Aaron Rodgers

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English 112B

Prof. Mary Warner

*The Girl from Everywhere* by Heidi Heilig

**About the Author**

Born in Hawaii, Heidi Heilig grew up riding horses and raising peacocks before moving to New York City. According to her blog, Heilig’s favorite thing to do, “outside of writing” (quote taken from her website, heidiheilig.com), is traveling and she has been to several places—Morocco, Africa, even going back to her birth home and “hiking the trails of the Ko'olau Valley”. With an MFA from NYU in Musical Theatre Writing, Heilig has written “books and lyrics for shows including *The Time Travelers Convention*, *Under Construction*, and *The Hole*”. She currently lives in Brooklyn with her husband, her sons, and their pet snake.

Picture of Heidi Heilig from http://disabilityinkidlit.com/dikl/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/heidi-heilig.jpg

For more info, please be sure to check out her website at <http://www.heidiheilig.com/>



Book Cover taken from

https://stacksofsarah.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/the-girl-from-everywhere.jpg

**Summary**

In *The Girl From Everywhere* the story follows a teenage girl named Nix Song who works aboard a ship called the *Temptation,* that seemingly has the ability to travel to any location—whether real or myth—and time period provided that they have a genuine map of the place and time period they wish to go. Throughout the story Nix is often conflicted as her father, the *Temptation’s* captain Slate Song, seeks a map of Honolulu during the year 1868 to save his wife, and Nix’s mother, from dying and is willing to do almost anything to get it. As the story unfolds, young Nix struggles with several personal crises along the way—the ultimate crises being the question of whether she’ll disappear if they do manage to change the past.

