her parents start taking her to a strange clinic and nothing seems to make sense. To add to the mystery, Miranda finds a photograph of herself she can’t remember being taken. With the help of her best friend Emma, Miranda discovers exactly what her parents are willing to do to save her from her fatal genetic disease.

Excerpt:
I flip through the pictures: me in front of the tower of London, me in front of the British Museum. A loose photo drops out. I pick it up. Me in front of...that’s odd. I look closer at the picture. How did that get in here? It’s me all right, in front of some big castle, but it couldn’t be from the London trip. I look about ten years old. And where was it taken? Funny. I can’t remember being there at all. And those clothes. Ugh. Did I really like to dress like that? Overalls? I don’t remember ever owning a pair of overalls, even at that age.

World Rights Available Ex:
Canada, Norway, Sweden and Finland
(Stabenfeldt)
Lithuanian and Russian, English in Germany
Published by Scholastic Canada, Germany,
Denmark and Indonesia
Film Rights Available
Ages 10+

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tlal.com

“This series is a way to discuss what it means to be a human being. Miranda faces the dilemma of how to behave ethically when she discovers who and what she is, that she herself was created unethically. The books are Scientific thrillers that explore ethical issues.”
—Carol Matas
Greater Than Angels
CAROL MATAS

In this story—based on actual occurrences during the German occupation of France—award-winning author Carol Matas unveils a contagious goodness that permeated one corner of a region otherwise enveloped in evil, and celebrates the courage that made these citizens “greater than angels.”

In the autumn of 1940, when Anna Hirsch, her friends, and her family are rounded up by Nazis and deported to Gurs, a refugee camp in the south of France, they see little hope on the horizon. Food is scarce, and the living conditions inhuman. Even worse is the ever-present fear that they will be relocated once again—this time to one of the death camps.

Word comes that Anna and the other children at Gurs are to be moved; their destination is not Auschwitz or Buchenwald, but Le Chambon-sur-Lignon: a tiny village whose citizens have agreed to care for deported Jewish children. As the war rages on and the Germans gain more control in France, Jews, and those who shelter them, are sought with increased vigor, and when they are found, the punishment is severe. Yet even in the face of Nazi atrocities, and despite the great risk, the good people of Le Chambon continue to protect the refugees who seek cover in their homes.

Excerpt:
“I hear something!” I hiss. “Quiet!”

Twigs snap, I can hear the crunch of boots on the ground. As long as they don’t torture me, I think. Just let them shoot me. I don’t think I could stand up to torture for more than a minute. Then I’d tell them anything. Anything.

—I researched the book by going to New York where I interviewed people who had hidden in Le Chambon during the war. The people were amazing, their stories inspiring. Le Chambon was a small farming village surrounded by farms. The pastor was a man called Pastor Trocmé, who was a pacifist. He didn’t believe in fighting, so at the start of the war he opposed fighting the Germans, which got him in a lot of trouble. But once the Germans occupied France, he refused to collaborate with them. Although the French had promised to protect their Jewish population, they broke that promise as soon as France was invaded. (Unlike the Danish people who never betrayed their Jewish population) But Pastor Trocmé and the people of Le Chambon helped to hide as many Jews as arrived there—and not only Jews, anyone who was fleeing the Nazis found refuge there."

—Carol Matas

Finalist, Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction, 1999
Absorbing, full of surprises, Telling is, at its 
unique heart, about the power of “girl talk” to
overcome fear, articulate beliefs and transform 
lives.

No matter what else is happening in their lives, no
matter how mad at each other they might be, the
Erikson sisters’ late-night tell-alls are their one surefire 
way to keep themselves honest. And lately, being honest
hasn’t been easy.

This novel chronicles one eventful summer in the three
sisters’ lives, which presented all of them with
challenges. Thirteen-year-old Corey, the youngest, is
swayed by her reckless groups of friends into taking
some big and dangerous risks. Sue, the eldest, is in love
with her new boyfriend, but how much does she have to
compromise to keep him? For middle child Alex, who’s
landed her first job in a Renaissance Fair, the challenge is
to figure out how to stand up for what she believes,
when doing so means going against the wishes and
expectations of others.

“How can you be yourself if you don’t know who you
are?”

