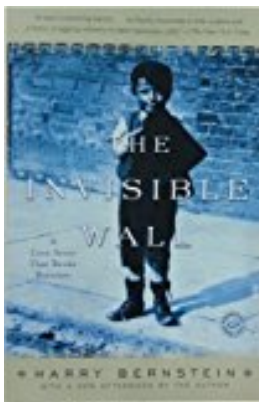


[PDF] The Invisible Wall: A Love Story That Broke Barriers

Harry Bernstein - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: The Invisible Wall: A Love St
Author: Harry Bernstein
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Starred Review. Bernstein writes, "There are few rules or unwritten laws that are not broken when circumstances demand, and few distances that are too great to be traveled," about the figurative divide ("geographically... only a few yards, socially... miles and miles") keeping Jews and Christians apart in the poor Lancashire mill town in England where he was raised. In his affecting debut memoir, the nonagenarian gives voice to a childhood version of himself who witnesses his older sister's love for a Christian boy break down the invisible wall that kept Jewish

families from Christians across the street. With little self-conscious authorial intervention, young Harry serves as a wide-eyed guide to a world since dismantled—where "snot rags" are handkerchiefs, children enter the workforce at 12 and religion bifurcates everything, including industry. True to a child's experience, it is the details of domestic life that illuminate the tale—the tenderness of a mother's sacrifice, the nearly Dickensian angst of a drunken father, the violence of schoolyard anti-Semitism, the "strange odors" of "forbidden foods" in neighbor's homes. Yet when major world events touch the poverty-stricken block (the Russian revolution claims the rabbi's son, neighbors leave for WWI), the individual coming-of-age is intensified without being trivialized, and the conversational account takes on the heft of a historical novel with stirring success. (*Apr.*) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the edition.

From School Library Journal Adult/High School—When Bernstein, who is in his 90s, was a boy, his older sister, Lily, was in love with Arthur. This would not have been a problem except that Arthur was Christian and Lily was Jewish, and in their pre-Great War mill town in northern England, an invisible wall ran down their street, separating them. Neighbors rarely crossed those few cobblestoned feet. In winter, the Jews built a snow slide on their side and the Christians built one on theirs. There was not much other frivolity in those hard times. Home was not a happy place for Harry, his mother, and his five brothers and sisters when his mean, alcoholic father was there. When 12-year-old Lily won a scholarship to grammar school, her father dragged her by the hair to work with him. Harry's mother started a shop in her front room to make ends meet, selling slightly damaged fruit and providing a place for socializing and gossip. She always hoped for better, having Harry write letters to their relatives in America, beseeching them on a regular basis to send passage for her family, and then, finally, only for Lily when the lovers were discovered. Barriers were finally broken as Lily refused to give up either Arthur or her mother. Readers will be taken with this memoir, reminiscent of Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* (Scribner, 1996). It will grab them from the start, drawing them into an intimate relationship with Harry, Lily, their mother, and the various neighbors who lived on their street.—*Ellen Bell, Amador Valley High School, Pleasanton, CA*
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