



## Stars Across the Ocean

*Kimberley Freeman*

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**Stars Across the Ocean** Kimberley Freeman

**The powerful new novel from Kimberley Freeman.**

**A rich and satisfying story of two women with indomitable spirits and the high costs they have to pay for being strong-minded, from the author of the bestselling *Lighthouse Bay* and *Ember Island*.**

A story about love, motherhood, and learning whom you belong to in the world.

In 1874, wild and willful Agnes Resolute finally leaves the foundling home where she grew up on the bleak moors of northern England. On her departure, she discovers that she was abandoned with a small token of her mother: a unicorn button. Agnes had always believed her mother to be too poor to keep her, but Agnes has been working as a laundress at the foundling home and recognises the button as belonging to the imperious and beautiful Genevieve Breckby, daughter of a local noble family. Agnes had only seen her once, but has never forgotten her. She investigates and discovers Genevieve is now in London. Agnes follows, living hard in the poor end of London until she finds out Genevieve has moved to France.

This sets Agnes off on her own adventure: to Paris, Agnes follows her mother's trail, and starts to see it is also a trail of destruction. Finally, in Melbourne she tracks Genevieve down. But is Genevieve capable of being the mother Agnes hopes she will be?

A powerful story about women with indomitable spirits, about love and motherhood, and about learning whom you belong to in the world.

## Stars Across the Ocean Details

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Author : Kimberley Freeman

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# From Reader Review Stars Across the Ocean for online ebook

## Dale Harcombe says

The story starts in the present day with a daughter who has left her husband Geoff and come home from Australia, to sort out what is happening with her mother. Several times her mother has been found wandering and is often confused. She wonders when her mother mentions a person called Emile. Then she finds a letter which starts 'To my child, whom I could not keep.' Only part of the letter is there. The rest is missing. The story then turns back to 1874 to Agnes Resolute, who is just about to leave Perdita Hall, a home for orphans and foundlings, where Agnes has lived for nineteen years since being left there as a baby. Agnes remembers seeing a woman and a jacket with unicorn buttons. A unicorn button is the memento that accompanied Agnes when she was left. Agnes believes it belongs to her mother. So starts the search to track her down. Agnes is prepared to do whatever it takes to find her mother.

The story of Agnes and her adventures takes up most of the book. But every now and then it flips back to the present day and the letter. This is an enjoyable read. Agnes is a spunky and determined, or one might say stubborn, but a likeable and kind hearted character. Sometimes the story does get a little farfetched but if you can suspend disbelief and go along with it, this is an entertaining read. with possibly a surprise or two along the way.

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## Brenda says

It was 1874 when Agnes Resolute reached the age when she could finally leave the place that had been her home her whole life, Perdita Hall. Agnes was a foundling and had never known either her mother or her father. But in the weeks leading up to her departure, she discovered something to make her focus on Genevieve Breckby as the woman she believed to be her mother. And she was sure Genevieve was in London...

From the harsh streets of London, to the dangers of Paris, Agnes followed the trail of her elusive mother. Adventures, lost hope but equal determination would lead Agnes across the ocean aboard the Royal Mail ship *Udolpho*, and then onward on the sailing ship, *Persephone* – always following the trail of her mother. Would Agnes eventually find Genevieve? And would she be rejected once again if she did find her?

Set in three timeframes, *Stars Across the Ocean* by Aussie author Kimberley Freeman tells Moineau and Agnes' story in the past, with present day Tori from Australia with her mother in London. I absolutely loved this historical fiction novel which I finished late last night, but haven't stopped thinking about. I found Agnes' character to be strong, determined, gutsy and focussed – though it was 1874, she would not conform to what was expected of her. I have no hesitation in recommending *Stars Across the Ocean* to all historical fiction fans.

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## Carolyn says

Stars Across the Ocean is an adventure set far and wide, expertly written by Kimberley Freeman.

I absolutely love sea stories and Stars Across the Ocean, as the title is so aptly named did it for me!