This is a slice of life story, grounded in three sisters
that are on their own and have to support each other. It
is about learning who they are and what to believe in;
how to be yourself even if it doesn’t jive with how
other people think you should be.”
—Carol Matas
The Garden

CAROL MATAS

After surviving the concentration camps of World War II, and a perilous journey to a kibbutz in Palestine, Ruth Mendenberg works in a beautiful garden. She desperately wants peace but soon tensions build and she feels she must fight for her new life.

Ruth Mendenberg, survivor of the Buchenwald concentration camp, has helped a group of other young refugees flee Poland. They have been smuggled into Palestine and now live on a kibbutz, trying to forget their old life and forge a new one. They long for only one thing: peace. Ruth’s solace comes from tending her garden, where she has found beauty and tranquility. But her respite does not last long.

The United Nations is preparing to vote on a plan that would partition Palestine into two separate lands, one for the Arabs and one for the Jews. The Arabs are ready to fight to prevent partition, and the British government does little to stop the escalating hostilities.

Ruth’s brother, Simon, belongs to the Irgun, a terrorist group ready to bomb their enemies. Ruth herself has joined the Haganah, which believes in fighting only in self-defence. How far will they have to go before they find the peace and safety of a place they can finally call home?

Excerpt:

In order to fool the Arabs who lay in wait for the convoys, we’d move on Shabbat or at night or take side roads or dirt roads. We hid guns on us, not in pieces like the first time, but tucked into our skirts or blouses, and we returned fire when we could. All we could carry were pistols, though, except Fanny, who actually managed a submachine gun. Meanwhile we were being shot at with rifles and machine guns by Arabs - not exactly a fair fight. Still, we couldn’t let them cut us off from each other - food had to go from the kibbutzim to the cities and people had to travel, too. Jerusalem has been under siege since that first day of the riot, and getting food and supplies through is becoming harder and harder.

In between our convoy duties we’ve had to go on raids to other Arab villages similar to the one we carried out on Majed. We’ve been lucky so far. Although we’ve had close calls, none of us has been seriously wounded.
After The War
CAROL MATAS

This adventure will touch readers, who will marvel at the resources and inner strength of mere children, helping other children to find a place in the world in which they can belong.

“Didn’t the gas ovens finish you all off?” is the response that meets Ruth Mendenberg when she returns to her village in Poland after the liberation of Buchenwald at the end of World War II. Her entire family had been killed in the Holocaust, and now the fifteen-year-old girl has nowhere to go.

Members of the underground organization Brichah find her, and she joins them in their dangerous quest to smuggle illegal immigrants to Palestine. Ruth risks her life to help lead a group of children on a daring journey over half a continent and across the sea to Eretz Israel, using secret routes, forged documents, and sheer willpower.

Excerpt:
They were rounding up Jews in the ghetto. Pulling them out of the houses, shooting them on the spot. I heard my cousins scream as they were taken away. They hadn’t managed to hide in time. When we crawled out of hiding, little Rachel was tied to a chair with a rope. Her own socks were stuffed in her mouth by some guard and suffocated her.

I crawl through the grass which is quickly becoming wet with dew. It takes me a long time to get to the border post. Once there, I raise myself to my knees and peek around. Nate sits tied to his chair, but no one is watching him. I get up and run over to him. He grins when he sees me.

“There are some bottles in the hut,” he says. “They’ve been drinking.”

I nod, run in, find an empty bottle, break it on the ground, and begin to cut through his ropes, which are very thick. It takes me at least fifteen minutes of arduous, careful slicing until I finally break through. Once free he grabs my hand and shakes it, then forgets that and kisses me on the cheek.

“Didn’t the gas ovens finish you all off?” — Quill & Quire

“...After the War is a compelling and important story, fashioned from horror and redeemed by hope.”

— Carol Matas

O.L.A. Red Maple Readers Choice Award, 1998
McNally Robinson Book Award, 1996
Finalist Ruth Shwartz Award, 1996

World Rights Available Ex:
French & English Canada (Scholastic)
Spain (Edelvives)
Film Rights Available
Ages 8-12
Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tlal.com

“...After the War is a compelling and important story, fashioned from horror and redeemed by hope.”

— Quill & Quire

“I occurred to me that young people might imagine that when the WW11 ended so did anti-Semitism. However pogroms continued as did the hatred of Jews. And in the midst of that, after losing everyone and everything, how can a young person like Ruth put her life together again? She decides to travel to Palestine and to try to help create a Jewish homeland where she can be safe, for once and for all.”

