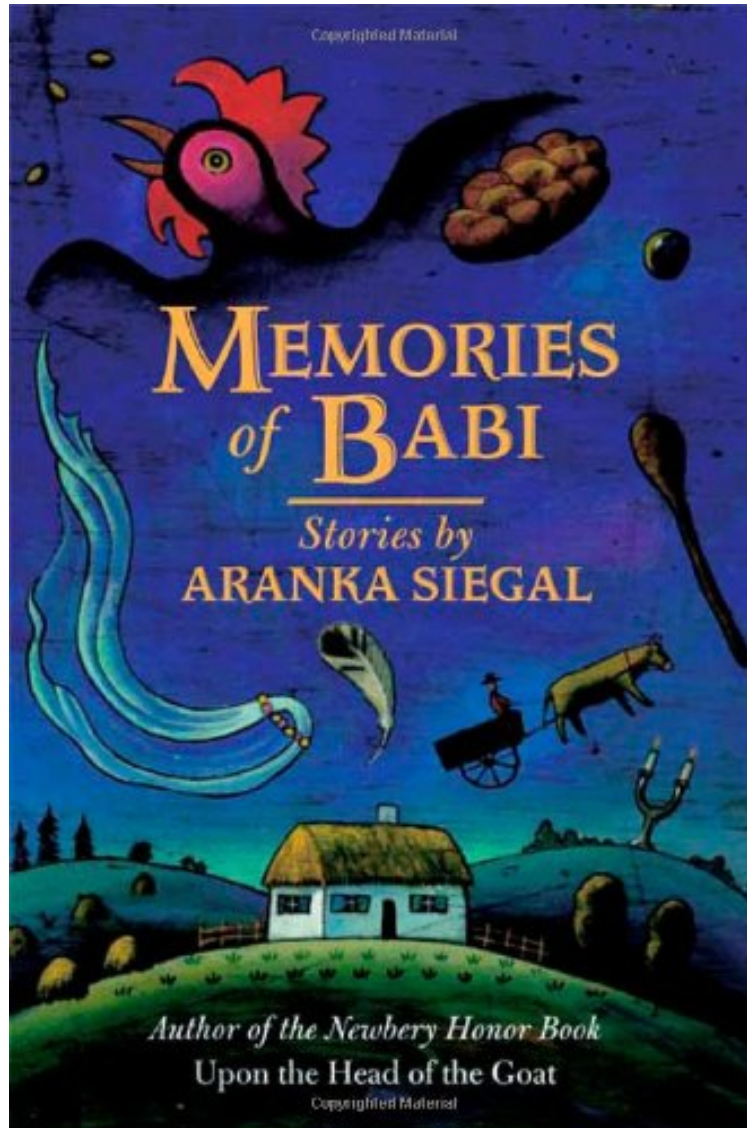


(Download pdf) Memories of Babi

## Memories of Babi

*Aranka Siegal*

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#3108650 in Books 2008-05-27 2008-05-27Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.15 x .76 x 6.131, .55 #File Name: 0374399786128 pagesFictionMysteryBook | File size: 46.Mb

**Aranka Siegal : Memories of Babi** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Memories of Babi:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Superior Storyteller with HeartBy DanielleOne of my favorite children's novels is Upon the Head of the Goat: A Childhood in Hungary by Aranka Siegal; it chronicles Siegal's real life experience during the Holocaust, leading up to her captivity in a concentration camp. In the sequel, Grace in the Wilderness: After the Liberation, Siegal explains her life post-World War II, integrating back into everyday life after experiencing the horrors of the Holocaust. While it can easily be read as a stand alone, Memories of Babi, is best

appreciated as a prequel to Siegal's two original novels as they bring life and history to the characters that is not afforded in the length of this book of stories. Each chapter in *Memories of Babi* contains a story that reads like a fable with a lesson. Main character Piri (Siegal with a different name) learns from life with her grandmother, Babi, on Babi's farm. Piri learns lessons in hard work, compassion, honesty, and tradition which all help her maintain her sense of identity and compassion once faced with the atrocities of the Holocaust. My favorite story was titled *The Beggar Woman*, in which Piri and Babi take care of Bracha, a beggar woman in town, when nobody else would help her. Babi grew up with Bracha and explains to Piri that she befriended Bracha as a child because others were cruel to her. When Piri asks whether or not the other children would play with Babi after she befriended Bracha, Babi replies, "Some did and some did not, but it didn't bother me. The ones that were so mean to her were not worth bothering about. Why would I want such mean friends?" I found this to be great foreshadowing for Piri's experience with the Holocaust. Because I had already read Aranka Siegal's two autobiographical novels I knew what Piri would experience and how it would affect her; I knew the type of child she was and the adult she would become. The stories in *Memories of Babi* are part of the foundation for who Piri is which makes the stories more powerful having already read the novels. I highly recommend that if you are interested in reading this, you first read Siegal's novels. While they are marketed as children's novels, the content and writing are appropriate for any age. If you have children in junior high school or older, I highly recommend reading these books with them to give you a platform for discussing the Holocaust and human rights. Aranka Siegal's books are compelling reads for any age.

