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# The Borrowed House



## Synopsis

During World War II a young German girl, who has been indoctrinated into the Hitler Youth, travels to occupied Amsterdam to rejoin her parents then comes to realize the truth about the war.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A book we read in my children's 'Classic Book Club' in their elementary years (15 years ago). A young German girl who belonged to the Hitler Youth in Germany, reunites with her actor parents who are entertaining German troops in Holland. They are brought to live in a home, filled with beautiful items of furniture, art... and a family portrait; the borrowed house. The mix of characters inhabiting this house are both good and ugly. Her growing doubts about what she'd been taught to believe about an inferior race, are mingled together in a beautiful story of confronting the evil of discrimination, its' insidious, subtle indoctrination, and the triumph of a mind being set free--- The believable transformation of the heart of an adolescent girl as she confronts 'the enemy'. This is a book that should never have been allowed to go 'out of print'. It's a wonderful understanding of the roots of discrimination and its' undoing. Should be required reading for all children, combined with class discussion. The world could be a better place.

This is a wonderful book! it takes place in the Netherlands during World War II. Its about a girl and she's German. She was indoctrinated with Pro-Hitler stuff and when she goes to the Netherlands to live with her parents who are actors she learns that Hitler isn't as good as she thinks he is. She learns that Jews aren't bad and that they are just regular people. It also has suspense and excitement! Its really good! Read it!

This is a wonderful book about debunking prejudice. It is a nicely told story about how a young girl comes to question, challenge and later renounce the prejudiced notions she had been exposed to. In some ways, I can't help thinking about Ann Frank. She, too, was German/Dutch. This is a lovely little story that will not be forgotten by those who read it. It's a treasure.

When Jana Oster, a German girl who lives in Holland, finds a boy inside her wardrobe, her view on what is happening in the world around her completely changes. As I read *The Borrowed House*, by Hilda Van Stockum, I learned that people had different views on what happened in World War II. Jana thought that Hitler was doing the Jews in Germany a good deed by sending them away to a nice home of their own. On the other hand, Sef, a fourteen year old boy, knew that the Jews were really being sent to concentration camps, where they were put in gas chambers and killed. As Jana and Sef become closer friends, Jana begins to realize how wrong she had been about many things. In addition to the different views people had on WWII, the characters were thoughtfully created. Jana, the main character, is a good friend and is very caring. She is a strong girl, and is not afraid to speak what she thinks. Sef is a Jew that secretly forges papers and food cards for other Jews. He enjoys teasing Jana, who has a soft spot for him, by pretending to be in love with another girl. Jana's mother and father are actors at a theater. Jana's mother is attractive, and has always had many fans. Jana's father believes strongly in what Hitler is doing, and encourages Jana to be in the Hitler Youth. Jana's parents love her dearly; however, they never seem to have any time for her. The Oster's share their house with the Frosch's. The Frosch's have a son, Heinz, who loves to make trouble. Unlike most books, you can never, at any point, guess what is going to happen next. *The Borrowed House* is the kind of book that draws you into a world full of twists and turns, war, and unexpected relationships and deaths.

My children and I are very interested in World War II and I have read many books about it: adult as well as young adult and children, fiction as well as non-fiction. I previewed this for my young teens. This was a great one! The story was not predictable, but it did have mystery, family love and strength of character at the forefront. While the main character is a German girl of 13, any boy would enjoy the story because it is intriguing and has enough male characters to sustain a boy's interest. So boys and girls alike should enjoy it. Jana is transported to occupied Holland to be with her actor-parents after 2 years separation, and she is immersed into a world of mystery, suspense, war, deception, love and prejudice. With as much knowledge that I have about WWII, I still learned a

lot from this book. It's a keeper. One outstanding quality of the story is the author's portrayal of the sacredness of marriage and family. The story reminded me a bit of *The Hiding Place* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The supporting characters (a cook, a Baron with a castle in Bavaria, a bratty little German boy aching for his father's love) provide many surprising twists to the story that make it the page turner it is. Whether your young teen's interest in (or knowledge of) wartimes is high or not, he/she will enjoy this book. So will you.

Boy! Does this author think up some pretty good books! It's not to many times in a year when I find a good Christian book to read. Especially with all that terrible, disgusting junk going on in the world today. This was a real page turner, as soon as I hit the end of a chapter I had to read the next one so I wasn't left on a cliff. There is just enough romance to make it cute, but not all-to mushy! Blah! That's one thing I absolutely despise about modern books these days. Filled with nothing, but utter grossness. These including a few Christian books, which I thought would be good, but ended up in total disaster of mushiness, and too much teen love!!! I can't stand how people write these days. Especially for young adults, and you might say, "Well if you don't like them, don't read them, and stop COMPLAINING!!!" Really, I truly don't mean to bother your thoughts about mushy books! It's your decision what you read though, I hope you make a good one!

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