— Carol Matas

O.L.A. Red Maple Readers Choice Award, 1998
McNally Robinson Book Award, 1996
Finalist Ruth Shwartz Award, 1996
The Freak
Book Two
What if one day you woke up a psychic? What if, suddenly, you could see things, know things—about your friends and family, even your new boyfriend—that you couldn’t, and maybe shouldn’t know. What would you do?

Visions
CAROL MATAS

Jade is having nightmares. It’s been a few months since the episode at the synagogue—a few months since she discovered her strange new “powers”—and she’s pretty sure that a dream is no longer just a dream. Especially these dreams. How else do you explain seeing someone in your sleep who ends up on the front page of the morning paper—the victim of a murder? And what happens when one of the intended victims turns out to be someone a little too close to home? This time, Jade is more than willing to use her abilities to solve the murder. But will she figure it out in time?

Excerpt:
“Perhaps there are many, many time lines and each and every choice we make creates new ones, and then more new ones. And maybe some time lines are more likely to happen then others. But that doesn’t mean that the less likely ones can’t happen as well—sometimes.” - Dad

“...in the idea of parallel universes...Chopra talks about our brain being like, well, a radio. Our brains are just receivers, but our minds are universal.” - Susie

“I wonder if there could be some sort of genetic link...Like gene mutation or something that lets people like me tune in.” - Jade

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Previously published by Key Porter, Canada
Film Rights Available
Ages 8-12

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tla1.com

“The intricate family dynamics lend authenticity and add to the story’s universal appeal...Highly Recommended.”
—CM Magazine

“...the two novels blend seamlessly—almost like chapters rather than separate books—and the third and final instalment should be eagerly anticipated.”
—The Globe and Mail
The Freak
Books One and Three
What if one day you woke up a psychic? What if, suddenly, you could see things, know things—about your friends and family, even your new boyfriend—that you couldn’t, and maybe shouldn’t know. What would you do?

The Freak
CAROL MATAS

What Jade knows and tells about her friends’ most personal thoughts and feelings isn’t exactly improving her social life. In fact, many of her friends are starting to avoid her now that she’s different. Jade would do anything to be normal again. But what if something terrible is about to happen and she alone knows it? Jade discovers that what she considers a terrible liability can turn into a powerful gift.

“Carol Matas does a great job of portraying the stages that Jade goes through in dealing with her new abilities—total disbelief, denial, and finally a grudging acceptance and recognition that good can come from being what others consider a freak... The Freak is an excellent start to what promises to be an exciting and thought-provoking new series.”
—Hilary Williamson

Far
CAROL MATAS

While Jade seeks answers about her abilities from paranormal investigators at a Palm Springs university, mysterious accidents continue and her sense of dread grows.

“Is there life after death? Apparently there is for 16-year-old Jade. The only difference for her now is that she possesses some unique psychic powers. In search of answers, she goes to a university in Palm Springs, where she finds new friends might not be as they seem. Action, suspense and mystery anchor this continuation of The Freak series.”
—The Magazine, October 2008
**Not A Stranger**

*CAROL MATAS*

**Abuse can be found** in the most unexpected places and by those you trust explicitly.

“Can abuse still happen in this day and age when young people are taught to say no and taught to be careful? Unfortunately the answer is yes. A charismatic abuser happens in all faiths and no matter how well prepared we think our children are—it can still happen. This book shows us how.”
—Carol Matas

**Excerpt:**

The bell rings and jolts me out of one moment of panic into another. Where do I sit? What do I do? A very tall man, wearing a black, pinstriped, three-piece suit, walks into the room. He has curly black hair, blue eyes, and is clean shaven. Quickly he scans the room, the blue eyes landing directly on me. His face lights up and he gives me this incredibly warm smile—I can’t help but realize how handsome he is.

“You must be Debbie.”

I nod.

“Have you met the others?”

I nod again.

He takes my hand, which shocks me and embarrasses me even more—no teacher back home would ever do that! He leads me to a desk, his hand warm and dry in mine, and says, “I’m Rabbi Werner. I’ll put you here right beside Mara and Rebecca.”

“Carol Matas again displays her ability to spin a good story while writing about tough, hard hitting subject matter... Matas realistically reveals what can occur when questions of morality become tangled in adult “politics” and reputation. Matas also adds to the book’s impact by entwining Debbie’s problems with her parents’ marital difficulties. The troubled family situation increases Debbie’s vulnerability and limits her parents’ ability to respond concertedly.

