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Pastel Orphans



Synopsis

In 1930s Berlin, young Henrik, the son of a Jewish father and Aryan mother, watches the world around him crumbling: people are rioting in the streets, a strange yellow star begins appearing in shop windows, and friends are forced to move—or they simply disappear. After his father becomes gravely ill, Henrik and his little sister, Greta, are taken by their mother to Poland for safety. However, not even the pastoral surroundings of their new home can protect them from the terrors of war. When the Nazis invade and Greta is kidnapped, Henrik must shed his youthful innocence and search for his lost sister, a quest that will further reveal a harrowing landscape of violence and struggle—but also unexpected connections. Uniquely told from the perspective of youth plunged into adult chaos, *Pastel Orphans* is a coming-of-age story that explores profound lessons in self-belief, kindness, and human endurance. Revised edition: This edition of *Pastel Orphans* includes editorial revisions.

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Customer Reviews

An amazing story of a terrible time, showing the true power of family. Gemma Liviero has brought to life characters that you will feel drawn to. She paints you a picture of the life of a young boy growing

up during the holocaust and his trials and loss during this time. It is an excellent read and so well written, it will make you laugh and cry, be prepared to lose yourself in this story.

Having read much about World War II and the holocaust this book sounded authentic. Also about the fair haired and blue eyed children taken from their families to make a superior Aryan race; in this case seven year old Greta. Just had to keep reading to know how her brother, Henrik, would attempt the impossible task of finding the SS officer who took her, whilst avoiding vigilant German soldiers, a trigger-happy partisan and treachery. There are many suspenseful moments and a devastating event which leads to a surprise ending.

My husband was a young child during the war and reading this and asking him if he remembers some of this he said yes and More. This book was well written, one story with maybe a thousand more to be told.

Though I do not enjoy the substance of what has happened, the telling of these stories--true or fiction-- reminds us that we must NEVER forget. People are so like sheep, led around by their noses, believing the diatribe put forth by charismatic leaders. In believing, many--especially those with the greatest power, become monsters. Fortunately, despite the pain and horror, a remnant survive with an indomitable spirit.

Pastel Orphans has made a lasting impression on me. After finishing the story I was left still thinking about the characters, the Holocaust, Germany in WW2 and the role the Nazis played in it all. Such a sad, sad story in so many ways, but also one of courage, hope, fortitude, acceptance, endurance and love. Thank goodness there are writers like Gemma Liviero to remind us of what was and what must never be again.

An insightful story, gripping and interesting. Great characters that you can relate to, an unusual angle to look at the war. A great read.

I was given a copy of this book from NetGalley for an honest review and this is my review. I could not get into this book for the life of me. I usually find myself unable to put down Holocaust books but Pastal Orphans just dragged on and on and on and I felt like it was going nowhere fast. Two hours into the book and only a quarter of it was done and to me the plot had really not moved all that

much. It got to the point where I just sped read the rest of the book because it was starting to become a painful process but then towards the end things did pick up a bit more saving the book overall. I personally think all the dull stuff at the first quarter of the book could have been cut down a lot to keep the readers interest for the the last part of the book. So because the end saved the book overall when things finally got going I am willing to give it three out of five stars but I do wish it would have moved on a bit faster and it probably would have been a better read.

Usually I don't like to read books about the Holocaust, books about war. I have no idea what prompted me to buy this book as ordinarily I would have rejected it after a brief glance at the synopsis. The book engaged me from the start. Henrik and his family became very real to me very quickly. I loved how various little vignettes helped to flesh out the characters. Indeed, I loved the characters themselves as if they were truly people I had come to know and care about. This story reeled me in and kept me hooked from beginning until the very last page. It is a book about love and families and perseverance in the face of impossible circumstances. It is a true masterpiece and I am sorry it is over.

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