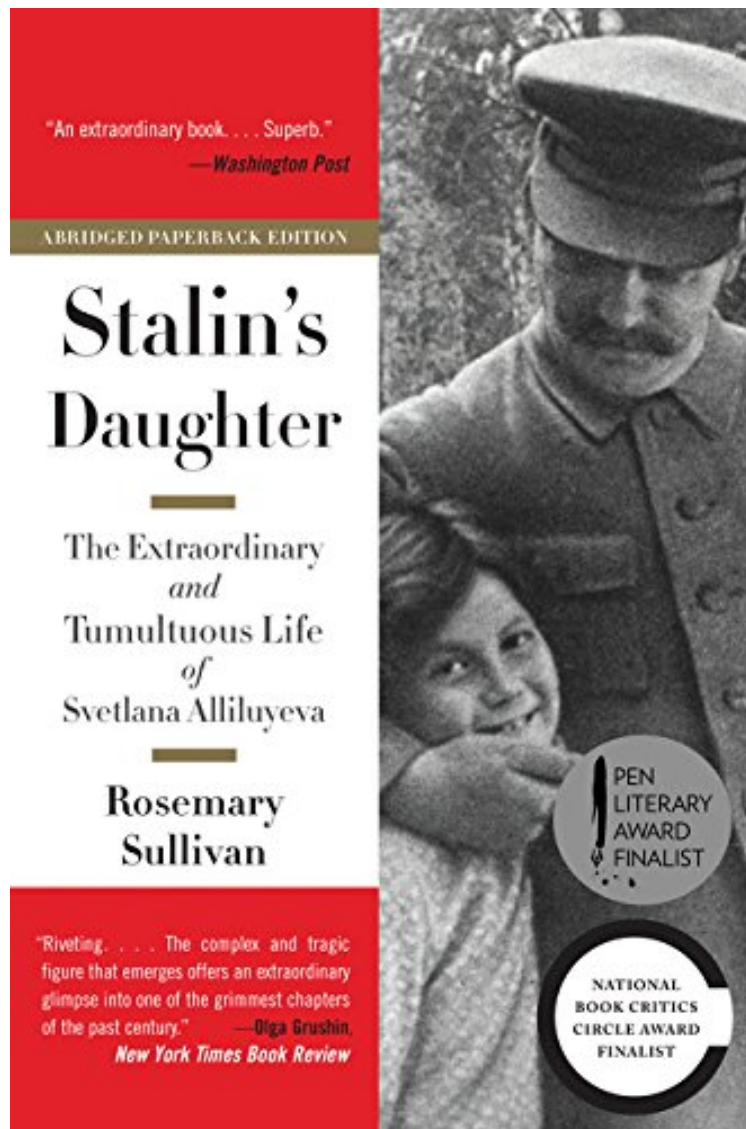


Stalin's Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva

Rosemary Sullivan

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Rosemary Sullivan : Stalin's Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stalin's Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva:

109 of 113 people found the following review helpful. A Riveting Account of the Tumultuous and Strange Life of

Stalin's Daughter by a Gifted Writer
By James McGrath Morris
In trivial pursuits years ago I would have been the only one in the group to have recognized the name Svetlana Alliluyeva. For some reason I have always been fascinated by the fact that the only daughter of Russian dictator Joseph Stalin lived--in all places of the world--the United States! But I had to wait until now to learn the riveting tale behind this unusual fact. The wait had been worth it. Rosemary Sullivan, a gifted writer and scholar, has produced a fascinating account of Alliluyeva's improbable journey from inside the walls of the Kremlin to the United States. As much as I had hoped it would be a happy story, I was chagrined to learn it was anything but. Nonetheless reading this book is a pleasure. Not only does author Sullivan provide a sympathetic and riveting account of Alliluyeva's life but reading the book is like entering a time portal back to the incredible days of the Cold War. I'm amazed we survived the era and now I understand that among Stalin's victims was his own daughter.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The sad life of Stalin's only daughter Svetlana Alliluyeva is brilliantly chronicled by Canadian author Rosemary Sullivan
By C. M Mills
Josef Stalin was a monster in human form. Stalin led the Soviet Union from the death of Lenin in 1924 until his own death in 1953. During those dark years he murdered millions of his nation's citizens, relocated millions of others and led his nation to triumph against the Nazis. During World War II the Soviets lost over twenty million people. Stalin was twice married. His first wife produced one son and died early of disease. His second wife Nadya gave birth to a son Yakov who was died in a Nazi POW camp and Svetlana who was born in 1926. Svetlana was a favorite of her father who was sometimes loving towards her but could also be as cold as an ice cube to his family. Her mother Nadya committed suicide burdened by the cruelty of Stalin and her lonely and difficult life. Svetlana was a smart young woman who studied Russian Literature at the University of Moscow. Her father did not approve of her friends. At the height of the Cold War she defected to the West living in England and the United States. She left behind two children in Russia who spent most of their lives denouncing their mother for her defection from Soviet society.. In America Svetlana became involved with Taliesin the community established by architect Frank Lloyd Wright. She wed Wesley Peters a member of this group but the marriage failed. She was married four times. Svetlana died in America in 2011 an impoverished and bitter woman. She too was one of Stalin's victims. Rosemary Sullivan has told Svetlana's odyssey with insight and wisdom. The book is well illustrated with family photos. This book has cinematic sweep and is a fine biography recommended by this reviewer.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic book
By moomoo
Firstly, this book taught me the history of the Bolshevik Revolution of which I knew very little. It is written like a wonderful novel, not like a history book. Never boring. It left me so sad that a human being like Svetlana, never really feeling accepted in any of the countries where she lived, always suffered from the psychological trauma of her father's tyranny. People were always popping up to destroy whatever anonymity she wanted. She was however, because of bad decisions, always in the public sphere. Her constant moves, changes of citizenship, kept her in the news. She had a very complicated psyche which ultimately destroyed her despite the people who did try to help her. She always needed someone to love but there were always complications because of this neediness. She was an amazing lady! Many people who got to know her, realized how special she was in spite of her complexities. I highly recommend this book. Having read so many books of fiction, it has made me want to read more biographies.

