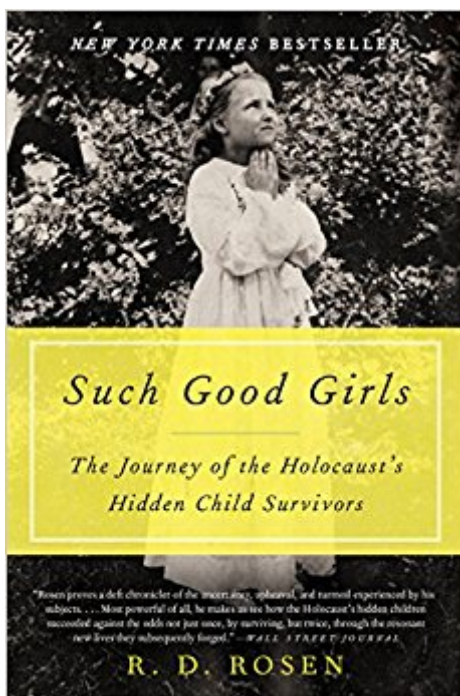


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# Such Good Girls: The Journey Of The Holocaust's Hidden Child Survivors



## Synopsis

Edgar Award-winning mystery novelist R. D. Rosen tells the story of the hidden children who survived the Holocaust through the lives of three girls hidden in three different countries—among the less than 10 percent of Jewish children in Europe to survive World War II—who went on to lead remarkable lives in New York City. Only one in ten Jewish children in Europe survived the Holocaust, many in hiding. In *Such Good Girls*, R. D. Rosen tells the story of these survivors through the true experiences of three girls. Sophie Turner-Zaretsky, who spent the war years believing she was an anti-Semitic Catholic schoolgirl, eventually became an esteemed radiation oncologist. Flora Hogman, protected by a succession of Christians, emerged from the war a lonely, lost orphan, but became a psychologist who pioneered the study of hidden child survivors. Unlike Anne Frank, Carla Lessing made it through the war concealed with her family in the home of Dutch strangers before becoming a psychotherapist and key player in the creation of an international organization of hidden child survivors. In braiding the stories of three women who defied death by learning to be “such good girls,” Rosen examines a silent and silenced generation—the last living cohort of Holocaust survivors. He provides rich, memorable portraits of a handful of hunted children who, as adults, were determined to deny Hitler any more victories, and he recreates the extraordinary event that lured so many hidden child survivors out of their grown-up “hiding places” and finally brought them together.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Rosen tells the story of these women and the varied community of survivors with

sensitivity and genuine affection. (Library Journal) R.D. Rosen has performed an essential service to both memory and understanding. The three women at the heart of *Such Good Girls* have lived remarkable lives, and Rosen has limned them with both empathy and grace. (Daniel Orkent, author of *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*) "In the always harrowing and inspiring literature of *Survival*, R.D. Rosen's *Such Good Girls* makes a poignant and well-told contribution... The good girls of this riveting tale pulled off the improbable, which he conveys with talent, warmth, and great humanity. (Thane Rosenbaum, author of *The Golems of Gotham* and *Second Hand Smoke*) "The first book that delves into the lesser-known aspect of children in hiding and the aftermath of the war years. Richly anecdotal, it reveals what it was like to become someone else—for a while—and then back again to whom one was meant to be. (Myriam Abramowicz, co-director of *As If It Were Yesterday*) "R.D. Rosen has written about Jewish girls hidden in plain sight during the holocaust with such compassion and precision that his beautifully crafted words give a new voice to an unspeakable time. *Such Good Girls* is a story you will not forget. (Betsy Carter, author of *The Puzzle King*) "R.D. Rosen proves a deft chronicler of the uncertainty, upheaval and turmoil experienced by his subjects. Most powerful of all, he makes us see how the Holocaust's hidden children succeeded against the odds not just once, by surviving, but twice, through the resonant new lives they subsequently forged. (Wall Street Journal)

