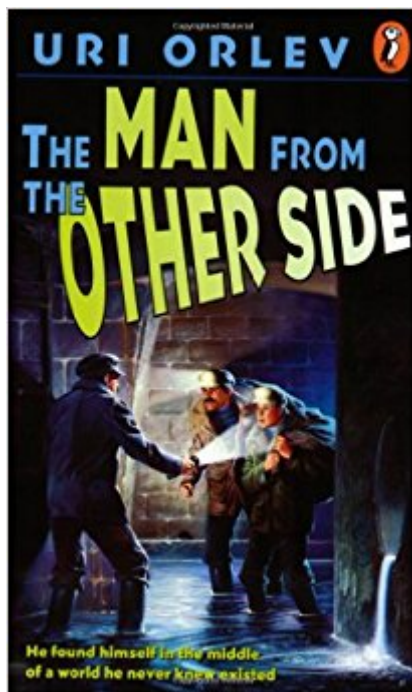


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# The Man From The Other Side



## Synopsis

Marek has never thought about the Jewish people who live in the Warsaw Ghetto near his home until he helps his stepfather smuggle food and guns through the sewer to sell there. Even then, he does not truly understand what it means to be isolated, persecuted, and faced with almost certain death at the hands of the Nazis. Then Marek meets a Jewish man on the run and, in helping him, is thrust into the middle of an uprising. From the first page, this grabs you like a thriller. Booklist, starred review Subtle, beautifully crafted, altogether compelling. Kirkus Reviews, pointer review "This is a story of individual bravery and national shame that highlights just how hopeless was the fate of the Warsaw Jews as they fought alone and heroically against the Nazi war machine." School Library Journal, starred review

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

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Age Range: 10 - 13 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up-- Based on a true story of a Polish boy living in Nazi-occupied Warsaw just before the 1943 uprising, this understated but very revealing fictional memoir follows 14-year-old Marek through some harrowing experiences as he is drawn into this Jewish battle for survival--on both sides of the Ghetto wall. Until his Catholic mother informs Marek that his father was a Jew and had been killed in prison because he was a Communist, the boy has extremely negative feelings about

Jews. When he helps Jozek, a Polish Jew hiding from the Nazis and anti-Semitic Poles in Warsaw, he begins a series of events that ultimately results in Jozek's violent death at the hands of the Nazis and Marek's narrow escape from the besieged quarter. Characterizations are vivid and finely drawn, even those of minor figures such as Marek's empathetic mother who is embarrassed by her countrymen's hatred of Jews; his crude, contradictory stepfather; and his grandparents, who treat Jozek as a family member, all the while hating Jews. This is a story of individual bravery and national shame that highlights just how hopeless was the fate of the Warsaw Jews as they fought alone and heroically against the Nazi war machine. --Jack Forman, Mesa College Library, San Diego Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

When Israeli author Orlev, who drew on his own ghetto experiences in *The Island on Bird Street* (1984; Batchelder Award), met a certain Polish journalist, they found that both had been boys in Warsaw during WW II; Orlev kept "Marek's" extensive confidences secret (including his discovery in 1942 that his father--executed in 1934 as a Communist--was Jewish) until his death in 1987. Now, Orlev shapes Marek's account into a powerful novel about a devout 13-year-old Catholic in a virulently anti-Semitic society, responding to his experiences by coming to champion the Jews walled in near his home. With stepfather Antony, Marek already knows the ghetto: traveling through sewers, they take food to sell there at high prices, often returning with a baby to hide with the nuns (no charge). Still, Marek is casually anti-Semitic until he helps rob a Jewish escapee and is caught by his mother, who points out that "You sentenced him to death" and reveals his own heritage. Deeply shaken, Marek sets out to make amends. He befriends a man he sees crossing himself the wrong way and ultimately leads him back, underground, to the ghetto, during the heroic ghetto uprising. Orlev's characters are sobering, believable blends: e.g., Antony dislikes Jews but, knowing Marek's background, wants to adopt him; he turns others' dire needs to profit but has "nothing against human beings." Many others in this richly authentic story are equally complex. Subtle, beautifully crafted, altogether compelling. (Fiction. 10+) -- Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

very good read. Really puts you into Warsaw, and makes you feel alive.

