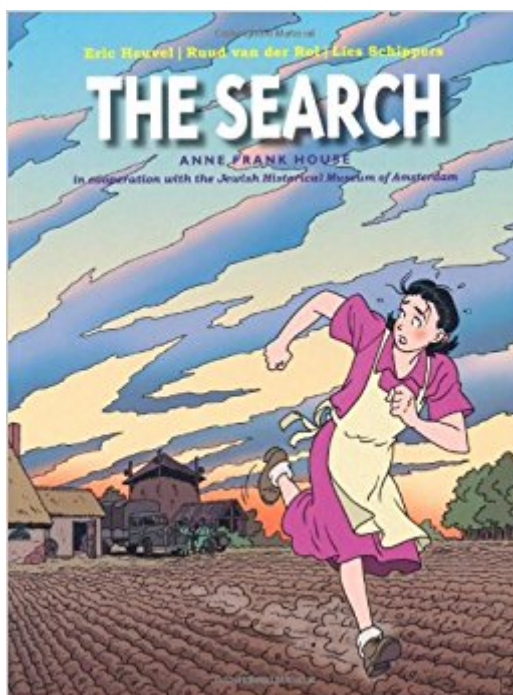


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# The Search



## Synopsis

Esther remembers her own experience of the Holocaust as a Jewish girl living in Amsterdam, and recounts to her grandson Daniel and his friend Jeroen how she escaped from the Nazis and survived by going into hiding in the countryside. Her parents were not so lucky. Esther knows they were sent to a concentration camp and died there, and with Daniel's help she embarks on a search to discover what happened to them during the last months of their lives. After tracking down an old friend who now lives in Israel, Esther finally learns the shocking story of how her parents met their fates at Auschwitz.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 320 (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #79,155 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Jewish #25 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Holocaust #56 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Europe

Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 8

## Customer Reviews

"Heuvel holds little back from his audience, presenting his facts starkly through Tintin-like illustrations that depict the atrocities without artifice. Gripping and visceral, these two volumes together are must-haves." - Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review

ERIC HEUVEL is a highly regarded Dutch graphic novel artist. He lives in Zaandam. RUUD VAN DER ROL worked at the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam for many years, and LIES SCHIPPERS is an editor and author there. They have both written and edited books and educational materials

dealing with Anne Frank and her family, her work and her lifetime, as well as the Holocaust, human rights, prejudice, and discrimination. Mr. van der Rol lives in Castricum, and Ms. Schippers lives in Haarlem.

These are humanizing stories from not too distant history. A story of a young woman who survived living through The Holocaust and losing her family. Her search for the truth of their deaths. Told for people of all ages and backgrounds. Well written and well drawn. Herge inspired cartooning style.

Our girls book group, ages 9-12, read this book and everyone, girls, mothers and grandmothers, enjoyed the story and the format. Most of us had not read a graphic novel before and it was a great introduction. The story is told looking back into the past and is touching and informative. Easy to relate to.

My students really enjoy the books. It is a high interest level for some of my struggling students who were actually reading.

An unusual work in the corpus of graphic Shoa novellas is *Die Suche* (The Search). Published by the Anna Frank House and the Jewish Museum in Amsterdam, this educational brochure imparts information on the Shoa to high school students. The text authors of *Die Suche* are Ruud van der Rol, Lies Schippers and Eric Heuvel, a well-known comics artist and illustrator in Holland, who also provided the pictures. Surprisingly, these pictures are reminiscent of the Tintin series by Georges Prosper R  mi (Herg  ) (1907-1983), probably to make the Shoa story more accessible to young readers through pictures, which have become an inalienable asset of comics culture. For pedagogical reasons, the voice narrating the Shoa events is personal. Here is the story of a family, one of whose daughters was able to hide and after the war looked for her family. Following the history of the Hechts, most of whom perished during the Shoa, is in fact the authors' search for the guilty parties. In this sense the speaking voice belongs to the contrite--the German and the Dutch peoples. The rather stereotypical plot resembles many stories of Jewish families who experienced the horror of the Shoa. The stations the Hechts went through until their arrival in Auschwitz resemble those of many Jews; in this respect the booklet reveals nothing new. The Hechts, who lived in Germany, sought refuge in Amsterdam after the Nazis rose to power. When the Germans occupied Holland, the Jews were transferred to a camp and from there to Auschwitz. Esther Hecht, who was not home when the Jews of her neighborhood were rounded up, thus escaped by chance

