



The Last Witness

Jerry Amernic

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The year is 2039, and Jack Fisher is the last living survivor of the Holocaust. Set in a world that is abysmally complacent about events of the last century, Jack is a 100-year-old man whose worst memories took place before he was 5. His story hearkens back to the Jewish ghetto of his birth and to Auschwitz where, as a little boy, he had to fend for himself to survive after losing his family. Jack becomes the central figure in a missing-person investigation when his granddaughter suddenly disappears. While assisting police, he finds himself in danger and must reach into the darkest corners of his memory to come out alive.

The Last Witness Details

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Author : Jerry Amernic

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From Reader Review The Last Witness for online ebook

Carol says

The Last Witness by Jerry Amernic was inspired by the time he saw the numbers on the arm of a woman at a Jewish Bakery that his father used to take him to as a child. I was older when I first saw the tattoo of numbers on a man's arm. Having read many books about the Holocaust, I always wonder about how is it possible that there are still survivors of those who were in death camps. Jerry Amernic provides one of the best answer.

Jack Fischer aka Jacob Klukowsky is the vehicle for that answer. At the beginning of the book he is 100 years old and believed to be the last survivor of the Holocaust. Why is this book set in the future? The author can see signs that the Holocaust is being forgotten or diminished in its importance. One thing that this book brings up that is different from many books on the Holocaust is that recognizes that the Nazis forced many into ghettos. Jacob was only four years old living in a closed ghetto (walled off from the rest of Lodz, Poland. There was overcrowding, disease and hunger. This was the stage before the death camps. Jerry Amernic flashes back and forth from different points in Jack's life and to 2035 in New York City with great ease.

Jack Fischer's great granddaughter, Christine, a school teacher with a love for history is shocked with the trend to cover less and less of the Holocaust in the textbooks. Jack had not told his children of what his life had been like but he shared what happened with his great granddaughter. She fights to get the full history in the school books.

This book does have some mystery which becomes more apparent at the end but I think it is more of a crossover book with historical fiction. This book makes you think. When I was growing up, we heard nothing about the Holocaust. It was my father who brought me the book by Anne Frank that introduced me to the subject. Also, we need to think about recognizing all genocide, about what we can do to prevent it. We need to think about what leads to it, racial slurs, putting down people who are different from the majority, to not really listening to people who are verbally threatening others because they need to be prevented from action.

I received an Advance copy of The Last Witness by Jerry Amernic in exchange for a fair review from the Partners in Crime but that in no way influenced my thoughts or feelings in my review.

Cindy Taber says

What abuse, torched, they went through. I enjoyed but upset what he witnessed, then to be told that it didn't happened!!

michael pilgrim says

one is the lowest rating

I can honestly say that I did NOT enjoy this book. I had an experience at an early age with a lady who had a 6 digit number on her left forearm. being an outspoken kid, I asked what it was and she said it was her id number. I later learned that it was her auschwitz number. this book to me tended to downplay the JEWISH HOLOCAUST.

I had,to stop reading several times and allow my BP to level out. all I can say is read at your own risk.

Pam Warner says

We must remember! Ver good book.

Kathleen Ibbotson says

Wonderful story

I have been a history buff since I was just a girl. I discovered the holocaust in my early teens and read all I could find. I have been to the Anne Frank house and to the holocaust museum in Washington. I have been to France and Germany to try to understand more about WW II. But recently I discovered something amazing. I am an Irish American but found out that I am descended from 4 Jewish women who share my genome. I have never been so proud. So stories like this one are magical. Thank you!

Barbara Tsipouras says

What if the world forgot about the Holocaust? What if those groups who claim that it's all a lie and the camps were just internment camps and no death camps and all the sites would be closed, history books would leave out the horror of the Holocaust. At the moment this does not seem possible and I doubt it will be within the next 20 years, but that's the premise for The Last Witness.

A radical group of white christians is killing the last survivors of the Holocaust. Jack seems to be the last one alive, he hasn't forgotten anything and finally starts to talk.

No, we must not forget, we all need to learn from history or else it will repeat itself. And we need to teach it in school, the world needs to overcome racism in all its forms.

