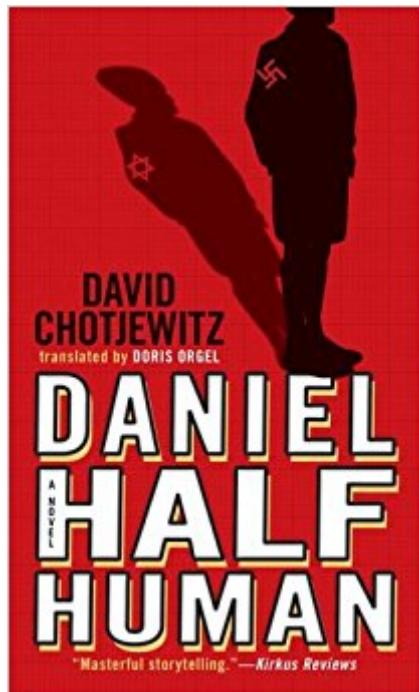


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# Daniel Half Human



## **Synopsis**

At the dawn of Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933 and a period of the most brutal, aggressive anti-Semitism the world has ever seen, two boys swear eternal brotherhood by slitting their wrists and mingling their blood. Having experienced so much together, even a night in jail after painting a swastika on a wall in the hated Communist section of Hamburg, Daniel and Armin had become the best of friends. But then, with the scar on his wrist still healing, Daniel receives some life-altering news: He is half-Jewish, and as such, half-hated by a growing number of neighbors, teachers, and friends. Quickly, he decides to keep his identity a secret, conspiring with Armin to join the Hitler Youth -- but only one of them can, and will, join, with terrible consequences.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 740 (What's this?)

Mass Market Paperback: 325 pages

Publisher: Simon Pulse (March 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689857489

ISBN-13: 978-0689857485

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 1 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #258,148 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #59 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Holocaust #67 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Holocaust #199 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Prejudice & Racism

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

"An outstanding addition to the large body of World War II/Holocaust fiction." -- School Library Journal "No book stages Kristallnacht more chillingly." -- The Horn Book >

David Chotjewitz is a teacher and playwright. He lives with his daughter in Hamburg, Germany, where, in 2000, this book was published to acclaim. Doris Orgel's own novel of the Nazi period, *The Devil in Vienne*, is considered a classic. She has translated many books from German, including a

recent volume of the Grimm fairy tales. She lives in New York City.

I was introduced to this book by a 6th grade student of mine after I had assigned the class to find a Holocaust related historical fiction novel. The student enjoyed it and so did I. It reveals a different perspective on the Holocaust as the main character, though not exactly anti-Semitic, is confused about his German identity when he discovers that he is half Jewish. This revelation changes his entire life, between friendships, school, family, etc., as he wrestles with his emotions and Nazi-German societal influences and pressures. Great story about family, friendship, and identity.

I bought one used one and one new one. They are the same, but one smells better than the other, lol My daughter needed the book for school. I think we will be donating them to the school library.

I bought this novel as one of the many required novels for a children's literature class at my university. It was a great story that featured a side not often read about.

Daniel Half Human was mailed in good condition, looks almost new. All pages and binding were intact; and clean. My son was very happy with the book.

Until the spring of 1933, Daniel has been lucky enough to enjoy a good German childhood with his well off and well educated family. Daniel has even enjoyed jail because one exciting night along with his best friend, Armin, they were caught painting a swastika on a wall in the hated Communist section of Hamburg. In their cell, the boys swear lasting brotherhood but this camaraderie is soon threatened by a family secret for Daniel learns that his mother is in fact Jewish, that he is half-Jewish and therefore in the eyes of the Nazis who are rapidly rising to power in Germany, half-human. Daniel decides to keep the truth a secret and he and Armin excitedly talk of joining the Hitler Youth. Armin's father forbids it as he is a Socialist but Armin joins anyway and the seeds of tragedy are planted for both boys who remain friends despite everything but eventually their friendship is overrun by the times they are living in and Daniel is forced to make a choice, stay in Germany surely die or leave with his parents to a safe haven outside of Europe. The story shows the rise and fall of Nazi Germany and the rise and fall of a friendship that is destined to come full circle, for with the fall of Nazi Germany and the allied invasion a young American soldier (Daniel) is interviewing German soldiers who may or may not have been in the Nazi Party and among them is Armin and the young American soldier has a choice, should he ignore what he knows to be the truth despite Armin's

protests, that the Armin was a member of the Nazi party or let him go. This is a book about friendship and what we do in the name of our beliefs, well written, totally haunting, this is a book that both adults and children can read and enjoy. Sometimes we have to stand up and be counted no matter what the consequences.

Daniel Half Human was a very good book about conflict with a Half-Jewish boy: Daniel. He wanted to join the Hitler Youth when he found this out. His friend, Armin, who already joined the youth stayed as his friend even when he found out about Daniel's secret. I would recommend this book if you like books about the holocaust or historical fiction. I rate this book a 5 out of 5 because even when I wanted to stop reading I couldn't. The story gets very suspenseful at points and keeps the reader on the edge of their seat.

Good book. Easy read. I thought some of the language unsuited to my 7th graders. Would probably be fine for older students.

Teens are a notoriously challenging audience to write for, but given the right subject, the right characters, the right book, they can be fanatic readers. Many a devoted, mature reading life begins when the inexplicable evil of Nazism haunts a young heart. For adolescents, Holocaust writing is often their best introduction to memoir - I Have Lived a 1000 Years, Wiesel's Night - and historical fiction (Number of the Stars, The Devil's Arithmetic). Among such company, this is a lesser volume. To its credit, the book adequately sketches German life during and just prior-to the Nazi rise to power. Distinctions of class and party affiliation are made clear, and the insidious creep of totalitarianism over time is rendered well. But on many other levels, the book fails to hit the mark. None of the characters is especially compelling, leaving the horrors at arms-length. There are shifts in time and perspective of narration that may leave weaker readers in the dust. The writing is clunky and oddly paced. So while this book isn't a failure, it falls short of both its subject and its audience. Recommended only for obsessive readers of the Holocaust.

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