and found a hide-out in a village. After the war she placed an ad in search of her family. A Jewish neighbor, who was with her parents at Auschwitz told her about their death. She moved to the USA and years later, when she told her grandchildren about the Shoa, one of them located that neighbor in Israel through the Internet. Only then did she find out about her family's ordeals. Again, this is a stereotypical story: Germany, Holland, Auschwitz and Israel are intertwined in one bundle meant to evoke in German and Dutch students a net of associations that unravel the events and the involvement of their country in the destruction of German and Dutch Jewry. Before he wrote *Die Suche* Heuvel published another booklet, *A Family Secret*, which also tells about Dutch Jewry during the Shoa. Interestingly, in neither of these two booklets do the survivors themselves tell the Shoa story; it is the second and third generation's voice the reader hears. In one booklet the family's story comes to light when one of Esther's grandchildren finds, through the Internet, his grandmother's neighbor, who had witnessed Esther's her parents' deportation. Similarly, in the second booklet, Jeroen, another grandson, goes up to his grandmother's attic to look for old objects to sell on Queen's Day in Holland. He finds his grandmother's diary where she writes of her and her family's tribulations during World War II. In both stories, the grandchildren--the third generation, like the students for which they were written--assumed the task of revealing the events, and it is they who are meant to learn from them. The art historian and journalist Rolf Lautenschläger has stated that *Die Suche* has become a popular text and to a certain extent has even raised the level of information among Germany's young generation, most of whom are not familiar with this sinister chapter in their country's history. The comics genre thus expanded both the knowledge and the interest in the Shoa among 9-13-year-olds. But *Die Suche* raised yet another question: is it appropriate to (re)present the Shoa in art in general and in comics in particular? The preoccupation with the legitimacy of art to depict the Shoa and the public debate kindled by the emergence of an uncommon artistic medium--comics--that tries to cope with the trauma reflect the unrelenting questions of how and to what extent the Shoa can be documented. *Die Suche* raises these questions, which, among students are a way of preserving awareness of the Shoa. Ben Baruch Blich, ph.d. History and Theory Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem

This graphic novel was originally published in conjunction with the Anne Frank house in Amsterdam. It is historical fiction about World War II. *The Search*, which was written in cooperation with the Jewish Historical Museum of Amsterdam, tells the same story, but centers specifically on the experiences of Jews deported from the Netherlands to Auschwitz. *The Search* features the same characters, but concentrates on the Holocaust, as it affected Dutch Jews. As its focus is narrower, it

is would be easier for American children to understand. One character is hidden during the war by Dutch farmers; the second survives Auschwitz. While the illustrations are not graphic, the narration is fairly specific as to the horrors the characters experience. The illustrations are in a realistic style, very similar to the drawings in the Tintin comics. This gives the book an old-fashioned look, appropriate to the subject matter. The graphic novel medium will lure reluctant readers or students who enjoy this format. Unfortunately, the cartoon format may attract readers who are too young for the subject matter. The Search could be an introduction to the Holocaust for middle school students. The book should also appeal to readers interested in Anne Frank's life. For ages 11-14. Hilary Zana

This book is about World War 2 during the Holocaust and a grandmother's family and friends who hear her unfold her saddening past as a Jewish girl growing up in Germany at this horrifying time in history. The author's viewpoint was from the grandmother who was explaining to her best friend, her grandson, her own son, and her friend's grandson about the events in her young life in Germany. The author created characters to explain the events and plots of the Holocaust in a single situation way of one main person named Esther, the grandmother, and what had happened in her scenario. The facts about the Holocaust were also mentioned while Esther was explaining to her family and friends. For example, Auschwitz concentration camp was the largest camp ever built. Esther dove into her story while visiting the farm where she had hidden as a child. Groups of younger readers would like this book because of the pictures and that they would not have to imagine the scenes since the graphics are already there. I was surprised because I had never really read an informational graphic novel when I had received the book. This book fits under the genre historical fiction. Reviewed by a young adult student reviewer Flamingnet Book Reviews Teen books reviewed by teen reviewers

This graphic picture book tells the story of a young Jewish girl separated from her parents during the Holocaust. She is elderly now and is finally able to tell her story to her children and grandchildren and with their help is able to locate someone who knew what happened to her parents. The language is appropriate for older middle grade and even middle and high school age kids. My 3rd and 5th grade girls thought this book was great and have read it several times--and the book has led to some really good discussions as well.

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