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Broken Angels



Synopsis

A Nazi doctor. A Jewish rebel. A little girl. Each one will fight for freedom or die trying. Imprisoned in the Lodz Ghetto, Elsi discovers her mother's desperate attempt to end her pregnancy and comes face-to-face with the impossibility of their situation. Risking her own life, Elsi joins a resistance group to sabotage the regime. Blonde, blue-eyed Matilda is wrenched from her family in Romania and taken to Germany, where her captors attempt to mold her into the perfect Aryan child. Spirited and brave, she must inspire hope in the other stolen children to make her dreams of escape a reality. Willem, a high-ranking Nazi doctor, plans to save lives when he takes posts in both the ghetto and Auschwitz. After witnessing unimaginable cruelties, he begins to question his role and the future of those he is ordered to destroy. While Hitler ransacks Europe in pursuit of a pure German race, the lives of three broken souls are thrown together by chance and intertwine. Only love and sacrifice might make them whole again.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Broken Angels is a stirring story of Elsi, a young Polish woman who is part Norwegian and whose mother is Jewish; Willem, a handsome German officer and doctor, son of one of Hitler's top researchers; and Matilda, a part-German child torn from her family in Romania. I suppose the title reflects the brokenness of each of these characters. Elsi and her family have been thrown into the ghetto. Her Norwegian father puts on a yellow star to show solidarity and one day goes to work and never comes back, leaving his wife and two daughters to fend for themselves. Elsi's mother resorts to prostitution to support her children, the younger Leah, sickly and slightly handicapped. An

unwanted pregnancy and botched abortion brings her, accompanied by Elsi to the hospital where Willem works in the womenâ€™s clinic. Matildaâ€™s idyllic existence on her parentâ€™s lavender farm suddenly turns a macabre turn when a Nazi officer forces her mother to sign her away to go to a school to make her a better German but in reality was no better than a prison where she was constantly punished and tortured. But Matilda is headstrong and fights to maintain her identity. Willem is a Nazi officer but was grappling with a moral dilemma. He is torn between his allegiance to his country and the pity and compassion he feels for the Jewish women he treats. He is able to save Elsiâ€™s mother but Elsiâ€™s waif-like appearance haunts him. Although Willem is a Nazi, he, and probably other Germans as well, did not agree with what Hitler and the Nazis did. He uses his position to rescue Elsi and Matilda and together make a family. Although the story is told from three different points of view, I didn't have a problem with it. Sometimes, it was a welcome shift after a gut-wrenching scene.

Broken Angels is not only a novel of the war waged by Adolf Hitler against the world and his race for Aryan dominance, it is first and foremost a story of humanity. It is a story of a Nazi officer who strives to come to terms with who he truly is against the backdrop of Auschwitz and the clinics for women in the Jewish ghettos. It is the story of a Jewish girl who fights for what is right and finds herself in a prison for her actions. It is a story of a fair haired little girl torn from her home and brought to Germany so that she can be brought up to respect the Fuhrer and learn to be a good German. It is the story of these unlikely allies who come together during the most turbulent and dangerous time in history and strive to build a life filled with love and hope. Willem, to all outward appearances, is a steadfast Nazi officer. He does as his very powerful, politically connected father tells him to do because he sees no choice. But as he witnesses atrocities that turn his stomach he decides he must be true to himself and he risks it all to do what he considers the right and honorable thing. The recently widowed Willem has met Elsi only once, but when he sees her dying in prison, on the verge of being carted off to be exterminated, he makes a bold move that changes his life forever. Willemâ€™s father is frustrated with his son and his apparent inability to conform to Nazi rules and regulations. He finds an assignment for his son where he imagines he will not be able to do further damage to his reputation. He becomes director of a home for children who are being indoctrinated in German ways. They must first pass the Aryan testing before being allowed to stay. When they do not, they are taken to the camps.

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