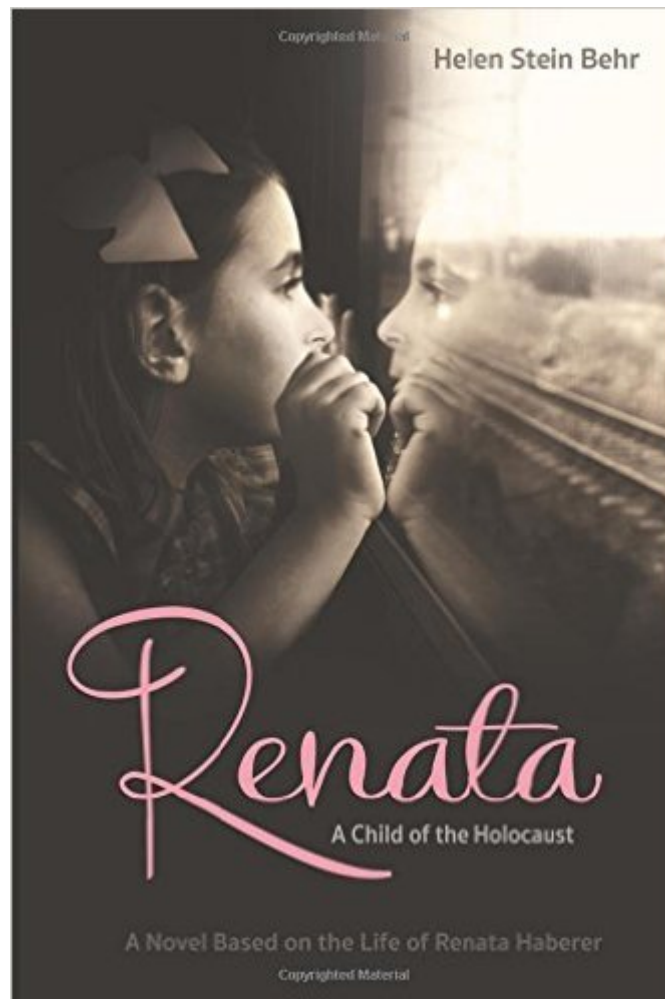


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Renata, A Child Of The Holocaust: A Novel Based On The Life Of Renata Haberer



Synopsis

Like most children, Renata Haberer loved the train. The sound of the whistle. The gentle hum of wheels hugging the tracks. Chatting with passengers she did not know. Renata loved it all. But all that changed on an October day in 1940 when German soldiers forced Renata's family and her town's fellow Jews on a different kind of train for a destination unknown. It wasn't just Renata's love of trains that changed that day. Everything she cherished would never be the same. Based on actual events, Renata tells the story of a German girl born as Adolph Hitler comes to power. At first shielded by her parents of Nazi abuses and a world collapsing around them, Renata's facade of a normal childhood begins to crumble with Kristallnacht. Soon one horrific change after another shatters Renata's life, leading to a separation from her parents and ultimately a race to the Swiss border with a German soldier at her heels. No longer did Renata wish for a new doll or a new party dress—all she wished for was to be with her family. Geared to readers ages ten and up, Renata is authored by Helen Stein Behr, a long-time elementary school educator who approaches this true Holocaust story with a prose and sensitivity appropriate for readers of any age. Adults and children alike will find Renata to be a page-turning and riveting story of a young girl's despair, hope and courage—and a joyful ending that defied the odds.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am a sixth grade English teacher and I've been searching for the right novel to teach the holocaust to my students. Behr's Renata is brilliant. The greats: Weisel's Night, Spiegelman's Maus, and Anne Frank's diary are obviously terrific, but my sixth graders aren't ready for them. The parents and administration voice objections not to novels pertaining to the holocaust specifically, but oppose

exposing today's 11 year olds to death, and blood, and carnage, and murder. Thus the middle school classroom has become this cleansed version of what it used to be--I teach a "literature-lite" curriculum rife with adventure novels, as long as they aren't too dangerous, passionate love poems, as long as the writing isn't too revealing, and non-fiction excerpts, as long as the pieces aren't too honest. Of course the inverse is happening at home, while the classroom becomes more and more censored, the video games and movies these children are consuming outside of school pollute their young minds with more sex and violence than I would ever expose them to in a classic novel. I digress. Behr's novel allows the teacher to teach the holocaust, its horrors and nightmares, without stepping the bounds of contemporary society's rules. Renata accomplishes this feat cleverly, not by diluting or changing the events and experiences, but by viewing the holocaust through the lenses of a young child, Renata. Renata's vantage point is one of naiveté and innocence, she is not yet wise to ways of the world or to man's capacity for evil. Thus, this is the perfect novel to introduce the holocaust to children. !!SPOILER ALERT!!: none of the main characters die.

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