Set in 1874, an adventure from Northern England to the streets of London, to Paris and then on board a steamship set for Ceylon then onto the coast of Australia.

Utterly engaging, full of turmoil, sadness and an emotional roller-coaster.

This is a huge read with a lot to take in and it's the first novel I've read by this author and I'm very impressed.

How far would you go to find your past to reveal the present?

Read it and explore in Stars Across the Ocean by Kimberley Freeman.

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### **Amanda - Mrs B's Book Reviews says**

\*<https://mrsbbookreviews.wordpress.com>

Kimberley Freeman is the pen name for Kim Wilkins, the author of over twenty titles. Although I have not explored these twenty titles by Kim Wilkins, I have read most of the Kimberley Freeman published titles. I am always left in awe of Freeman's ability to merge the past with present, in two equally engaging storylines. Stars Across the Ocean is Freeman's latest and it is a book I enjoyed from cover to cover.

Two strong stories make up Stars Across the Ocean. In the late 19th century, a young foundling named Agnes Resolute makes the journey to London, from the safety of her home, in search of her birth mother. With only an engraved unicorn button as a clue to her birth, Agnes has little to go on in the search for the mother who abandoned her. Agnes' quest to discover her origins takes her from the north of England, to the tough streets of inner London, to a noble family home, Paris, Ceylon and finally Australia. The search to find her mother is a perilous one, filled with adventure and mystery, as Agnes gets closer to discovering the identity of her mother. In the present day, Tori uncovers a letter which reveals the story behind the mother who abandoned a baby in over a century before. This letter plays a key role in reconciling Agnes with the mother she longs for.

There is always great excitement when a new release by one of my favourite authors, Kimberley Freeman brings out a new novel. I have been savouring this one for some time to read.

Kimberley Freeman is an author who is especially skilled in her ability to draw two separate stories, from the past and present together in a streamlined manner. Stars Across the Ocean shows us once again, how adept Freeman is in converging the past and present together. There are never any confusing moments in Freeman's novels and the transitions always occur with the utmost care. Freeman is a skilled writer for the historical fiction genre. In this particular novel, the book moves to a number of locations. Freeman displays a great flair in getting the specific period details of her novel just right. The international locales of England (north and south), France, Sri Lanka and Australia are vivid, realistic and utterly engaging.

In terms of the narrative itself, the content is absorbing. I was soon swept up in the mystery of this novel, once the letter was discovered by Tori in the present day. I was also equally taken in by the origins of the unicorn engraved button that Agnes in the 1870's narrative possessed. There are plenty of twists and turns in the novel. The central family mystery keeps the reader completely on their toes. This is a book that successfully combines themes of family, identity, romance, love, loss, adventure and history all in the one

absorbing book. My attention did not lag at any point as a result.

Freeman has a full character list and on the whole, all were fascinating. Agnes, the heroine of the past storyline, has a great character journey that I enjoyed being a part of. Agnes is quite young and naive. At times I could see ahead that she would become the victim of many of the unfortunate circumstances that touched her. However, I did admire her strong resolve and determination to find her birth mother.

Freeman takes the reader on a fabulous adventure in her exploration of mothers and daughters. Freeman closes her novel off well and readers will be satisfied by the final result, both for the past heroine and Tori in the present day.

Stars Across the Ocean is an expansive and all encompassing tale that all lovers of historical fiction should not miss. If you have exhausted the work of Kate Morton or Kate Forsyth, Kimberley Freeman is an author you need to put on your reading agenda.

Stars Across the Ocean is book #31 of the Australian Women Writers Challenge

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### **Lindsay - Traveling Sister says**

3.5 stars. A compelling historical fiction novel with strong characters.

This was my first experience reading a Kimberley Freeman novel and it definitely won't be my last. I loved Freeman's writing and the idea behind the storyline. Freeman does a fantastic job pulling the reader into the lives of her characters – each character is well developed with a personal history that is intriguing and enticing.

