



A Snowfall of Silver

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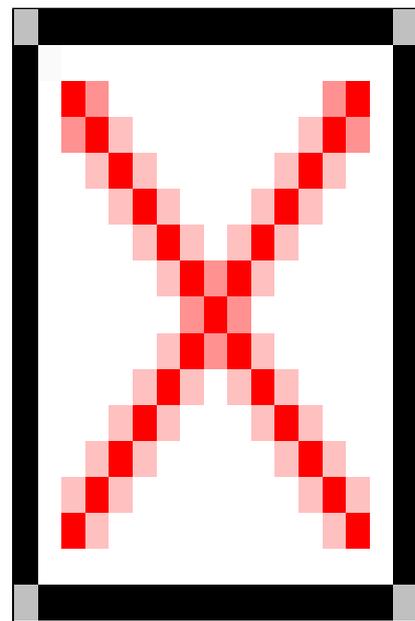
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Media type:

Book

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4



It is 1931 and Freya is 19, impulsive, impatient and obsessed with becoming an actress. She runs away from home to the heady theatrical life which London has to offer, determined somehow to realise her ambition. This impetuous journey is not quite as daring as the reader is first led to believe as Freya has a sister living in London who allows her to stay and, in addition, she meets Kit on the train who offers to show her around the Queen Anne theatre, where he is conveniently working as part of the backstage team. This pattern recurs in the novel-crisis followed by safety net or sometimes improbable solution. With the help of this repeated device the reader is led ably and protectively through the novel.

Wood skilfully recreates the theatrical world and her characters are convincingly and entertainingly drawn. The full gamut of sexual partnerships is presented in the story but the inherent tensions are not always explored. The gradual deepening of Kit and Freya's feelings for each other runs through the novel, a steady and reliable thread which is, ultimately, neatly but not conventionally tied. Freya's realisation-after her competent but uninspired performance as an understudy- that she will never be a great actress is followed by the conviction that her career path lies in directing Kit's

plays. With the help of Rhys Cantwell, an internationally famous director who Kit introduced her to in the Queen Anne theatre, her plans come to fruition on a London stage and the novel ends with the curtain rising on her production with Mr Cantwell, her family, friends-and, of course, Kit-in the theatre to support her.f

This a pleasing, cosy read which comforts in these dark, distressing times. The narrative moves along richly and entertainingly and Wood addresses deeper issues such as racism which give the story gravitas. There is escapism aplenty in the after-show parties and the interplay between characters in the somewhat claustrophobic world of a theatrical company on tour. **A Snowfall of Silver** is perfectly cheering antidote to the long, dark nights of Autumn and Winter.

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