



SENTIR

SIONNER

IMPA

THE BERLIN LETTERS

A COLD WAR NOVEL

BOOK CLUB KIT

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

“Surrounding the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall, Reay’s action-packed novel is told in dual-narrative form between a daughter with a rebellious streak and her father’s buried secrets. A story of hope and resilience, *The Berlin Letters* is a thrilling story full of intrigue, espionage, code-breaking, and, at its core, loyalty and humanity. You won’t be able to put it down!”

—**Eliza Knight, USA TODAY and international bestselling author of *Starring Adele Astaire***

“*The Berlin Letters* is a thrilling read that has it all: secret codes, espionage, and a fascinating glimpse into the world behind the Berlin Wall. Katherine Reay always delivers well-researched historical fiction with a perfect blend of heartwarming characters and fast-paced action. Fans of historical spy novels are going to love this enthralling read!”

—**Madeline Martin, New York Times bestselling author of *The Keeper of Hidden Books***

“It’s a beautiful story with a perfect ending: the fall of the wall. But it also should serve as a cautionary tale.”

—**Bookreporter.com**

“Both deeply moving and edge-of-your-seat suspenseful, *The Berlin Letters* is an eloquent reminder of the brutal totalitarianism of Soviet Communism and the unsung heroes who fought to tear down the Iron Curtain and free Eastern Europe.”

—**Beatriz Williams, New York Times bestselling author of *The Summer Wives***

“Fans of codebreakers, spies, and Cold War dramas will be entrapped by Reay’s tale of courage, love, and honor set against the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall.”

—**Starred Booklist Review**

MEET THE AUTHOR



KATHERINE REAY is a national bestselling and award-winning author who has enjoyed a lifelong affair with books. She publishes both fiction and nonfiction, holds a BA and MS from Northwestern University, and currently lives outside Chicago, Illinois, with her husband and three children.

CONNECT WITH KATHERINE:



@katherinereay



@katherinereaybooks



@katherine_reay

LETTER FROM KATHERINE

Hello Dear Friends!

I am delighted to present you with *The Berlin Letters*!

This book has been such an exciting treat for me. While all books are labors of love, Luisa, her family secrets, and her father's work behind the Berlin Wall set up a dynamic sense of chase, suspense, and anticipation that was tremendously fun to write. I started this journey studying the CIA's Venona Project and photographs from the very morning the Wall went up in 1961 and ended up with a family love story.

Early on August 13, 1961, Monica Voekler panics at the new barricade that separates her from her parents and, without thinking, throws her young daughter over the barbed wire...

Twenty-eight years later, CIA cryptographer Luisa Voekler finds a secret cache of letters written by the father she has long presumed dead and learns the truth about her grandfather's work, her father's identity, and why she has never progressed in her career. With little more than a rudimentary plan and hope, she journeys to Berlin and risks everything to free her father and get him out of East Berlin alive.

In the meantime, Luisa's father, journalist Haris Voekler, shares his story with readers as well. While he grew up a proud East Berliner, after that fateful morning in 1961, his eyes open to the realities of postwar East Germany and he realizes that the Soviet promises of a better future are not coming to fruition. Soon Haris finds himself separated from his young daughter and all alone after his wife dies. There's only one way to reach his family—by sending coded letters to his father-in-law who lives on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

I sincerely hope your book club enjoys this novel as much as I loved writing it. If so, please help me spread the word and share it across social media. Also, consider leaving reviews on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, BookBub, and Goodreads. I appreciate it a great deal and thank you! One more thing... I LOVE chatting with book clubs, so if you are interested in having me pop up in your book club on a Zoom call, reach out to me on social media and let me know!

Enjoy!

All the best to you,

Katherine



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you feel about Walther's decision to share Haris's letters with a journalist?
2. Do you think Walther should have told Luisa her father was alive? Why or why not? Were his secrets justified?
3. Luisa begins to grasp the fear that continues to affect her Oma's life. Do you think she'll ever fully understand? What does that say or mean with regard to our ability to understand each other?
4. Would you have risked everything and traveled to Berlin? Why or why not?
5. What do you think of Luisa's initial plan? And considering how little information was conveyed over the wall, was she wrong to hope it might work?
6. Did the story change your thoughts regarding punks in Eastern Europe? What do you think about music and dress as a form of protest?
7. How would life feel when, at any moment, anyone, including your best friend, could be watching and reporting to the government about you?
8. Did you enjoy the split- time scene between Haris and Luisa as they raced away from the Stasi for their "one hour" on November 9, 1989? Do you believe that, despite hearing the same words, two people can perceive things so differently during a single event



HARPER MUSE

M 2