Unfortunately, some parts of this story seemed a little far-fetched to me which took away from my overall enjoyment. The writing itself was great, but the believability of the story wasn't fully there for me. I also found the three storylines slightly confusing at times. I had to break after starting a new chapter a few times to remind myself which storyline I was reading about and which characters belonged to which storyline.

Overall, I was impressed with Freeman's writing and will definitely look into reading more of her novels. A big thank you to NetGalley, Hachette and Kimberley Freeman for a copy of this novel in exchange for an honest review!

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### **Jeanette Lewis says**

The book begins with the return to England from Australia Tori, to assess the health issues of her well respected Professor mother who is in the early stages of dementia. Tori is in her own state of emotional turmoil which hinders her ability to make decisions. In the process of organising her mother's affairs Tori discovers documents of the 1800 's relating to a particular noble family, with Marianna and Genevieve the daughters.

The story moves around the present and 2 in the past. The present is well defined, however, the manuscript/diary written by a grieving mother moves to form it's own identity even though it is delivered as part of the Present Day story. The second story in the past revolves around Agnes who is a foundling child

delivered to the orphanage run by Captain Forest of Perdita Hall. Agnes appears to be a wilful “Tom boy” but obviously a bright and resourceful child who cannot accept that she doesn’t have a mother somewhere who would love her. With only a speciality button as her proof of identity at seventeen when released from the orphanage does Agnes embark on her adventures to find her mother. The story of Agnes and her adventures is a really good read and I loved her determination, her concern for others that she comes into contact with and never failing to keep her eye on the main goal. However, I found the present day character of Tori clunky with her own emotional state, the mother etc simply out of kink with that of the main stories. The discovery of the manuscript/diary could have been written in a less involved manner.

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## ΧΑΙΔΩ ΚΟΥΡΟΥΠΑΚΗ says

Ήνα υπ?ροχο ιστορικ? μυθιστ?ρημα που διαδραματ?ζεται επ? το πλε?στον στα μ?σα ως τα τ?λη του 1800 στην Β?ρεια Αγγλ?α. Η κ?ρια ηρω?δα του η ?γκνες Ήνα κορ?τσι που απ? βρ?φος αφ?θηκε σε Ήνα τοπικ? ορφανοτροφε?ο φτ?νοντας στην ηλικ?α των 19 ετ?ν, φε?γει απ? εκε? ?χοντας στις αποσκευ?ς της εκτ?ς των ?λλων το π?θος της να ανακαλ?ψει την μητ?ρα της και την θ?ση της στον κ?σμο.

Πριν φ?γει απ? το ορφανοτροφε?ο, ανακαλ?πτει Ήνα στοιχε?ο που την οδηγε? στο συμπ?ρασμα ?τι η μητ?ρα της ε?ναι η Τζενεβιβ Μπρ?κμπι και μαθα?νοντας ?τι εκε?νη βρ?σκεται στο Λονδ?νο ξεκιν? το ταξ?δι της για να την γνωρ?σει και να μ?θει γιατ? την εγκατ?λειψε.

Ξεκιν? η περιπ?τεια της απ? το Λονδ?νο, ταξιδε?ει στο Παρ?σι, στην Κε?λ?νη , φτ?νει στην Αυστραλ?α και π?λι π?σω στο Λονδ?νο εκε? που την περιμ?νει ο ?ρωτας και ?λα ?σα ποθε? να μ?θει για την ζω? της.

Η δ?ναμη του χαρακτ?ρα της, η καλοσ?νη και η αποφασιστικ?τητα της την βοηθο?ν να ανταπεξ?λθει σε ?λες τις δυσκολ?ες που βρ?σκει στο δρ?μο της, να βοηθ?σει ?σο μπορε? ανθρ?πους που νοι?ζεται, ?σο εκε?νη ακολουθε? τα ?χνη της μητ?ρας της.