**Bottom Line:** A great compilation of fable-like stories which I highly recommend -- after reading Siegal's books *Upon the Head of a Goat* and *Grace in the Wilderness*. 4/5 stars stand-alone, but 5/5 stars as read with Siegal's other books.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Glimpse into Another Time By mercuryval

If you don't already know, Aranka Siegal is a Holocaust survivor. This book is written about the time before she was taken to the concentration camps. Knowing this adds a whole new dimension to the book. Aranka Siegal spent time during the summer (and sometimes other parts of the year) with Babi, her grandmother, who lived in Komjaty, a Ukrainian village. It is clear from these stories that her grandmother was an inspiration to her. The stories are written for younger readers—the book is a little over 100 pages—so it is an easy read. I like how she writes the way she speaks: nothing fancy, simply communicating her story. I enjoyed being taken into a world much different from my own. Indeed, the world of Babi is even different from the world Aranka knew growing up, as she lived in the city with her parents and siblings. She mentioned in her talk that her grandmother was an inspiration for her. Above all, Babi had unwavering faith no matter what happened in life. Though Aranka was not present when her grandmother was taken by the Nazis (this part of the story is not recounted in this book), she is confident that Babi kept her faith all the way to the end. That strength is foreshadowed in this book. Babi does everything by hand. Each morning when Aranka (Piri, in this book) would awaken, a fire would already be roaring, breakfast would usually be prepared, and bread or other food would be in the works for later. Babi was also the problem solver of the area. For instance, when Piri's friend's grandmother cuts her hair terribly, Babi evens out the haircut, giving the crying girl confidence and turning a negative into a positive. Babi reminds me of the quintessential grandmother—someone with a lifetime of experiences, an unbreakable spirit, and enough common sense to solve any problem. What gave the book extra depth for me was knowing how it all turns out for Babi and her family. Throughout the work, Babi gave Piri advice about growing up and promised her that she would get to do all the things older kids got to do, all in its own time. It was sad to read that, knowing that Aranka and her grandmother were separated, both dragged to Concentration Camps. But something Babi said resonated with me. Babi said that everyone is put on this earth for a purpose, and she said that Piri was only a child and wouldn't know her purpose yet, but she would eventually. Hearing Aranka Siegal speak, I learned her purpose. She went through a terrible experience, but she found that her purpose was to share her story with the world, opening her heart in hopes of spreading love and preventing further atrocities by educating people about the consequences of hatred. Even without that added dimension—without knowing the “end” of the story, the book is a nice glimpse into another culture and another time. I especially liked how Piri believed all the ghost stories and superstitions she heard—it brought me back to the mind of an imaginative child. In the end, the author hints at the fact that her faith has never been as strong as her grandmother's, and I know from the talk I heard that her faith was deeply tested by her experiences at Auschwitz. But she still held her grandmother's spirit in her heart and has lived with the lessons of her grandmother for all these years. It was an inspirational book, and I'm glad I read it.

On a side note, there are a lot of recipes mentioned in the book, and several of them are reprinted in the back of the book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Memories of Babi*: Purchased at .com

By dep This is the third book I have read written by Aranka Siegal, (known as Piri in her books). I wasn't sure how I would like this book, but it does have a special charm. The eight stories in the book all have a moral lesson for Piri to learn, who better to teach her than her beloved Grandmother Babi. I must admit some stories seemed a bit scary when dealing with cemeteries and neighbors believing in witches. A good book though, which very much reminded me of my own grandmother who would have had much in common with Babi. A good read and a lovely book.

Piri is a city girl, but every year she goes to visit her grandmother Babi on her farm in the Ukrainian village of

Komjaty. There is a lot that Piri finds strange, even scary, in Komjaty, such as the ghost in the form of a rooster who supposedly haunts the cemetery! But Piri loves country life: making corn bread, eating plums right off the tree, venturing out with her grandmother in the early morning to hunt for mushrooms. And during her time with Babi, Piri learns lessons that will stay with her all of her life, about the importance of honest hard work, of caring for the less fortunate, and of having the courage to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. In these nine stories, Aranka Siegal paints a tender portrait of the love between a grandmother and granddaughter, inspired by her own experiences with her grandmother. *Memories of Babi* is a 2009 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

From School Library Journal Grade 4–7—It takes an eloquent weaver of words to entice readers into the world of rural, pre-World War II Ukraine, and Siegal does just that in these nine exquisite tales. Youngsters visit Babi's farm and the town of Komjaty, seeing it through the eyes of young Aranka, who spent summers there with her grandmother. The beauty of the countryside comes through, but so does the anti-Semitism, the superstitions, and the poverty. The stories and the lessons learned resonate as the character and readers discover life in the Carpathian Mountains together. The love between grandmother and granddaughter especially shines through as Siegal retells the lessons that she asserts have become even more meaningful to her in the intervening years.—Ernie Bond, Salisbury University, MD  
Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. “The love between grandmother and granddaughter especially shines through.” —School Library Journal “Fans of the Little House Books will like Siegal's warm descriptions of work, home, and faith; they will also appreciate the picture of Siegal's loving grandmother-mentor.” —Booklist