Highly Recommended.”
—CM Magazine
Minds
Books One and Two
Princess Lenara and Prince Coren are trapped in their own worlds. Lenara has the ability to make whatever she imagines real. But she is strictly forbidden to do this by her parents and the laws of her land. Prince Coren has the ability to read minds but everybody else can read his mind – meaning he can rarely keep his thoughts to himself.

Of Two Minds
CAROL MATAS AND PERRY NODELMAN

Princess Lenara’s parents want her to marry Prince Coren. But Lenara has a better idea. She runs away – only to find Coren still by her side. Their thoughts and fates have intertwined. Together they must fight an evil tyrant and forge a future for themselves...with one spirit, and of two minds.

“A spell-binding fantasy...proof positive that two heads are better than one.”
—SLJ Best books of the year

“Strong...a solid fantasy about thinking for oneself, thinking other people’s thoughts, and the power of the imagination.”
—Kirkus Reviews

More Minds
CAROL MATAS AND PERRY NODELMAN

Lenora needs to be in two places at the same time—planning a wedding and defeating a giant. She creates a duplicate of herself so she can go on her adventure...only to learn she doubled her trouble.

“This second collaboration will be welcomed by those who enjoy challenging fiction, told with humor and energy.”
—School Library Journal
Minds
Books Three and Four
Princess Lenara and Prince Coren are trapped in their own worlds. Lenora has the ability to make whatever she imagines real. But she is strictly forbidden to do this by her parents and the laws of her land. Prince Coren has the ability to read minds but everybody else can read his mind—meaning he can rarely keep his thoughts to himself.

Out of their Minds
CAROL MATAS AND PERRY NODELMAN

Lenora and Coren are finally getting married at the court of Andilla, Coren’s homeland. But when The Andilla’s powers aren’t working the wedding is stopped as the sacred Balance is thrown out of whack—which means another adventure for headstrong Lenora.

A Meeting of Minds
CAROL MATAS AND PERRY NODELMAN

Lenora and Coren find themselves in a strange place, the inhabitants call it Winnipeg. It is bone-chilling cold and the people are angry but Lenora and Coren can’t return home because their imaginative powers have deserted them again. How will they manage to escape this frightening city so they’re long-awaited marriage can finally happen?
The Lost Locket

CAROL MATAS

Someone steals Roz’s great-grandmother’s locket which she has taken to school without permission. How can she get it back?

“If I were you, I wouldn’t take it to school,” Mom said. “It’ll get lost there for sure.”

But Mom didn’t exactly say Roz couldn’t take her great-grandmother’s special locket to school. Roz is sure she’s old enough to take good care of it. Besides, everyone in the class is going to be so impressed...

When the locket disappears, Roz feels sick. And when she figures out who took it, she feels even sicker. Can she handle Curtis?

Excerpt:

A Rotten Recess

The first thing we did at school the next morning was math. I used to hate math but Mrs. Lester makes it fun and this year I’ve been getting all VG’s.

A small group of us sat around a table with Mrs Lester while the other kids worked at their desks. And guess who ended up sitting right beside me? Curtis. Now, you’d think Curtis, being the jerk he is, would also be a stupid jerk. But the weird thing is, he’s smart. Especially in math.

Anyway, what I can’t understand is, if Curtis is so smart, why isn’t he smart enough to know that bullies don’t have friends and everybody hates them?

“A fun mystery for early readers, with some tricky moral dilemmas.”

—Carol Matas

“Matas has captured well the logic of an intelligent eight-year-old girl and has explored equally well the experience of not following parental advice and the trouble which then ensues... This book is a welcome addition to the collection of beginning chapter books for girls. Highly Recommended.”

—CM Magazine
Sworn Enemies
CAROL MATAS

Aaron and Zev have been protected from serving in the czar’s army for very different reasons—Aaron’s father pays to keep his scholarly son free and Zev works as a khapper, kidnapping other poor, young Jewish boys to fulfill the czar’s arm quotas. Zev’s jealousy of Aaron turns to hate when he discovers that Miriam, the girl he loves, will be Aaron’s future wife. Zev decides to rid himself of Aaron forever by turning him over to the czar’s army, where few survive the forced labor.

In this powerful novel set in nineteenth-century Russia, Carol Matas explores the complex issues of betrayal, faith and forgiveness.