Katrina Shawver says

The Last Witness is better classified under Holocaust first, and then mystery. This imagining of the world in 2039, when only a few survivors of the Jewish Holocaust remain. if any, is clever, and a timely message - if we do not honor history, remember history, write it down, and teach it, the memories will be lost, and Holocaust deniers will indeed prevail in textbooks and classroom teaching. It was a fast read for me, as I'm

well-researched on WWII and Auschwitz, and Jerry's history is spot on accurate. That he wrote it as a thriller falls under creative writing, and in doing so, is actually spreading Holocaust awareness to those who may not be drawn to a "Holocaust" or Auschwitz book. The reader needn't worry about grim scenes in a concentration camp - these are only short flashbacks as reminders of what really happened. It's written well, and the thriller aspect (no spoilers here) is completely realistic and spot on based on what's happening now in the world, a mere three years after he wrote.

Bandit says

The world is rife with atrocities of great and small scale. News reminds us of this every day. In fact, it's possible to get inundated with tragedies to the extent of becoming callous. And yet there is one great tragedy of not so distant past that is absolutely undeniably guaranteed to produce an emotional reaction, WWII and the Nazi's horrific extermination of the millions of Jews. Of all the atrocities wars bring that has got to be possibly the worst. This novel set in the not so distant 2039 is about a world that for various, utterly self serving reasons has chosen to reedit its past to minimize or even omit from books and records the genocide of the World War II. Although not if the Last Witness, a 100 year old eponymous protagonist, has his say, incredible character, on whose shoulders this novel rests almost entirely. The narrative splits between young Jacob's past and his survival in Auschwitz to 2039's Canada where tragic events bring him and his story to public attention. Interesting book, very compelling, exceptionally timely for a world all too eager to let nationalism and jingoism frame their views down to a very narrow, very ignorant, very intolerant perspective. Not to proselytize, one might argue the book does enough of that. Actually not too much for me, but it does have a moral. Of course, it has a moral, a good story should. Those who do not remember their past are doomed to repeat it. Those who do not learn from their mistakes are doomed to fail again and again. Never quite understood how someone can deny genocide (especially one of such magnitude) like what's the actual argument behind it. The author does a credible job of demonstrating such abhorrent thinking, so you can get a glimpse of such perverse logic without getting into a conversation with Mel Gibson or something. It's scary to see how such minds function and, unlike the recent controversial NYT article, this is far from a compassionate depiction. So from that perspective it was darkly fascinating. And the book itself is quite good with a terrific main character. The only thing is...when I referred to him as incredible earlier, that wasn't an exaggeration. I know extraordinary circumstances produce extraordinary reactions, but what Jacob as a 4 and 5 year old kid seems...I don't know...exceptional? preternaturally advanced? Granted I don't know kids that age and modern ones would probably just be confused or paralyzed without their gadgets, but can a kid that young really do all that? And, more importantly, remember all that in such detail 95 years later? Even as a terrifically spritely old man in great shape? Anyway, this is fiction, after all. Some suspension of disbelief is required. In this case, it just distracted me from the story somewhat. The writing was good, otherwise, only occasionally flashing some lack of experience. The author has a respectable nonfiction experience, fiction's just a different beast. Either way, it was a good read, compelling story, had my attention, went by pretty quickly, considering the page count. Anyone interested in that specific historical era would particularly enjoy this one. Thanks Netgalley.

Karen Sweiger-Veil says

Nvver forget

In this book, I have found a story of historical events that have always profoundly affected me during history

classes. Dutifully documented by the Nazi perpetrators, the Jewish Holocaust did indeed occur, but 2039 society cannot fathom its validity because the extermination of 6 million Jews just seems too far fetched to a large percentage of the general population. This is not a new belief system because through the years history books began to devote very little coverage to the Jewish Holocaust. Horrible events are set in motion to disprove the validity of this holocaust until one lone survivor must step up to the plate to convince society that despite his just turning 100 he is perfectly capable in supporting historical facts of death camps, ovens, and gas chambers and other atrocities committed by Nazi soldiers.

This book is one of my "wow" factor reads. I can see the danger radical hate groups pose for our hero as they distort the truth to sway people to embrace their racist viewpoints. It hits home hard in present time (2018) as the U.S. seems to be suffering the same plight as hate groups take center stage to spew their poison as a caustic administration sits idly by watching these groups divide our great country.

An absolutely insightful, yet frightening read. Kudos.

Lynn says

In the year 2035, Christine Fisher, a teacher of 8th grade History, wonders why "The Great Holocaust" mentioned in her history books is the 2009 annihilation of 50,000 Christians by Muslims in Turkey 40 years ago. No mention of the REALLY Great Holocaust that happened 100 years ago. She knows about the Holocaust of the 1940's because her great-grandfather, Jack Fisher, lived through it. He was born in 1935, spent time in the Lodz Ghetto in Poland, and ultimately ended up in a concentration camp where he was liberated at age 4.