Ε?ναι ?ραγε εφικτ? να ανακαλ?ψει την Τζενεβιβ και να π?ρει τις απαντ?σεις που γυρε?ει; Θα την απορρ?ψει ?λλη μια φορ?, μ?λιν την βρει; Τελικ? βρ?σκει την θ?ση της στον κ?σμο αν και δεν ε?ναι αυτ? που περ?μενε στην αρχ? του ταξιδιου? της.

Η ιστορ?α εξελ?σσεται σε δ?ο χρονικ?ς περι?δους καθ?ς η συγγραφ?ας απ? την αρχ? του μυθιστορ?ματος μας οδηγε? μ?σα στην ιστορ?α απ? Ήνα γρ?μμα που λε?πουν κ?ποια μ?ρη του, και ανακαλ?πτονται σιγ? σιγ? απ? την Καθηγ?τρια Κ?μπερ στο Λονδ?νο..... Ήνα γρ?μμα που γρ?φτηκε απ? μια νεαρ? γυνα?κα καλ?ς οικογενε?ας με τ?τλο: Στο παιδ? μου, που δεν μπ?ρεσα να κρατ?σω.....

Η επιστολ? αυτ? μας δ?νει κομμ?τια της ?διας ιστορ?ας καθ?ς ξετυλλ?γονται παρ?λληλα. Ήνα βιβλ?ο που θα αγαπ?σετε γιατ? δ?νει μαθ?ματα αγ?πης, φιλ?ας και θ?ρρους!!!

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## Stacey says

Absolutely adored this book. Full of warmth and so much love, it made me want to call my mum immediately after closing the pages. Sometimes cross-generational/international travel stories can get a bit convoluted and difficult to follow, but Kimberley Freeman manages the jumps incredibly well, and infuses the stories into each other in such a beautiful way. I can't wait to read this again.

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## Phrynnne says

This was written by an Australian author so it was not surprising that the main character made a short visit to Melbourne and that she came by sea. Thank heavens we now have airplanes to make the whole travelling part a whole lot less horrific.

Stars Across the Ocean is an enjoyable piece of historical fiction concentrating mainly on the character of Agnes who grew up in a Foundling Home in Northern England. Some tiny clues lead her to believe her mother is an upper class lady who has moved overseas and Agnes pursues her across the oceans. Her story is compelling and Agnes is a delightful character, naïve, determined, unswayable and very brave.

The author has used the fairly common technique of bracketing the historical story with a current day story in which a letter is found. This leads to a second time period in which another story unfolds from the content of the letter. And then Agnes' story which relates to the story in the letter is told. If that sounds complicated it was, and I was not really sure it was all required.

Still it was a very enjoyable book and one I would still have enjoyed if it was told as just Agnes' story without all the trimmings:)

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## Lena Papanikolaou says

<http://lovebooksloveread.blogspot.com...>

?να βιβλ?ο που εστι?ζει στους ισχυρο?ς δεσμο?ς της οικογ?νειας, της ταυτ?τητας, του ρομαντισμο?, της αγ?πης, της απ?λειας, της περιπ?τειας και της ιστορ?ας! Κινε?ται σε τρεις εποχ?ς.Ξεκιν? με το σ?μερα και στην επιστροφ? της Βικτ?ρια-Τ?ρι στην Αγγλ?α απ? την Αυστραλ?α λ?γω σοβαρ?ν προβλημ?των υγ?ας της μητ?ρας της, που βρ?σκεται στα αρχικ? στ?δια της ?νοια.

