**Elizabeth Wein: *The Pearl Thief***

[www.elizabethwein.com](http://www.elizabethwein.com)

Elizabeth Wein was born in New York City, grew up in England, and started reading when she was 7. She currently lives in Scotland with her husband and two children. She is an avid flyer of small planes and holds a PhD in folklore from the University of Pennsylvania.

Wein is the author of *Code Name Verity*, winner of the Edgar Award in the Best Young Adult category and a Printz Honor Book; *Rose Under Fire*, also with *Black Dove* and *White Raven*, both winner of the Children’s Africana Book Award.

Wein and her husband, Tim, both enjoyed flying, and they both have their private pilot’s licenses.

https://vignette.wikia.nocookie.net/starwars/images/9/93/Elizabeth\_Wein.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20171007130955

As a fifteen-year-old schoolgirl returned home for her usual summer break, Julia Beaufort-Stuart woke up in a hospital wounded and with amnesia after a few weeks was not normal. Once she returned to her grandfather’s estate, she found out one of her family’s employees was missing, and he disappeared on the same day she landed in the hospital. Wanting to find out the missing piece of the puzzle, she befriended with Euan McEwen, the Traveller boy who found her when she was injured, and his sister, Ellen. As Julia started to grow closer to the family, she discovered more prejudices between the Travellers and the people from town, and as soon as a body was discovered, the McEwens are first to blame. Desperate to find out what happened and to protect her friends, Julia has to find her memories piece by piece, and forced to walk through the history of the Stuart family.

**Favorite Quotes:**

1. “Feeling abandoned, I let my natural vanity take control of me, and I spent a long time in front of Memere’s dressing table mirror…” (*The Pearl Thief, The Appearance of Legs 160*)

* **Significance:**

It’s hard not to pay attention to our appearances when we were teenagers, because we were just starting to get used to what we actually look like. We will try to fix our hair, our clothes if possible, or even our facial expressions. We also talk to ourselves a lot, to give ourselves more confidence, especially in front of a mirror, when we were trying to figure out how we look best.

1. “Hugh Housman was a scholar. He wasn’t a natural thug and he wasn’t naturally bold. He needed babying.” (*The Pearl Thief, An’ Wha Dare Meddle Wi’ Me? 279*)

* **Significance:**

I laughed so hard after I read this. This passage was showing how easily we give judgments. Julia basically scrolled at Housman because he is a man but with no strength, just like a baby that needs nurturing. The word choice directly takes us to the situation and I can feel Julia filled with despise when she saw Housman.

1. “ “You perfect coward,” I sympathized patronizingly. “Please don’t tell me again that you’re sorry….”” (*The Pearl Thief, An’ Wha Dare Meddle Wi’ Me? 281*)

* **Significance:**

Here Julia scrolled at Housman again. She used all the possible words she could use when accusing Housman by not being able to take responsibility. We sometimes would talk in the same language when we’re raging, and words usually hurt more than any weapon.

**Author’s Writings (Bibliography):**

Elizabeth Wein’s writing style mostly per *Adolescents in the Search of Meaning* falls between the category adventure and realistic fiction.

For *The Pearl Thief*, she talked about the history of Scotland in the book, “Scottish Travellers, like other nomadic ethnic groups throughout Europe, have long been treated as pariahs…” (*The Pearl Thief, Author’s Note 320*) The reason why she wrote the story from an outsider from the Travellers is because she is an outsider.

Her stories represent the friendship between a possible enemy and the main character. For example, *Code Name Verity* was about WWII with two young British women’s friendship, except one is a pilot and another is a spy. In *The Pearl Thief*, Ellen and Euan are both Travellers with mysteries backgrounds, but with Julia only having them as sources to find out what happened to her, she has no choice but to trust them.

**Text Complexity:**

*The Pearl Thief* has a page count of 336, has an ATOS book level 6.4 or above, which means the book most likely suits teens around age 12-18, and the grades of 7-12. I found the ranging quite accurate because there are lots of challenges encountered including trusting strangers, being unconscious and panicking, learning family history and protect what’s important to us. There are also languages that are not used in modern society, such as “Aye,” or “Shaness”. Sometimes the wordings are hard to understand, and a 7th grade might still be too young to make sense of those.

**Why giving this book to teens:**

* Learning to trust someone when we have prejudices against them
* Romance may not be the most important part in a teenager’s life, friendship is far more valuable
* Getting to know ourselves when we’re not “adults” yet
* Appearances can be important, but not quite as important as personalities.
* Always be carious instead of staying put, we never know what we will encounter or find when we take our first step.

**Author’s other works:**

* **Code Name Verity:** published 2012. Focused on the friendship between two young British women in WWII, one English and one Scottish, a spy and a pilot.
* **Rose Under Water:** published 2013. Rose Justice, an 18-year-old American volunteer Air Transport Auxiliary pilot who is captured in France in 1944, and is sent to the camp. It follows up *Code Name Verity* with a few characters in this book.