Winner of the Plutarch Award for Best Biography
National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist
PEN Literary Award Finalist
New York Times Notable Book
Washington Post Notable Book
Boston Globe Best Book of the Year
The award-winning author of *Villa Air-Bel* returns with a painstakingly researched, revelatory biography of Svetlana Stalin, a woman fated to live her life in the shadow of one of history's most monstrous dictators—her father, Josef Stalin. Born in the early years of the Soviet Union, Svetlana Stalin spent her youth inside the walls of the Kremlin. Communist Party privilege protected her from the mass starvation and purges that haunted Russia, but she did not escape tragedy—the loss of everyone she loved, including her mother, two brothers, aunts and uncles, and a lover twice her age, deliberately exiled to Siberia by her father. As she gradually learned about the extent of her father's brutality after his death, Svetlana could no longer keep quiet and in 1967 shocked the world by defecting to the United States—leaving her two children behind. But although she was never a part of her father's regime, she could not escape his legacy. Her life in America was fractured; she moved frequently, married disastrously, shunned other Russian exiles, and ultimately died in poverty in Wisconsin. With access to KGB, CIA, and Soviet government archives, as well as the close cooperation of Svetlana's daughter, Rosemary Sullivan pieces together Svetlana's incredible life in a masterful account of unprecedented intimacy. Epic in scope, it's a revolutionary biography of a woman doomed to be a political prisoner of her father's name. Sullivan explores a complicated character in her broader context without ever losing sight of her powerfully human story, in the process opening a closed, brutal world that continues to fascinate us. Illustrated with photographs.

“[A] measured, informative biography...fascinating...an admiring portrait of an amazingly adaptable person facing all but insurmountable odds...[and who] refused to let her lineage seal her fate.” (Janet Maslin, *New York Times Book*)
“Riveting.... Throughout, Sullivan treats the wealth of facts she has uncovered with a sensitive, compassionate touch.... Sullivan tells a nuanced story that, while invariably sympathetic, nonetheless allows readers the freedom of

