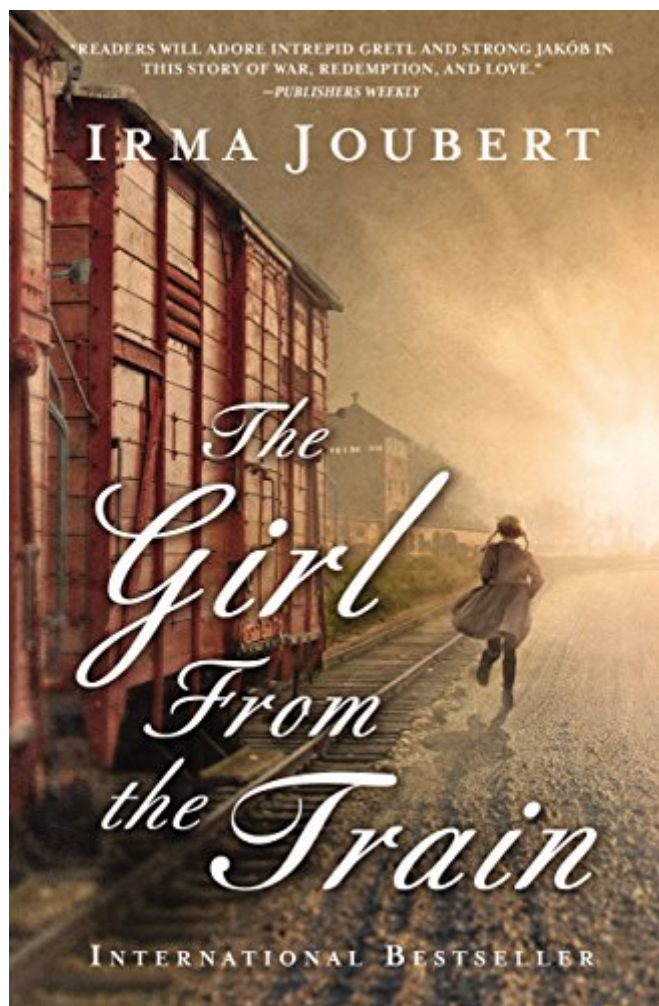


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The Girl From The Train



Synopsis

Six-year-old Gretl Schmidt is on a train bound for Aushwitz. Jakob Kowalski is planting a bomb on the tracks. As World War II draws to a close, Jakob fights with the Polish resistance against the crushing forces of Germany and Russia. They intend to destroy a German troop transport, but Gretl's unscheduled train reaches the bomb first. Gretl is the only survivor. Though spared from the concentration camp, the orphaned German Jew finds herself lost in a country hostile to her people. When Jakob discovers her, guilt and fatherly compassion prompt him to take her in. For three years, the young man and little girl form a bond over the secrets they must hide from his Catholic family. But she can't stay with him forever. Jakob sends Gretl to South Africa, where German war orphans are promised bright futures with adoptive Protestant families "so long as Gretl's Jewish roots, Catholic education, and connections to communist Poland are never discovered. Separated by continents, politics, religion, language, and years, Jakob and Gretl will likely never see each other again. But the events they have both survived and their belief that the human spirit can triumph over the ravages of war have formed a bond of love that no circumstances can overcome.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the loveliest tales I have read in a long time. I normally don't like reading what passes for "Christian literature" these days; not because of its contents, but because of its poorer language structure. This book is written well and obviously, well-edited. I have read a lot of books about the Holocaust, both fiction and nonfiction. This one doesn't really qualify as a Holocaust book because it didn't delve into the deeper issues that faced the countries at the time. It was the starting point for the novel, but it is a personal novel about 2 people who connected because of the war. Gretl Schmidt is a young girl who lost her mother and grandmother and her sister. Jakob is a Polish student working to liberate Poland from the Germans when he rescued her. He had found her in the woods after Gretl jumped off the train. His family took care of her till he read of an organization taking German kids to South Africa to people who wanted to adopt orphans. There are a historical facts woven into the story of Gretl and Jakob; their lives after the war went separate ways. The author, Irma Joubert is a teacher who turned to writing and it shows in this book. The stories of the two characters are interwoven in a seamless path as they grew up in different parts of the world only to be reunited years later. There are stories of how Poland became a communist country; there are stories of how the Catholic faith colors the lives of the people in Poland and how people in South Africa view the Catholic church through the personal viewpoints of varying characters. There are historical tidbits interwoven through the every day lives of the characters. It is also a love story. It is a lovely story. It is a story of faith as well. It is a book to curl up with on those dreary winter nights. It is a book to discuss over book clubs. It is just an inspiring international tale that ends well. It sounds so simplistic but it really isn't. It is a good story and I can see why it is a best seller in other parts of the world. I hope it becomes as successful here in the States as well.

Of all the books that I have read in the category of historical fiction/fiction/nonfiction, this book is probably my least favorite, unfortunately. As far as imagination of the author and flow, those aspects were enjoyable and kept me reading. However, the very predictable relationship that ensues between two individuals is not one that I agree with. From the beginning, the words used to describe the moments between the two made my stomach turn. When the author finally transitions the relationship from that of what it once was to what could possibly exist between the two, it is done in a manner that is tolerable and helps the reader accept what is about to happen. Still, difficult to

accept. Then the book ends abruptly. Chapters and chapters of WWII and one or two chapters on the ending. It was too much in too little time. Still worth a read but not on my list of top recommendations.

This book...I'll try to do it justice. A little girl escaping a train bound for Auschwitz is where the story begins and then follows her and her rescuer through the best several years. She gets sent to South Africa and makes a life there...only for her past to resurface. The pain, anguish, and joy that these characters go through is just the beginning of what families felt at the time. Read it...I bet it will change your life.

I loved this book so much that I read it a second time. Being a part of this young girl's life as she grew through experiences that could strengthen or destroy her was emotional. It is beautifully written and immediately has become one of those books I will read again and again.

I hope there is a sequel... A triumphant story about goodness in the midst of evil. It described the hardships of the Polish people during the Nazi occupation, and showed not only their pride of country, but also the desperate bravery of those who chose to fight for their beloved Poland against impossible odds. The author showed her wonderful writing skills with the development of memorable characters and settings.

I feel this book related Holocaust experiences in a real but sensitive way that conveyed the horrors without unnecessary graphics. The romance between the two main characters was also appropriate and sensitive. A story that had hope, optimism, beauty, realism, love of family, of country, brotherly love and romantic love all in a very uplifting narrative throughout. I really enjoyed the book very much.

The story of a 6 year old child, on her way to Auschwitz from The Lodz Ghetto, when fate intervenes with her mother's help. She is lost, malnourished and alone, yet finds a new life. I found parts were a bit of a soap opera but it was quite a story.

This book was recommended to me by a Polish woman who survived a labor camp during World War II. As I was asking her about her life, how she ended up in America, etc... She recommended that I read this. The story is emotional, the plot is interesting, and the character development is done

well. A story of complete loss, finding oneself, love, and the trials and tribulations of the time were enthralling. However, there were times where the characters were very repetitive and the story started to slow down.

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