

APPENDICES

Synopsis of When the Emperor Was Divine

This novel tells a story of a Japanese-American family during World War II. They have been living comfortably in Berkeley, California, when their nightmare begins. Soon after the Pearl Harbour attack, the husband or father is arrested by the FBI, the reason for his arrest is never explained, the mother is left to take care of her two children and the house.

A few months later the mother reads an order for all Japanese Americans to evacuate. She has to pack up their belongings, give away their family cat, kill their lovely dog and the chicken. They are allowed to bring only what they can carry. The mother, the girl, and the boy take an endless train ride through the Nevada desert to reach an internment camp in Utah. They live there for three and a half years in bad and traumatic circumstances, all the while awaiting news from the father, who is imprisoned in the far away New Mexico.

After the war is over, they are allowed to go home with only twenty-five dollars in cash. Their house has been vandalized. Their neighbours, teachers, and

classmates ignore them or are openly hostile to them. It takes time for them to adjust themselves to life outside the camps and to come to terms with the hostility they face. Finally, their father is released from detention in New Mexico. However, he has changed both in appearance and spirit, not as what they have expected.