Κατ? τη διαδικασ?α της οργ?νωσης των υποθ?σεων της μητ?ρας της, η Τ?ρι βρ?σκει μια συγκινητικ? επιστολ? που αποκαλ?πτει μια ιστορ?α για μια μητ?ρα που εγκατ?λειψε το μωρ? της ?ναν αι?να πριν.Ο Αναγν?στης γυρν?ει στο παρελθ?ν, στο 1800 και γνωρ?ζει την ευγεν? οικογ?νεια Μπρ?κμπι και τις κ?ρες αυτ?ς, Μαρι?ννα και Τζ?νεβιν .Αυτ? ε?ναι η δε?τερη ιστορ?α, η τρ?τη που καταλαμβ?νει το μεγαλ?τερο μ?ρος του βιβλ?ου ε?ναι η ιστορ?α της ?γκνες, που ξεκιν? το 1874 στη στ?γη των εγκαταλειμμ?νων παιδι?ν.Ε?ναι το μ?ρος που ?ζησε μ?χρι την ενηλικ?ωση της.Μοναδικ? της επιθυμ?α, ε?ναι να βρει και να γνωρ?σει τη μητ?ρα της. Το μ?νο της εφ?διο φε?γοντας απ? τη στ?γη ε?ναι ?να αν?γλυφο κουμπ? που ?χει π?νω του ?να μον?κερο, σαν απ?δειξη της ταυτ?τητας της. ?γκνες μια και αυτ? ε?ναι στην ουσ?α η κεντρικ? ηρω?δα του βιβλ?ου ?να κορ?τσι τ?σο δυναμικ? και συγχρ?νως τ?σο ασυμβ?βαστο! Τ?ποτε και κανε?ς δεν μπ?ρεσε να την αποσπ?σει απ? τον επικεντρωμ?νο στ?χο της.?λλωστε ?ταν θες κ?τι πολ? ?λο το σ?μπαν συνωμοτε? για να το αποκτ?σεις!!Τη θα?μασα για ?λα τα ρ?σκα που π?ρε αφ?νοντας π?σω την απ?λυτη ευτυχ?α που βρ?κε στο πρ?σωπο του ευγενικο? Τζο?λιους. Η αναζ?τηση της επικ?νδυνη, γεμ?τη περιπ?τεια και αγων?α καθ?ς πλησι?ζει περισσ?τερο στην ανακ?λυψη της ταυτ?τητας, της μητ?ρας της. ?ντονη πλοκ?, γεμ?τη αναταραχ?, θλ?ψη και συναισθηματικ? περιπ?τεια.?να απολαυστικ? αν?γνωσμα, με δ?ο πολ? ισχυρ?ς ιστορ?ες.

?σο και αν αγ?πησα την ?γκνες, η ιστορ?α που γκρατζο?νισε την καρδι? μου ε?ναι η ιστορ?α της Μαρι?ννας και του Εμ?λ..

Π?σο μακρι? θα μπορο?σατε να π?τε για να βρε?τε το παρελθ?ν σας και να αποκαλ?ψετε το

παρ'ν;Ανακαλ'ψτε μ'χρι που 'φτασαν οι 'ρωες της ιστορ'ας !Για 'λλη μια φορ' η kimberley Freeman δεν με απογο'τευσε, στ'θηκε αντ'ξια των προσδοκι'ν μου!

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## HÜLYA says

Ah çok güzeldi sonunda a'latt' beni. Bazen mutluluk veya arad'??n'z 'ey yan' ba'?'n'z dad'r. Kitab'n ana konusu bu bence.

Agnesii ufac'k bir dü'meden annesini, babas'n' bulmay' ba'ard'?? bir hikaye. Müthi'ti. Iss'z Kar Taneleri de hayal k'r'kl'??na u'ram'??t' ama bu hikaye ile yazar'n'n muhte'em kalemi geri dönmü? oldu.

Ba'larda yine hikayenin vasat olaca'?'n' dü'ünmü'tüm ama sayfalar ilerledikçe heyecan dozunu art'rmaya ba'lad'. Kitab' okurken iki hikaye dönü'ümlü okurken bir an üçüncü hikaye de araya girdi bu da Agnes'in arad'?? annesinin hikayesi idi. Agnes annesini yanl'?? yerde ar'yordu tabii ki o bunu bilmiyordu. Annesini aramak için dünyan'n bir ucuna kadar gitti'i gibi sevdi'i adam ile de bir türlü birle'emedi. Ama o y'lmad' en de'erli arkada'?'n' kaybetti'i halde y'lmad'. Tavsiye ederim okuyun..