When Marek discovers a shocking secret about himself, he decides that he must help the captured Jews fight the Germans. While the Nazis are imprisoning Jews in the Ghetto, Marek is helping one

Jew avoid capture. Will Marek be able to help the Jews in their fight against the Nazis? During World War II, a teenage boy named Marek lived in Warsaw with his mother and stepfather, Antony. Although Marek witnessed Nazis imprisoning Jews, he joined his friends in robbing an escaping Jew. Marek discovered he was partly Jewish and his guilt caused him to use the stolen money to help another Jew, Pan Jozek, hideout. When the Jews rose up against the Germans, Marek and Pan Jozek snuck into the ghetto to help the Jews. Pan Jozek was killed before Marek and several other Jews were rescued by Antony. After escaping from the ghetto and the Germans, Antony, Marek, and Marek's mother left Warsaw to live with Antony's sister in the country. Antony risked his life to save Marek and as repayment Marek agreed to let Antony legally adopt him. I recommend that everyone read this book about a young boy and his struggles during World War II. The situations the characters in this book go through seem incredibly realistic. Marek had to cope with the fact that his father died and his mom had remarried. Pan Jozek narrowly escaped the Germans and had to prevent being imprisoned or killed. Marek and his parents left the busy, chaotic city of Warsaw and moved to the quieter, more peaceful countryside. The characters are described in great detail. Marek is a fourteen-year-boy who is partly Jewish. Pan Jozek was a Jewish man who was studying to be a doctor before the war; he had gentle eyes, high cheekbones, and an amiable expression. Marek's grandmother dressed in large skirts with multiple pockets and his grandfather's old jacket. The setting is also described in detail. Theater Square was a small area in town similar to a strip mall and park combined. The Jewish ghetto was a small area filled with many people; it was destroyed when the Jews started an uprising against the Germans. Marek's apartment was just the right size for their family of three. I recommend this book to everyone. It is a wonderful story about the struggles of daily life during World War II. The characters, places, and events in this book are described in such detail that you can actually picture the story taking place in your mind. ~V.

Newberry

A Review by Craig This is a story about a fourteen-year-old Polish boy, Marek, who lives in Warsaw, Poland in 1942. The book takes place a couple of years after the Nazis invasion of Poland. Warsaw is a city occupied by the Nazis who have sectioned off an area of the city called the ghetto. This area, which is basically a prison, is strictly for the Jewish people. The story follows the teenager Marek as he struggles to understand the hatred and mistrust towards the Jewish people. The book follows Marek as he helps his stepfather and becomes a member of the underground, which smuggles weapons, food, and other goods through the sewers into the ghetto. The Jewish people in the ghetto decide to defend themselves when the Nazi decide to get rid them all. Marek gets

involved in the uprising and fights along side his friend that he saved from the Polish and German Police. This book does a good job of putting the reader right along side Marek in his adventures throughout the story and to feel his experiences. The action and descriptions in this book really shows the horror of the Holocaust and war in general. "For a moment I stood there with my mouth open, listening to the German's screams grow more distant. Then there was a sudden thump in the courtyard." (p.167). Even though it was sometimes hard to read because I knew that these things really could have happened, I always wanted to keep reading. The author made me want to find out what would happen next. The author wrote so that you could really get a feel for how he felt about the characters in the book. He wrote, "The more I imagined him, the more I had to rewrite the whole story of his life, to change my whole conception of him, starting with his childhood" (p. 38). Here he is talking about the father that he never knew well, and whom he was told lies about, but then finds out the truth. This book got The Batchelder Award and I think it deserved it. It portrayed life during the holocaust very well through the eyes of a sympathetic teenager. On .com, they show this book at a 9-12 year old reading level, but I think you really have to be at least 12 to totally grasp the situation in this story. That's one of the reasons I recommend this book to read, because it really grabs you, and makes you feel for the people who suffered through those times.

This fictionalized memoir follows 14-year old Marek in Nazi-occupied Warsaw. Marek's step-father profits by smuggling items in and out of the Jewish ghetto through the labyrinth of sewer tunnels, often bringing Marek with him. As anti-Semitic feelings grow outside the Ghetto, Marek finds himself shaking down an escaped Jew along with two other boys. Wracked with immense guilt, Marek seeks to help Jozek, a polish Jew who has lost his hiding place in the city. Suddenly, the Jews living in the ghetto began an uprising, and Jozek is determined to sneak back into the ghetto to help. Marek takes him through the sewers, but is trapped on the Jewish side with one of the tunnels collapses. Faced-paced and interesting, Marek is a character whom many teenagers could relate to. He has found himself in an awful environment and feels conflict and guilt over his actions.

The Man From the Other Side, by URI Orlev is a great and amazing novel. It is about a fourteen-year-old boy, Marek, who lives in Warsaw, Poland. He lived in a ghetto or an enclosed area where Jews were kept and told to stay. The nazi's would torture and kill them to rule their lives. Lucky for Marek, he was catholic, so hid not feel the pain the Jews did. You as the reader follow the life of Marek throughout the story. I think this book is really great and fascinating. The characters are really well brought in the story. It is almost like you are actually there in Warsaw, when all of this is

taking place. I think that if you read this book you will be very impressed. I think this book has a very valuable moral to life. It is that always help those in need and to not single anybody out because of their backround. It is basically saying do not discriminate anybody.

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