

*After the Train*

Gloria Whelan

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Hopelessly naïve, Peter Liebig is (on the surface) a typical thirteen year old German boy living in post-WWII conditions. Jaded at school yet enthused by books and his own personal history, Liebig soon stumbles upon a secret that threatens to change quintessential pieces of his own identity. However, despite the heartwarming potential of a novel chronicling personal acceptance, *After the Train* is at the crux a spiced up history lesson.

While Whelan provides impeccable descriptions of the post-World War II atmosphere during the novel, the plotline has gaping holes that flood the story half-way through. After the climax of the story rears its head within the first fifty pages, the entire second-half is unnecessary and contributes nothing to the plot; instead, Liebig travels on a journey that is a sporadic collection of events. Such problems are further supplemented by poor character development and cliché life-lessons.

For late-elementary and early middle school students seeking an informative introduction to World War II, this book is ideal. Unfortunately, for any readers above thirteen years old *After the Train* quickly approaches station “boredom imminent”.