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## Andrea says

This was the group-read members' choice for Aussie Readers in January 2018, and I'm glad, because I may not have got to it otherwise.

Told in 3 parts, this is *mainly* the story of Agnes Resolute, a foundling who has come of age in the 1870s and is leaving the Yorkshire orphanage to make her own way in the world. In the weeks leading up to her departure, she stumbles upon a few clues as to her mother's identity, and makes her way firstly to London, then Paris, Ceylon and Melbourne in pursuit of the woman who, coincidentally, she vividly remembers an encounter with in the village as a child. She's a determined and gutsy young woman, and her adventures had me cheering her on all the way, even though I was pretty certain I knew something that Agnes didn't...

Supporting the story of Agnes are two other vital threads; a letter (the longest letter ever penned?) from a mother 'to my child, whom I could not keep', and the present-day anchoring story of Victoria who has returned to England to check up on her historian mother who is beginning to suffer from the confusion brought on by Alzheimers. Through the letter and her mother's occasional moments of lucidity, Victoria starts to piece together Agnes's story.

This really was a rollicking adventure that was a delight to read. Highly recommended.

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## Carolyn says

This was an enjoyable historical novel mostly set in the mid to late 1800s and stretching from the north of England to Australia (and back again!). It is the story of Agnes Resolute, a foundling brought up in an orphanage and sent out into the world at the age of 19 to be a seamstress. However, Agnes is determined to find her mother and her place in the world and sets off on a grand adventure of discovery.

Told in three time frames, the threads all converge towards the end of the novel. In the current time frame a

professor of history has been researching the events described in a letter written by a wealthy young woman in the mid 1800s and this events are interwoven with Agnes' story in the 1870s. Agnes is a strong and determined woman who doesn't let anything hold her back. She is perhaps, due to her sheltered upbringing, also a little naive and unaware of the dangers of the world for women travelling alone in the late 19th century, but in some ways this acts to protect her and doesn't hold her back from tackling difficult situations or making new friends. She does eventually find her place in the world, although it is not what she expected at the start of her journey. 3.5★

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### **Kathy says**

Kimberley Freeman is one of those authors that instantly come to mind when someone asks to recommend a captivating author. A superb historical writer that has multiple time periods is a great way to draw the readers to the many, well written characters throughout this book. Set in the late 1800's and current time I really enjoyed each time period's story and how they intertwined. I had a little inkling of the ending (got thrown off of track a couple of times) and Agnes was such a fantastic, brave character to take us on such an adventure to find her mother. An easy 5 stars for me!

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### **Sue Gerhardt Griffiths says**

To say I liked this book is an understatement, this was pure joy to read. Superbly written, and a story I didn't want to let go of. I'm always thrilled when I start reading a book and realise it's in multiple time periods. I can't get enough of these types of historical novels and Kimberley Freeman has a talent for penning such books.

Within the first few pages the reader is drawn into a tale of suspense via a mystifying square of paper which reads: To my child, whom I could not keep. Only a page long and finishes in mid sentence... And thus begins the task of locating the missing pages which will be recovered by Victoria, or Tori as she prefers. Tori travelled from Australia to Bristol, England, to visit her mother who is unwell and finding it hard to remember things. Her mother's office is left in complete disarray and Tori is sent by her to locate some papers she'd been sorting through before her accident, those papers which are the letters to the mystifying square of paper will tell the tale of Agnes Resolute and her adventures around the globe looking for her mother.

Set in 1874 and the present, this novel will leave the reader breathing hard and on pins and needles until the final page. And oh, what a delightful ending and one I did not anticipate.

I highly recommend this novel, the reader will fall in love with Agnes Resolute, her story is engaging and will hold your interest throughout the book.

Thanks to Hachette for the review copy.

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