**Quotes**

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| 1. “I was in the crowded bazaar of a nearly historical version of Calcutta, where my father had abandoned me.   “He hadn’t abandoned me for good—not yet. He’d only gone back to the ship to make ready for the next leg of the journey: twentieth-century New York City. It was at our final destination, however, where he hoped to unmake the mistakes of the past.  “Mistakes like me, perhaps.  “He never said as much, but his willingness to leave me behind was plain: here I was, alone, haggling for a caladrius with a pitiful amount of silver in my palm. Part of me wondered whether he’d care if I returned at all, as long as the mythological bird was delivered to the ship.  “No, he would care, at least for *now*…I was a means to an end, and the end was looming, closer every day.” (1—2, this and all other quotes come from the book *The Girl From Everywhere*) | This scene comes from the very first page of the book and already introduces one of the main areas that will be shown in the book: Nix’s rocky relationship with her father, Slate. From the beginning it appears Nix doesn’t think very highly of her father, believing that he doesn’t really care about her and would just get rid of her should they accomplish their task.  This also gives us a brief idea of Nix’s character. She seems to act somewhat unworrying about this, yet as she goes on talking it seems clear that she seems anxious of what may happen should she not be able to deliver the bird to him.  This quote also present’s Nix’s father’s character early in the book: that he is a sailor, resourceful (if the silver is anything to go by), and that he seems to not really see his daughter as much except “a means to an end”. |
| 1. “‘Is it such a risk?’ he said, his voice faltering. ‘Would a life here be so terrible?’   “Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Kashmir turn his face. I clenched my jaw, but Slate pressed forward.  “‘Or the life you want, then—the escape you’ve got planned,’ he said desperately. My mouth fell open; I never thought he’d acknowledge it so openly. Suddenly, irrationally, I wished I’d let Joss tell my fortune.  “Slate plowed on. ‘Not a risk, then, Nixie. A gamble. And think of the reward.” He took my hand, and his was so hot—mine so cold—I pulled away. ‘Sometimes a person has to let go of something to take hold of something else. You always have to choose what’s more important.’  “‘Oh?’ I swallowed, curling my fingers in my lap, holding fistfuls of silk. ‘And what is more important to you, Captain? Lin or me?’  “He stared at me for a long time, but he didn’t answer my question. Then he put his forehead against the canopy support and stared at the trees. When Slate spoke again, his voice was changed, the tone simple, the passion gone. ‘I have to try, Nix? If I don’t, what am I? I love her. Do you understand? I can’t just let her go.” (272—273) | In this scene we get a much deeper view into the mind of Slate Song, Nix’s father and Captain of the *Temptation*. It shows that, unlike what Nix thought about earlier in the book, Slate is much more observant of his daughter’s feelings and exploits. He knows that Nix yearns to be free of him and have her own life, yet she still stays with him. Perhaps, despite the obvious tension between the two, Nix still cares about her father?  Another thing to note in this scene is Slate’s statement to Nix regarding his “gamble”. In a sense, Slate tells his daughter that when someone finds something important in their life then they must make sacrifices to keep it. Of course, this is contradicted when, after Nix asks him what was more important, her or her mother, Slate admits that he doesn’t want to sacrifice her.  What we can get from this quote is that Slate is much more observant than his daughter gives him credit for and that he struggles with deciding what is important in his life—is saving the life of his wife so important that he would willing cast his daughter adrift? |
| 1. “I watched the lonely pool of light as we rowed back to the *Temptation,* the last lantern to shine on Qin’s final realm. It must have been beautiful when he’d been laid to rest—an underground Eden, full of fresh scent of fruit and flowers, the jeweled stars glimmering above. Qin thought he’d rest forever in a heavenly afterlife, but the effigy of his empire had faded faster than his crumbling kingdom above. Joss had said it herself. Everything must come to an end. In every myth, paradise is meant to be lost.   “Slate helped us raise the dinghy, but he gasped when he helped me over the rail. ‘What happened?’ He reached toward my face.  I pulled away from his hands, not wanting to be touched. ‘Just…fate.’ I wiped my sleeve across my cheek—blood, thick and tacky. ‘It’s not mine.’ I clenched my fists, suddenly angry. ‘What’s the use?’ I shouted into the dark, my voice echoing in the cold stars. ‘Why do we bother if all we do is what was written a thousand years ago? What’s the point if we can’t try to change things?’  “‘Oh, Nixie.’ My father reached out again and I let him; my rage had burned too hot and flamed out quickly. He stroked my cheek with the back of one finger. ‘I always knew one day you’d understand.’” (369—370) | I choose this quote because it seemed to have represented a milestone in Nix’s journey. As she and her father prepare to undertake in a dangerous operation and gather materials, Nix begins to realize why her father does what he does and understands a little bit about fate.  In earlier chapters Nix would question, even argue, why her father has been trying so hard to fight against her mother’s fate. It isn’t until she meets her father’s friend Joss, an opium store owner who lived in Honolulu in the late 1800s, that Nix’s understanding about fate begins to shift and she begins to question her own fate and, terrifyingly, whether it was truly hers to begin with.  This scene in the story is pivotal as Nix finally begins to understand her father’s drive for wanting to rescue her mother and how difficult it is to fight against fate. |

**Reasons Why Students Would Want to Read It**

1. This book delves in time travel which is sure to capture the attention of any young adult reader.
2. The book teaches people about the history and myths of some cultures, for example: Honolulu and China.
3. Has elements of romance which would capture the attention of some of the young adult readers.
4. Both Nix and Slate’s strained relationship as father and daughter would grab the attention of several young adults who also have a strained relationship with their father.
5. The question of fate and existence is often talked about in the book.

**Exeter Qualities**

Reading the book, I feel that this book displays quite a few Exeter qualities that any young adult reader would find appealing and would want to put *The Girl From Everywhere* on their book reading list. It is very fast paced, with the scenes jumping from one point to the next. It gives readers a glimpse into a world that no longer exists. *The Girl From Everywhere* also deals with adults who knowingly or unknowingly add to the problems and pressures that Nix experiences throughout the story.

The book also introduces readers to several characters who would be both memorable and likeable—especially with its protagonist, Nix Song, who is a female. Along with the characters, time travel is also featured in the book, which is sure to capture any reader’s attention.

Personally, I really like this book because it also asks us the big question about time travel and fate: if we had the ability to time travel and could change anything in our lives, would we do it? It’s a big question that both Nix and her father face as they journey across the *sea* of time.