As the debates swirl around her, Christine becomes more and more determined to set the record straight, before her history class becomes yet another example of the rewritten history of George Orwell's "1984". Dark forces close in on Christine and on her great-grandfather, who is befriended and championed by wonderfully competent NYPD Lieutenant named Jack Hogson.

If you think you've read every single thing about the Holocaust, written from every single perspective imaginable, I'd like to suggest that you read this novel. It will absolutely be worth your time.

I read this Ebook courtesy of NetGalley and Books Go Social pub date 10/01/14

Rachel McKitterick says

thank you to Netgalley and BooksGoSocial for a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review

3 stars.

Holocaust. It's one word that full of sadness. This story is not your typical Holocaust/Auschwitz story. This is set in the future, in 2039 where almost everyone is skeptical about it even happening in the first place. 6 million Jews dead for just being Jews was too much for people's minds. This is a sad story but in a good way. Can we really get to this point where we question if it ever took place? Such an epic part of history, held up for question? Its a thought I dont want to even think about. This story takes you on the journey of what could happen. I hope with all I've got that this does not become fact. It is an interesting read and I really liked Jack

Fisher. However, some parts of the story dragged but 3 stars is still means it was good and if this sounds like your type of book id recommend giving it a go.

E.J. Findorff says

The Last Witness, a "what-if" novel set in the not too distant future, grabs you by the throat and reminds us of how easily we can be manipulated as a people. Could we possibly forget or deny the Holocaust? Jerry Amernic gives us that possible scenario along with a nice history lesson. The novel is heart-breaking and thought provoking and some of the Holocaust flashbacks are not for the squeamish.

Sarah-Jayne Briggs says

(I received a free copy of this book in exchange for a review).

(This review may contain spoilers).

I found this book to be a particularly hard-hitting read. It isn't the first one I've read which details the Holocaust, but it's currently the first one I've read that's set so far in the future.

I found the idea of this book being about the last survivor of the Holocaust a particularly intriguing one. It was interesting to see that so many people had so thoroughly convinced themselves that the Holocaust never happened, especially since it's known that there are people nowadays who think it's a lie. Then again, there are people who don't think humans really went to the moon. There was one quote in this book that drew a smile from me. Note that I might not be recalling the comments exactly, but this is the general gist:

'Eighty-two percent of Americans believe the Holocaust never happened.'

"Were you aware that half of Americans believe we never went to the moon?"

"I don't know anything about that."

It is sad that I can see people turning a blind eye to the atrocities of the past. How can we learn from history's mistakes if we try to pretend those mistakes never happened? I thought the author showed that theme particularly well.

I thought it was good that the author included flashbacks to Jack's life. I did feel, at times in the flashbacks, that Jacob came across as an older child. His pattern of speech didn't really seem like a four-year-old's to me. At the same time, it was interesting to see the awful horror as he experienced it.

Another thing I found interesting to read was other people's reasonings behind their views. I definitely didn't agree with any of those, but the fact that the workings of their mind was shown helped me to see a bit deeper into their minds than I would normally with villains.

I also liked seeing about the leaps in technology and the fact that e-readers had all but replaced actual books was interesting, too. But I especially liked the way messages were left. And I couldn't help feeling sorry for

Jack during parts of the book, especially considering how many of the others spoke to him just because he chose not to stay silent any longer.

I personally don't think we should forget the terrible things in the past, because I think that history is full of lessons that humanity shouldn't ignore. Just because you don't like something, that doesn't mean it never happened.

Karen says

WOW!!

Cthulhu Down My Chimney 2Night says

Review: THE LAST WITNESS by Jerry Amernic

THE LAST WITNESS is a novel of extraordinary impact, and is definitely a Best of 2014. I fear that author Jerry Amernic is not only vastly talented, but also prophetic. George Orwell was prophetic when he penned NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR and we see indications of that all around us. 66 further years of history have supplied Mr. Amernic with further fuel and fodder for prediction. In this novel, the entire history and experience of the Jewish Holocaust of pre-World War II and throughout the War, is mocked, scoffed at, and declared false. In 2039 (a scant 14 years ahead of us) "what you see is what you get" is the rule--or, "if it happens in my lifetime it's fact," and whatever happened before--never occurred. In a society in which media spin is all, a society which already in some quarters denies the Holocaust--contemporary society--how easily could Mr. Amernic's 2039 come to fruition?
