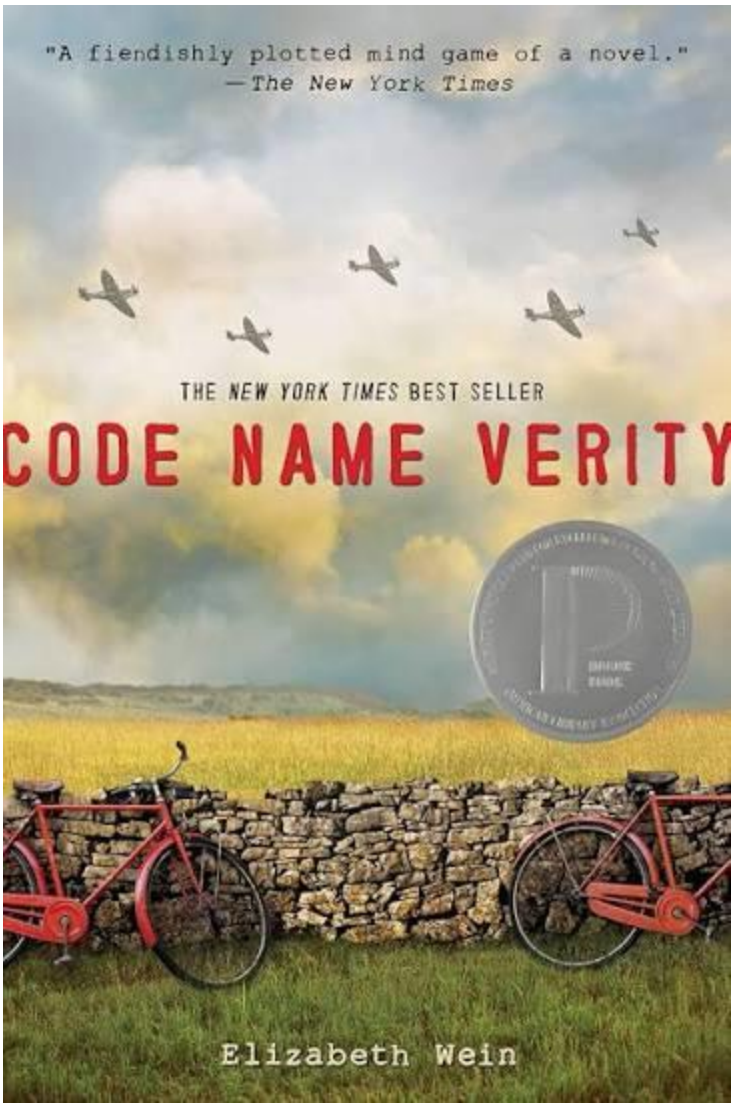

Code Name Verity
Elizabeth Wein
Reviewed by: Ayan Mohapatra, 15
Star Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity
www.bethestaryouare.org

In the captivity of the Nazis after an ill-fated mission to France, a British spy is subjected to interrogation. She, seeing herself as a coward, parts with much information to the Nazis, eventually telling a lengthy story about the life of her friend Maddie and how she got to France. As the spy seeks to evade execution and finish her narrative, many twists and turns transform this story and reframe it. Code Name Verity is a captivating story of friendship, war, and deception.

My attitude towards Code Name Verity is fairly unique. I found about 60% of the book rather mediocre, almost dull, yet the remaining 40% was absolutely fantastic. The book's narration style is very good at making you really feel the perspective character's emotions like they are your own. The sense of hopelessness that the book builds up in the beginning creates a great atmosphere that really makes the book feel unique. And, of course, there are the book's plot twists, which there are only a few of but are generally delightful. Without spoiling anything, I can say that the book is very different at the end than it is at the beginning.

Of course, I did find some of the book rather weak. The biggest issue I had was that the perspective character's friendship with Maddie was rather unconvincing. They do not really interact in the present, and even in the narrative of the past, they have remarkably little interaction. Unfortunately, this friendship is meant to be the emotional core of the book, which makes these issues hard to ignore. The book spends a lot of time talking about planes and flying, something which it does not succeed at making as interesting as the espionage aspects. Finally, the perspective character's name is not given until the midpoint of the book, which makes this review rather annoying to write without spoilers.

Overall, I would recommend Code Name Verity to most readers who would classify themselves as Young Adults. The best 40% of the book is an absolutely wonderful story, and I suspect most readers will enjoy the 60% more than I did.

Recommended Titles:

Rose Under Fire, by Elizabeth Wein

Testament of Youth, by Vera Brittain

Flygirl, by Sherri L. Smith