**Text Complexity**

*Lexile*

750L Ages 13—17

According to the Lexile scale, Heidi’s *The Girl From Everywhere* is for readers who “is expected to comprehend the text well enough to understand it, while still experiencing a reading challenge.” With a score 750L, the book is meant to be read by readers who are just finishing middle school or in the high school level.

*ATOS*

ATOS Level: 5.2

Interest Level: Upper Grades (UG 9—12)

AR Points: 13.0

Rating: 3.5 Stars

Word Count: 86, 953

Fiction/Nonfiction: Fiction

Topic-Subtopic: Adventure—Sea Stories; Interpersonal Relationships—Family;

People—Pirates; Science Fiction—Time Travel

Series: The Girl From Everywhere

Due to the mention of drug use and sexual references in the book, ATOS ranks the book for high school reading level.

*My Personal Score*

Personally, I feel that both Lexile and ATOS may have put the book in a much higher category than it should be. According to them, *The Girl From Everywhere* is appropriate for people in high school or above but, having read the book, I think it deserves to be in a category for middle schoolers. Reason why I say that it should be middle school level is that while the book has over four-hundred and thirty pages the story line is easy to follow, the characters are memorable, and the true journey it represents—not the journey of time-travel—would capture the hearts of those young readers.

**Other Books Written by Heidi Heilig**

*For a Muse of Fire*

A young woman with a dangerous power she barely understands. A smuggler with secrets of his own. A country torn between a merciless colonial army, a terrifying tyrant, and a feared rebel leader.

The first book in a new trilogy from the acclaimed Heidi Heilig blends traditional storytelling with ephemera for a lush, page-turning tale of escape and rebellion. *For a Muse of Fire* will captivate fans of Sabaa Tahir, Leigh Bardugo, and Renée Ahdieh.

Jetta’s family is famed as the most talented troupe of shadow players in the land. With Jetta behind the scrim, their puppets seem to move without string or stick—a trade secret, they say. In truth, Jetta can see the souls of the recently departed and bind them to the puppets with her blood.

But ever since the colonizing army conquered their country, the old ways are forbidden, so Jetta must never show, never tell. Her skill and fame are her family’s way to earn a spot aboard the royal ship to Aquitan, where shadow plays are the latest rage, and where rumor has it the Mad Emperor has a spring that cures his ills—and could cure Jetta’s, too. Because seeing spirits is not the only thing that plagues her.

But as rebellion seethes and as Jetta meets a young smuggler, she will face truths and decisions that she never imagined—and safety will never seem so far away.

Heidi Heilig creates a vivid, rich world inspired by Asian cultures and French colonialism. Her characters are equally complex and nuanced, including the bipolar heroine. Told from Jetta’s first-person point-of-view, as well as with chapters written as play scripts and ephemera such as telegrams and letters, *For a Muse of Fire* is an engrossing journey that weaves magic, simmering romance, and the deep bonds of family with the high stakes of epic adventure.

*The Ship Beyond Time*

Nix has spent her whole life journeying to places both real and imagined aboard her time-traveling father’s ship. And now it’s finally time for her to take the helm. Her future lies bright before her—until she learns that she is destined to lose the one she loves.

Desperate to change her fate, Nix sails her crew to a mythical utopia to meet another Navigator who promises to teach her how to manipulate time. But everything in this utopia is constantly changing, and nothing is what it seems. Not even her relationship with Kash: best friend, thief, charmer extraordinaire.

*Unbroken: 13 Stories Starring Disabled Teens*

This anthology explores disability in fictional tales told from the viewpoint of disabled characters, written by disabled creators. With stories in various genres about first loves, friendship, war, travel, and more, *Unbroken*will offer today’s teen readers a glimpse into the lives of disabled people in the past, present, and future.

*Don’t Call Me Crazy: 33 Voices Start the Conversation About Mental Health*

*(Don’t) Call Me Crazy* is a conversation starter and guide to better understanding how our mental health affects us every day. Thirty-three writers, athletes, and artists offer essays, lists, comics, and illustrations that explore their personal experiences with mental illness, how we do and do not talk about mental health, help for better understanding how every person’s brain is wired differently, and what, exactly, might make someone *crazy*.

If you’ve ever struggled with your mental health, or know someone who has, come on in, turn the pages, and let’s get talking.