Sophie Turner Zaretsky survived the Holocaust without even knowing she was Jewish, while her terrified, widowed mother worked for a Nazi in Poland as a "Christian" bookkeeper. Flora Hogman, orphaned by the Final Solution, was shuttled through southern France, from convents to the homes of one Christian family after another, clueless about her real identity. Carla Lessing and her family hid upstairs in the apartment of a defiant Dutch barber who protected them for more than two years while cutting German soldiers' hair on the first floor. Sophie, Flora, and Carla survived not only the Holocaust—among the mere 10 percent of European Jewish children who did—but their own survival as well. In *Such Good Girls*, Rosen traces their lives from traumatic childhood to triumphant adulthood, following each of them to New York City, where they slowly emerged from the devastation of their early years to devote their careers to helping others. It was there, in 1991, that they played important roles in the groundbreaking event that, for the first time, brought together hidden child survivors scattered around the world. A chance meeting with Sophie sent author R. D. Rosen on a journey to grasp the scope of Nazi extermination of Europe's Jews and to honor hidden children, the very last generation of survivors to have

witnessed the Holocaust firsthand.

The psychological issues and suffering by hidden children were neglected for many years. By understanding their traumas and the PTSD suffered as well as the loss of years of memories is difficult to understand but explains the PTSD suffered by victims of recent tragedies like 9/11. The fact that so many of these hidden children chose professions to help others. It explained a lot of what my own daughter has suffered at age 11 since 9/11. As part of a traumatized family, she has coped with PTSD along with her siblings and parents. She chose Social Work as her profession.

I was born at the end of the war and the book was eye opening and very moving. The history books tell us about what happened but I had no idea that children had been hidden. I suppose I should have and I suspect that there are many out there who are still unaware. I was born in Malta and as history tells us it was bombed very heavily. My mother and grandmother bore scars from the bombs. I also have read the book about Anne Frank so I have always wanted to know more. That the girls in the book went on to contribute so much shows a high level of bravery. I would highly recommend this book and feel it should be reading matter in schools.

There is a song called "Hell is for Children" sung by Pat Benatar. This is one book that explains that song better than most. If we are not to repeat it we must remember it. This book should be required reading for all.

Until I read this book, I had no idea so many Jewish children were hidden from the Nazis, many passing as Catholics and having to learn Catholic doctrine to do so. As one can imagine, this kind of childhood left many of these children feeling that they were neither Jewish nor Catholic. Some were so young they didn't remember they were Jewish. One became a Catholic priest. The author movingly describes the modern-day reunions of these children. Told initially from the perspective of two girls who became "hidden children," it is very affecting. I would recommend this to anyone at all interested in the Holocaust or the World War II era.

Very interesting book. The first half of the book concerned how the three girls stayed hidden during the war and the second half covered the next 60 or 65 years of their lives, mostly in the U.S. After I completed the book, I searched the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's website and found interviews with all three women. Very nice indeed.

This was an unusual story of Hidden Children during WWII and I found it really interesting. The author did an excellent job, carefully detailing information he got interviewing survivors as adults. He treated them all delicately as wounded souls who learned to put all the horrors they had had to live with as children, behind them. Although it had left scars and twisted their identities at times, it was really wonderful how they picked themselves up and were able to continue on. In fact some felt they were honoring those who perished, others still questioning why they survived and not others. An amazing amount of people helped hide and support these children, far more than you would imagine. Really interesting reading.

This is a sobering tale that draws the reader along a descent into hell, but manages to keep the clear and hopeful view of human soul under duress. Conveys the hardship of those whose lives were so distorted by having to hide, flee and in many instances, deny their very core in order to survive.

This book revealed many things about the Holocaust that I am sorry to say I heard for the first time. I had no idea the magnitude of loss The Netherlands and Belgium suffered. I learned about Germany, Poland and Austria but this was all new to me. We learned in general about the bravery of the Resistance, the families who hid children, and what parents did to try and protect their children, but to read about specific individuals and what they overcame is at times numbing. I think the number one thing I took away from this book was the confusion many of these children faced about their religion and their identity once they were free and establishing their lives as adults. The only problem I had with this book was that he jumped around so much. I'm not sure how else he could have told the stories but often I had to go back over what I had already read because I was getting confused about the children and their locations. I would recommend this book.

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