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Contact Joanne S. Silver (above)

I'LL NEVER BE FOURTEEN YEARS OLD

A memoir by François Lecomte
Translated by Jacques P. Trocmé

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I have only a few hours left in the house that was mine since I was born, to fill myself with its soul and its warmth, with everything that was my universe. Suddenly I remember my birthday, July 25, less than a month away. Never in my young life have I celebrated my birthday without them—him and her. I ask for and demand their promise: "I'll never be fourteen years old unless you are both with me."



The happy childhood of François Lecomte—born under the name Lévy—ended when, because of persecution of French Jews, he and his mother were sent into hiding. François's father was arrested, and François ultimately became one of the many children hidden in the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon. After the war, to his chagrin, his mother sent him to a boarding school for three years. They learned that Jean Lévy, his beloved father, had perished in the gas chambers of Auschwitz shortly after arriving there.

François tells his own story from babyhood through adolescence with humour and grace, and both style and content engage the reader throughout.

His adolescence cut short, François slowly found the path of Remembrance that would keep his father always with him—continuing in the love of the arts and music that they had shared. As an adult, he cherished the love of his wife and grandchildren and lived with "the certainty that somewhere on this earth, a new Martin Luther King will come to 'have a dream.'" (150)

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July 2009. Softcover, 5.5 x 8.5 ins. 190 pp.

Thirty-one black & white and full color illustrations:

Authentic documents, archived and personal photos.

Suggested Discussion Topics for students and book groups.

References for Further Study. ISBN 978-0-9819417-1-4

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