

HIDDEN IN BERLIN

A Holocaust Memoir

By Evelyn Joseph Grossman

222 pp. Amsterdam Publishers. 2020.

Hidden in Berlin is a rare Holocaust memoir. Ernst Joseph and Lilo Jacoby (author Evelyn Grossman's parents) are on the cusp of adulthood, and with the help of defiant Germans, go underground in Berlin's urban sprawl. Of the 160,000 Jews in the city in 1933, about 7,000 "ceased to exist" (25) by living illegally. The Josephs hid for twenty-seven months; the patriarch did not survive. The elder Jacobys were deported in 1942. With false papers, Lilo worked as a live-in maid in the posh Grunewald villa of a former classmate. Grossman tells the intergenerational story from the perspectives of grand/daughter, first-generation American, wife, and grand/mother. Having perfected her German, she retraces her ancestors' steps and scours archives in the multiple roles of protector, investigative reporter, and historian. Grossman places historical events in context of the personal. For example, she explains the exempted position of Jews of mixed religious heritage, as was Lilo's host. With strength, courage, luck, and grace, Ernst, his mother Betty, and Lilo were among the 1,400 formerly hidden Jews who survived (94). Betty sailed for America in 1947. Ernst and Lilo, now married, arrived in 1948, settled in New Jersey, and initially found factory work. They successfully petitioned the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous to award the title [Righteous Among the Nations](#) to the Germans who had hid them. Ernst wrote, "What these few Germans did was so great, . . . their deeds should . . . not [be] forgotten" (186). —Lisa Thaler, author of *Look Up: The Life and Art of Sacha Kolin*, 2 August 2021