“Sworn Enemies not only tells a good story, but it is also a fine character study. By using Aaron and Zev as alternating narrators, Matas shows her audience that labels like ‘villain’ and ‘hero’ are not absolutes. A real discussion starter, the book raises numerous theological and moral questions as well as invites comparisons with happenings in the contemporary world. A must purchase!”
—CM Magazine

World Rights Available
Previously published by HarperCollins Canada
Film Rights Available
Ages 8-12

Represented by Lynn Bennett
info@tlal.com

“Sworn Enemies is the story of two boys, a fanatic who thinks only of his own selfish wants and a boy who believes in treating others the way you would like to be treated. And yet each boy is an idealist, each boy believes their way is the only way. One will grow and learn the other will not.”
—Carol Matas

New York Public Library, Book for the Teen Age, 1994
Canadian Library Association, Notable book, 1993
Sydney Taylor Award, 1993
Notable Children’s Trade Book in the field of Social Studies, by NCSS, US, 1994
**Jesper**

**CAROL MATAS**

*Jesper* is a thrilling novel about determination, courage, and love. It is also a tale of twisted loyalties, ruthlessness, betrayal, and the darker side of heroism.

It is a time when nothing is safe, and no one can be trusted. There are German soldiers everywhere; worse yet, there are Danes who secretly spy on their neighbours in exchange for extra food or money. Despite the terrible danger, though, teenage Jesper risks everything to work for the resistance.

The Second World War is at its height. Like most of Europe, the small nation of Denmark has been overrun by Hitler’s armies. Food and supplies are rationed, newspapers are censored, and Danes who resist are jailed, tortured, even shot. But Jesper and his friends in the resistance defy the Germans, and put their lives on the line, by publishing an underground newspaper to educate people on what is really happening in the war, and by carrying out desperate feats of military sabotage with the Germans constantly at their heels.

**Excerpt:**

They didn’t bother to uncuff my hands; they just tied me to the pole by winding the rope around my chest and my legs. Then five soldiers lined up in front of us, machine guns ready. I remember thinking what a beautiful night it was. The trees rose up all around us, but when I looked straight up I could see stars. The branches made a beautiful sound as they rustled and swayed in the wind. I couldn’t help but think what a peaceful spot this was.

One of the soldiers started to call out: “Ready, aim.” I took a deep breath, said a prayer to God to protect those I loved, shut my eyes, held my breath, felt my heart hammered against my chest. No wonder they tied you up. My knees buckled, and I would’ve dropped to the ground.

“Fire.”
Lisa

CAROL MATAS

For the Jews of Denmark under the siege of the Nazis, time is running out. Lisa, who is now fifteen, and her best friend, Suzanne, set aside their dreams of dating and romance to become full partners in the heart-stopping world of armed resistance.

The city is Copenhagen and the year is 1940. Lisa is twelve years old, a bright high-spirited girl looking forward to the fun and independence of being a teenager.

Lisa and her family are awakened early one morning by the roar of war planes: Hitler is invading Denmark. The small country is overrun within the day, and the hardships and persecutions of enemy occupation begin.

When Lisa realizes that her older brother, Stefan, has joined the Danish resistance, she insists on helping too. She becomes a secret messenger with the thrilling, and terrifying job of distributing leaflets under the very noses of the German soldiers. But as the war goes on, the German occupation grows increasingly violent, and word spreads of Hitler's vicious campaign against the Jews in neighbouring countries.

“Scholastic’s reissue of this award-winning book will be a timely addition for those looking for World War II stories to complement the new Grade Six Social Studies curriculum in Manitoba...Carol Matas has created a well-written account...She manages to convey the fear and the helplessness, but also the feeling of hope. In spite of the overwhelming sadness of innocence of youth lost to harsh reality, Matas showcases Lisa as a strong character who believes that one person can make a difference. Recommended.”
—CM Magazine

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“A powerful book...intense and real...however one approaches it, as history, as adventure, or simply as a story about growing up, Lisa is enthralling.”
—New York Times Book Review

“An unsettling, important novel.”
—Publishers Weekly

“A gripping tale of adventure and courage.”
—Voya

The Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction for Young Reader, 1988
New York Times Book Review, Notable Book
Canadian Children’s Book Centre “Our Choice,”
Memorable Books for Young People
Lisa’s War - Sydney Taylor Book Award, 1989
Lisa’s War - Young Adults’ Choices,
International Reading Association, 1991

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