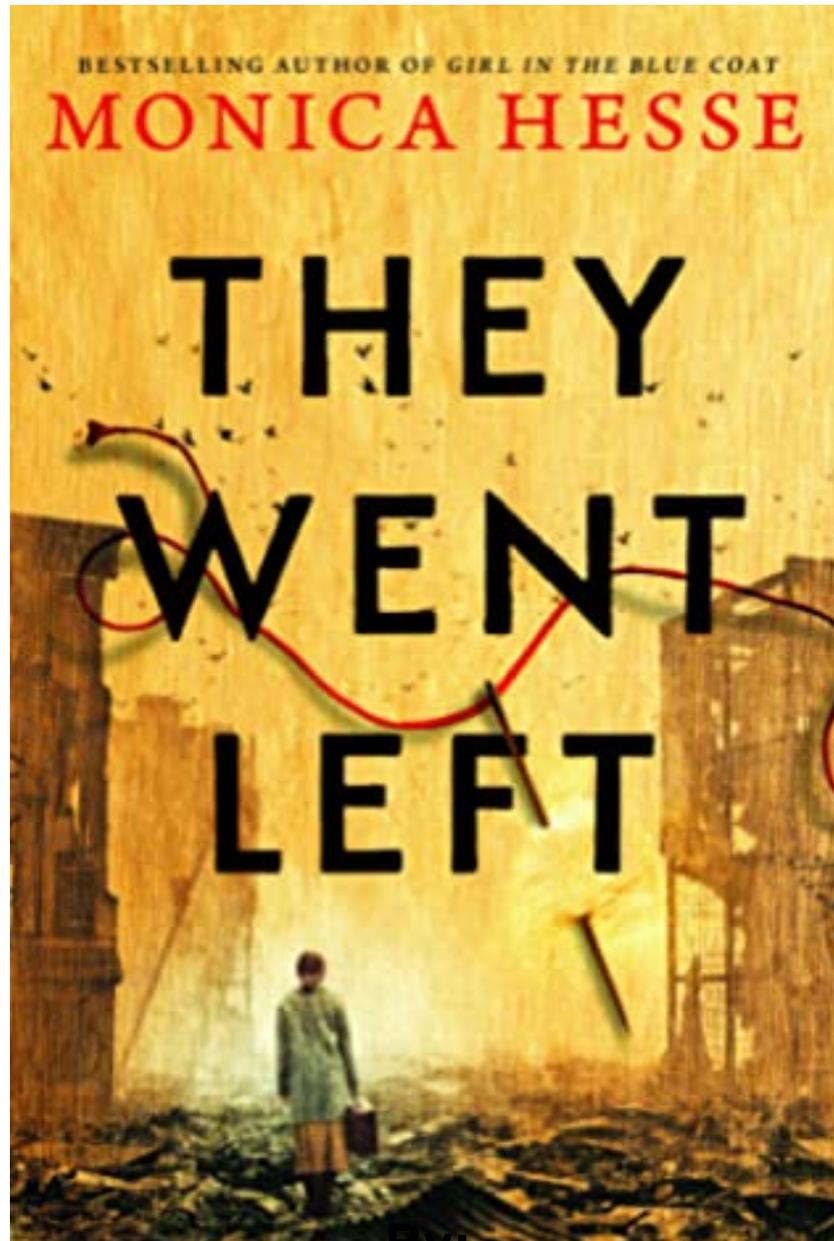


They Went Left Book PDF Download



By:
Monica Hesse

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What people Say:

Donna Backshall

When everything seems hopeless, when you're coming out of something that seemed unsurvivable, when you're overwhelmed beyond belief, you can still choose to love.

is one of those books that ties your stomach in knots, and makes you want to shout out in anger, but when you're done, you know you have changed. Your heart is crying out to your sense of decency, kindness and compassion, telling you how necessary it is to let these guide your daily actions.

Most WWII g

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Most WWII genocide stories start before the war, or while European Jews were being sent to the concentration camps. This well-researched and realistic novel, much like

, shows us the baffling and heartbreaking aftermath. We learn just how difficult it can be to survive the unthinkable and to endure the continuing hell of putting together a life and family torn apart by such evil as the Holocaust.

Celia McMahon

Thank you Edelweiss for this phenomenal e-galley!

I cannot stress this enough: I am a sucker for punishment and will read every WW2 book out there

no matter how heart-wrenching, gut-punching, how completely soul-destroying it is.

THEY WENT LEFT tells the unique story of what happened AFTER the concentration camps were liberated. Zofia, who has lost her entire family, holds onto hope that her little brother, Abek is alive. Accompanied first by a Russian soldier, she arrives back home only to find

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THEY WENT LEFT tells the unique story of what happened AFTER the concentration camps were liberated. Zofia, who has lost her entire family, holds onto hope that her little brother, Abek is alive. Accompanied first by a Russian soldier, she arrives back home only to find it utterly changed. In an effort to track her brother's whereabouts, she travels far and ends up in Germany where she joins a group of people, displaced and lost, but also hopeful. It's there that she finds a future for herself.