their own interpretations.” (Olga Grushin, New York Times Book) “Compelling.... Sullivan takes us confidently through an eventful life.... It’s to Ms. Sullivan’s credit that, at least in these pages, Alliluyeva herself is proved... a fascinating person not simply because of her name but because she was a willful, intelligent, passionate woman who resisted being gawked at as a freak of history: the monster’s pretty daughter.” (Wall Street Journal) “[An] extraordinary book.... Rosemary Sullivan possesses the sensitivity necessary to unlock a beguiling and complex character worthy of admiration, not ridicule.... Superb.” (Washington Post) “A child of the Kremlin who as an adult defected to the United States, Svetlana led a strange and often sad life; Sullivan brings deep scholarship and sympathy to her story.” (Boston Globe, Best Books of 2015) “A principal virtue of... Sullivan’s empathetic *Stalin’s Daughter* is the vivid sense it offers of Alliluyeva.... Sullivan does a nice job of conveying her subject’s point of view without accepting it as the last word.” (Los Angeles Times) “*Stalin’s Daughter* is a poignant look at the struggles of a dictator’s offspring.” (Christian Science Monitor) “[A] magisterial biography.” (O Magazine) “Sullivan tells Alliluyeva’s story with sympathy and sharp psychological insight.... [It] soars.... It is to Sullivan’s credit that she makes the Homeric wanderings of Svetlana Alliluyeva—who died, almost penniless, in 2011—not only comprehensible, but also unforgettably moving.” (Newsday) “Sullivan does an admirable job of researching, organizing and contextualizing the events of Alliluyeva’s bewildering life.... It is an excellent book, and deserves a wide readership.” (Dallas Morning News) “Compassionate and compelling, Sullivan sensitively delivers the intimate, tragic life story of a woman who was Stalin’s only daughter in all its strangeness.... This is not a political story but a quest for love in the heart of darkness.” (Simon Sebag Montefiore, bestselling author of *Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar*) “If it weren’t for the pages of scrupulous footnotes and the many interviews Rosemary Sullivan pursued you would be convinced that this was fiction. But it’s a true story, thrillingly told in this fast-paced, fascinating biography.” (Cokie Roberts, New York Times bestselling author of *Founding Mothers, Ladies of Liberty, and Capital Dames*) “A detailed, sensitive and... sympathetic account of Alliluyeva’s turbulent and tragic life.” (San Francisco Chronicle) “Although other authors have provided more systematic analysis of the substance and mechanics of Stalin’s terror, Rosemary Sullivan... provides one of the more emotionally draining illustrations of Stalin’s evil.... As Sullivan makes clear, Stalin’s daughter led a full and dramatically tumultuous life.” (Philadelphia Inquirer) “A compelling biography... Sullivan tells [Alliluyeva’s] story with sympathy and verve.” (Minneapolis Star-Tribune) “With a gentle literary touch, [Sullivan] lets readers follow Alliluyeva as she wanders the U.S. and U.K....” (Los Angeles Magazine) “Revealing.... Sullivan’s biography takes us beyond... obvious truth and helps us understand, through Svetlana’s stormy history, the nature of regimes that are as brutal as Stalin’s was.” (New York of Books) “...[an] arresting biography.” (More Magazine) “Sullivan draws on previously secret documents and interviews with Svetlana’s American daughter, her friends, and the CIA “handler” who escorted her to the U.S. for riveting accounts of her complicated life.” (Booklist (starred review)) “A biography of haunting fascination.... The author has illuminated another challenging, mercurial subject.... The author manages suspense and intrigue at every turn.” (Kirkus s (starred review)) “Stalin’s only daughter, lived an almost impossible life at the edges of 20th-century history.... Sullivan masterfully employs interviews, Alliluyeva’s own letters, and the contents of CIA, KGB, and Soviet archives to stitch together a coherent narrative of her fractured life.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review)) “Insightful and thoroughly researched.... This excellent and engrossing biography is suitable for anyone interested in Russian history or in Svetlana’s struggle to make a difference in a world that never could separate her from her.” (Library Journal) Praise for *Villa Air-Bel*: “A moving and richly detailed account.” (Boston Globe) “*Villa Air-Bel* is a most welcome book, a triumph of the human spirit” (Philadelphia Inquirer) “With tremendous suspense and emotional pull, Sullivan recounts the little-known story of Varian Fry, the intrepid young American who sheltered [dozens of artists and intellectuals] helping them and hundreds more escape from Vichy France.” (Vogue) “Sullivan brilliantly interweaves personal histories with terrifying tales about flight over mountains to Spain or Switzerland and by sea to Casablanca or Martinique.... At the centre is Varian Fry, the quiet American.” (Sunday Times (London)) “Rosemary Sullivan’s *Villa Air-Bel* is a marvellous addition to the surging literature on occupied France. Sullivan writes not as a historian—she has little new material—but as a dramatist. Her scene-by-scene evocation of life at the house reads like an updated Chekhov comedy laced with horror.” (Financial Times) “This is a magnificent, complex narrative of courage, folly, and complacency... a beautifully narrated book.” (Telegraph) “Gripping... Sullivan captures the tense atmosphere of France as the Germans invaded and the fear and anxiety of the intellectuals, some held in detention camps and some who ignored the danger until it was nearly too late.” (Booklist) “A moving tale of great sacrifice in tumultuous times.” (Publishers Weekly) “[*Villa Air-Bel*] bring[s] to life those committed Americans and Europeans who risked all to help others... A complex tale showing how hope and courage flourish, even in the toxic soil of totalitarianism.” (Kirkus s) From the Back Cover Born in 1926, Svetlana Alliluyeva grew up inside the Kremlin as her father’s power soared along with that of the Soviet Union. Eighty-five years later, she died alone in rural Wisconsin. Revealed here for the first time, the many lives of Joseph Stalin’s daughter form a riveting portrait of a woman who fled halfway around the world to escape her birthright. Svetlana was protected from the horrors that her father inflicted upon Soviet citizens, but she was not immune to tragedy. Her mother committed suicide, and her father’s purges claimed the lives of aunts and uncles; he also exiled her lover to Siberia. After her father’s death, she defected to the United States at the height of the Cold War—leaving behind two

children. For a time, Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin community, overseen by his controversial third wife, was a second family; Svetlana married a member, and they had a child. But Wright's widow manipulated their friendship for financial gain, and the marriage disintegrated. Drawing on FBI, CIA, and Russian State Archives, and with the cooperation of Svetlana's daughter, Rosemary Sullivan has created this masterful biography that places Svetlana in a broader context, without losing sight of her powerfully human story that reveals the heart of a brutal world and offers an unprecedented look at its mastermind.

About the Author
Rosemary Sullivan has written poetry, short fiction, biography, literary criticism, reviews, and articles. Her recent books include the critically acclaimed *Villa Air-Bel* and *Labyrinth of Desire*. She is a professor emerita at the University of Toronto and has been awarded Guggenheim, Camargo, and Trudeau Fellowships. She is a recipient of the Lorne Pierce Medal, awarded by the Royal Society of Canada for her contribution to literature and culture, and is an Officer of the Order of Canada.