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Resistance: Book 1



Synopsis

Fighting on a secret front of World War II Paul and Marie's bucolic French country town is almost untouched by the ravages of WWII, but the siblings still live in the shadow of war. Their father is a Prisoner of War, kept hostage by the Germans. When their friend Henri's parents disappear and Henri goes into hiding because of his Jewish ancestry, Paul and Marie realize they must take a stand. But how can they convince the French Resistance that even children can help in their fight against injustice? Resistance is the first volume of a trilogy written by acclaimed teen author Carla Jablonski and illustrated by Leland Purvis.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

Paul and Marie's bucolic French country town is almost untouched by the ravages of WWII, but the siblings still live in the shadow of war. Their father is a Prisoner of War, kept hostage by the Germans. When their friend Henri's parents disappear and Henri goes into hiding because of his Jewish ancestry, Paul and Marie realize they must take a stand. But how can they convince the French Resistance that even children can help in their fight against injustice? Resistance is the first volume of a trilogy written by acclaimed teen author Carla Jablonski and illustrated by Leland Purvis. [A Look Inside Resistance: Book 1 \(Click on Images to Enlarge\)](#)

Grade 7 Up

Paul and Marie are comparatively lucky because they live in the free zone of France instead of the occupied zone. When they try to hide their Jewish friend Henri from the Germans after his parents vanish, the children get recruited into the French Resistance movement. The story opens with Paul's sepia-toned drawings of a bucolic landscape that transforms as the clouds darken, demonic monsters appear, and the houses in the distance start burning. While the rest of the story is illustrated in full color, the boy's drawings appear throughout, a visual thread that readers can follow to see the action through his eyes. Throughout the course of this book, Paul and his sister learn more about the world around them and begin to understand the scope of what is happening to the rest of the country. By the end of the book, they have witnessed forced deportations and seen a member of the Resistance shot in front of them. But they have also learned that many people are participating in the movement and are fighting back in myriad ways. This ending makes it clear that sequels are needed to complete the story. A brief overview of free and occupied France and the French Resistance movement is included, which will be helpful for readers who are unfamiliar with this facet of history.

Andrea Lipinski, New York Public Library (c)
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Resistance, the first in a new trilogy of graphic novels about the French Resistance during World War II is a worthy addition not only to graphic novel collections but also to the wealth of Holocaust literature for children and teens. The author opens the story by providing some necessary historical background on the Nazi invasion of France in 1940 and the subsequent division of the country into Occupied France, run directly by the Nazis, and "Free France," run by the Vichy government, who collaborated with the Nazis. Paul, a budding artist, his sister, Marie, and his mother live at the Hotel Tessier; Paul's father is a prisoner-of-war. Paul's own drawings, with ragged edges that make it look as if they were torn straight from his sketchpad, provide a running commentary on the plot, and are interspersed with the story panels, offering his personal insights into the characters he encounters. However, Paul's problems are nothing compared to those of his friend Henri Levy, a Jew who they hide in their wine caves when the Nazis take over their hotel. As the Nazis begin deporting Jews and closing Jewish businesses in the Occupied Zone in 1942, Paul, Marie and the other children in the town struggle to understand what is going on. "Is it bad to be Jewish?" Marie asks her brother. "Of course not," he replies, but he's unable to explain to her why the Jews are being taken away. When Paul learns of the secret Resistance movement fighting in many ways

against the Nazis, he wants to help. While initially he's told he's too young, the local leader realizes that young children could be perfect for transporting information, since no one would suspect them. Soon they are given a test, to see if they are trustworthy. Paul's drawing talent even comes in handy, when he is asked to draw vehicles the Nazis have at the hotel and anything that they install on the grounds. Quickly they are entrusted with a dangerous mission--transporting information to Paris right under the Germans' noses--and helping their Jewish friend Henri locate his parents. The suspense builds on the train ride, as violence erupts. Will Marie and Paul be able to complete their first mission successfully? Jablonski does a terrific job in recreating the confusion and moral ambiguity of the period. In a thoughtful Author's Note at the conclusion of the story, she discusses the role of ordinary people who took action against the Germans to liberate France. However obvious right and wrong seems to us now, Jablonski points out that there "are different versions of 'the truth,' ...History as lived is anything but clear!...what seems obvious to us now was probably not at all obvious to anyone then." She emphasizes the difficulty of making choices--even if that choice was doing nothing. Purvis' illustrations, ranging from his grim depictions of Nazi roundups and deportations, colored in dark tones of blue and gray, to the angst-filled expressions on the passengers' faces while having their documents inspected by Nazi soldiers on the trains, greatly enhance the suspense and drama of the story.

The story is good, though it gets going a little late. The illustrations are okay, but the sequential art is a bit off. I've been reading comics for 30 years, and sometimes I was confused as to which word balloon was next. Bought it at a discounted rate. It was worth it.

Read so I could bring to school and have my middle school students read. It is a good introduction to WWII and the holocaust

Reason for Reading: This is a Cybils '10 nominee and required reading for me as a graphic novels panelist. The book starts with a one-page non-fiction narrative that places our story in history. We are told how France was invaded, occupied, surrendered and the results of this. The graphic story focuses on a French family living in Vichy, the 'free' part of France, a mother, two daughters and a son, the father is off fighting in the war and no word has been heard since France's surrender. One by one we learn how certain members of this family and village are part of the French resistance and when one of them learns that the children are hiding a Jew in their wine caves he enlists their help thinking children will make perfect resistance members as they will not be suspect. The book is

quite dark emotionally. We see images that hint at the horrors going on and some brutal events do happen but it is the looks of outrage and fear on the children's faces that truly brings the emotions to the reader. The story involves the round-up of Jews in their village and the children's mission as resistance fighters. It is exciting and full of fear at the same time. The book does a good job of bringing the reality of living in an occupied country to the reader. There are a few instances when the plot is a little too unbelievable, someone just happens to turn up in the nick of time at the place where they were looking, that sort of thing. But otherwise, a compelling story which takes an interesting stand in its two-page non-fiction conclusion where it explains the French Resistance and whether participating or not participating should ever be reason for judging someone.

[Resistance] byÃ Æ [Defiance] byÃ Æ [Victory] byÃ Æ This is a series of three graphic novels about the French Resistance written for young adults. I read them all one right after the other, in one day, and they read well as one book. I know nothing about the French Resistance other than a foolish romanticized notion and this gave me a lot of pretty good information quickly. Now I will be looking for a non-fiction memoir. This trilogy covered a surprising number of aspects of resistance. How does a person make the choice to join a resistance movement? How do those actions affect families as a whole and as individuals? How old should an active member be? There were many factions of resistance - which philosophy fits your beliefs and how to work together well, or IF to work together. What is to be done with collaborators and how do you even identify them? As you can see, these books addressed many, many ideas and issues. It also involved me emotionally with the characters. How would it be to see your children involved? How would it be to see your parents involved? What if someone you love was starving or injured and collaborated? This series has managed to address all of those issues without simplifying them or making them black and white. After reading this and looking at the colored drawings, I feel as if I have just left an epic movie. And I want to tell all my friends to go see it.

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