Zofia is an unreliable narrator. She's traumatized by her time in concentration camps, as anyone would be. It is through her memories that we experience the brutality of what happened and the atrocities that she had witnessed. This book made me uncomfortable, but it should. this stuff HAPPENED and it should not be forgotten because you feel uneasy. The war did not end for a lot of people even after they were liberated and this book is a testament to that.

I recommend this book for all ages because we should not censor our kids. The past is very much real and should be discussed and read and seen. This book is beautifully written and raw and powerful.

Zoe

Heartwrenching, haunting, and hopeful!

They Went Left is a poignant, compelling tale that sweeps you away to post-war Germany and into the life of Zofia Lederman, a young Jewish girl who after being liberated from a Nazi concentration camp and with a mind traumatized by cruelty and violence travels from her home town in Poland to the Foehrenwald Displaced Persons Camp to search for the one family member who may not be lost forever and that she swore to protect, her younger brother, Abek.

The prose

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The prose is raw and tense. The characters are vulnerable, tortured, and resilient. And the plot is a moving tale about life, love, bravery, strength, loss, deception, hope, survival, and the enduring aftereffects of war.

Overall, They Went Left is a lovely blend of historical facts, realistic fiction, and palpable emotion that does a beautiful job of reminding us that even after suffering the most unimaginable cruelty and wickedness humanity still has an innate ability to want to love and be loved.

Thank you to HBG Canada for providing me with a copy in exchange for an honest review.

Skip

A bit like

, this book takes place in the aftermath of Nazi concentration camps. Zofia has been rescued by a Russian soldier named Dima who brings her back to her home in Poland, where she yearns to be reunited with her younger brother, Abek. The rest of her family "went left" into the showers, where they were killed by poisonous gas. Rather than wait for him, Zofia heads off to Germany to find Abek in desperation for something to keep her tethered to this world. She ends up in a

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displaced people, eventually falling for a distant man named Josef, who seems to have his own dark secrets. One of the ways that Zofia survives is by reciting the alphabet from A (Abek) to Z (Zofia), each letter with a connection to family or home. She makes friends, who choose to make the best of their surroundings, when her world is turned upside down not once or twice, but thrice. Well done.

The Nerd Daily

| Review by Nathalie DeFelice

Long after I finished this book, I remained in awe of what I read. The melancholic tone of this story is hauntingly memorable, and offers an insight into an aspect of war that I don't get to read too often in stories: what happens in the aftermath. Unpacking trauma as well as figuring out how to continue on in a world that no longer contains those we hold most dear. My heart clenched as I went through each page, desperate to cli

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Zofia Lederman is 18, and recently been liberated from the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. Despite being told the war is over, it doesn't seem that way to Zofia. She feels broken in mind, body, and spirit. Three years prior, she witnessed as her all of her family were sent to die while she

and her brother survived. With a promise to find each other and fill the alphabet from Abek to Zofia, A to Z, Zofia sets off from Poland into Germany to seek her brother. However, everyone she meets at the displacement camp she is at is also looking for someone. She meets people just as forever changed by the horrors of what they experienced as she was, and a young man who hides his past behind a wall of secrets. As her search continues, it seems nearly impossible. How will she find a single boy in a sea of missing people? Will the answers she finds during her search help heal her or finally break her for good?

Friends, this story is beautiful, but it is also incredibly heartbreaking. You might be thinking: "Well, duh, it's historical fiction." But this book is something entirely different. I wasn't imagining that I would relate to the anguish that Zofia feels throughout this book. From the start, it pulls you in. Throughout this book you'll see Zofia's memories, as she remembers them. At first, it all feels real. Vivid, raw memories that serve as both a reminder and a glimmer of hope. There's no doubt that she's experienced some tragic things. Then, things become a little distorted. Zofia's memories become a little more unstable. There's something riveting about having a somewhat unreliable narrator.

Along the way, Zofia meets so many people with stories similar to hers. With the same fervent hopes that they'll be reunited with their loved ones. Each character is so memorable. You'll remember something about each one. Miriam, who seeks her twin sister after they went through horrible experimentation. Breine, a former heiress who now just wants a simple wedding and quiet life. There's also Inge. I don't want to say much about her because of spoilers, but she's the one that really stuck with me.

There are many small joys scattered throughout this story that are lifelines for all of these characters. Telling stories, hobbies, and reclaiming pieces of the past that were thought lost forever. Romance is another joy—mostly. Zofia's romantic partner was problematic, and for once I feel like the ending of this type of relationship was completely appropriate.

This story has a perfect ending, at least, in the realm of everything that has happened. It's not this overtly happy thing that is full of hope, but rather takes a very realistic approach to what's next for the characters. I have to say, this book truly resonated with me in a way that I didn't think possible. Truly, all of Monica Hesse's books have had this effect on me. Her books look into parts of history that most don't think about. Her author's notes are worth reading for the historical relevance to the places Monica chooses to focus on. There's so much respect in her research, and it reflects into her writing. I look forward to her next book, wherever that journey takes us.

This book is undoubtedly a 10/10 for me. It's powerful, and I hope that this story will resonate with many others. Definitely add this book to your TBR.