

## **Heroes of the Secret Underground**

By Susanne Gervay

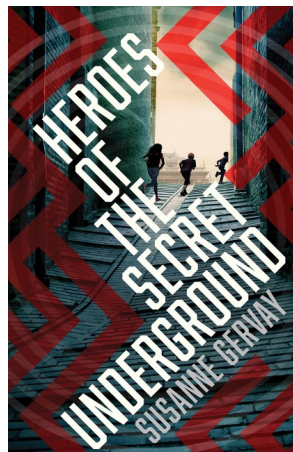
Publisher: Harper Collins

ISBN 9781460758335 SCIS: 1996244

\$16.99

### *Blurb:*

A timely and powerful time-slip story inspired by the author's family in Budapest during the Holocaust. Louie lives with her brothers, Bert and Teddy, in a hotel run by their grandparents. It is one of Sydney's grand old buildings, rich in history... and in secrets. When a rose-gold locket, once thought lost, is uncovered, it sends Louie and her brothers spinning back in time. Back to a world at war: Budapest in the winter of 1944, where their grandparents are hiding secrets of their own... From bestselling author Susanne Gervay comes a heart-racing timeslip story inspired by her own family's escape from Budapest during the Holocaust.



### *Lamont Review:*

When searching the tower of the Majestic Boutique Hotel, twelve-year-old Louie, his older brother Bert and younger brother Teddy, are suddenly back in war-torn Budapest in 1944.

Led by the mysterious Naomi, they set about to retrieve two family heirlooms - a rose gold locket and a candelabra. They also witness the remarkable bravery of their grandparents who are trying to save many Jewish children.

But can Louie and his brothers deceive the Nazis and return to their own time?

This book was a revelation. Uplifting and inspirational, and with themes of family, remembrance, war, reconciliation, and peace, this novel is ideal for readers aged 10 and older.

*Reviewed by Rob*

*Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.*

## **Paws**

By Kate Foster

Publisher: Walker Books

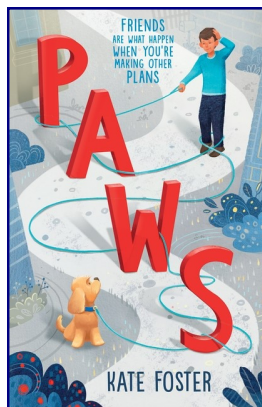
ISBN 9781760652661 SCIS: 1999372

\$16.99

### *Blurb:*

At home, Alex's best friend is Kevin the cockapoo, although what he wants most of all is a friend at school. But that is harder than he ever expected. A touching story about learning that friendship isn't one size fits all and is often found where you least expect it.

Everything is changing for 11-year-old Alex and, as an autistic person, change can be terrifying. With the first day of high school only a couple of months away, Alex is sure that having a friend by his side will help. So, he's devised a plan – impress the kids at school by winning a trophy at the PAWS Dog Show with his trusty sidekick, Kevin. This should be a walk in the park... right?



### *Lamont Review:*

Alex and Kevin are best friends. But Kevin is a dog, and what Alex really needs is a friend at school. Alex is an autistic person, and with high school just around the corner, finding a friend is quickly becoming a priority.

This is a wonderful story of finding friendship in places where you are not really looking. This is a beautifully written book, told from Alex's perspective of the difficulties he faces and what he does to cope when things overwhelm him.

It has great characters and is a story about friendship, family and dogs that readers will really enjoy.

Whilst Alex is in the final year of primary school, this story will also resonate with those starting out in high school who might be trying to make friends in a new environment.

There are also discussion questions at the back of the book which make this a wonderful book for classroom use as well. Readers in upper primary and lower secondary are going to absolutely love Alex and Kevin.

*Reviewed by Michelle*

## Huda and Me

By H. Hayek

Publisher: Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781760526023 SCIS:1999382

\$14.99

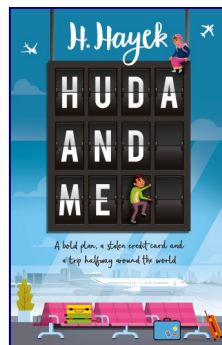
### Blurb:

A cheeky, fun and fast-moving tale of two Lebanese-Australian kids who decide to escape their horrible babysitter by running away... to the other side of the world.

Huda's sitting in the airport lounge, fiddling with our tickets. I can tell she's excited because she has a little smile on her face and she keeps glancing at her pink digital watch. I can't believe we're doing this. I can't believe we're running away from home. Well, we're not really running away. We'll come back. We're running to our parents. On the other side of the world.

When their parents have to travel to Beirut unexpectedly, twelve-year-old Akeal and his six siblings are horrified to be left behind in Melbourne with the dreaded Aunt Amel as their babysitter. Things do not go well, and Akeal's naughty little sister, Huda, hatches a bold plan to escape. After stealing Aunt Amel's credit card to buy plane tickets to Lebanon, Huda persuades her reluctant favourite brother to come with her. So begins Huda and Akeal's hair-raising and action-packed journey to reunite with their parents half a world away, in a city they've grown up dreaming about but have never seen.

A fresh and funny story of sibling love, adventure and courage, *Huda and Me* is one of a kind.



### Lamont Review:

Set in Melbourne, Akeal's family of seven siblings are thrown into turmoil when their Tayta falls ill in Lebanon.

Mum and Dad leave the horrified siblings behind in the care of the awful Aunt Amel, who quickly treats them like her own personal servants... Things are not going well at all!

Akeal's ever confident nine-year-old sister Huda has had enough, and takes matters into her own hands, booking them plane tickets to Lebanon. But can they really travel half way across the globe to their parents who will make everything alright?

This is a wonderful adventure with themes of culture, discrimination, siblings and family, and determination. These are some deep topic but handled lightly, and with good outcomes, that make it a terrific novel for readers 9 - 13 years old.

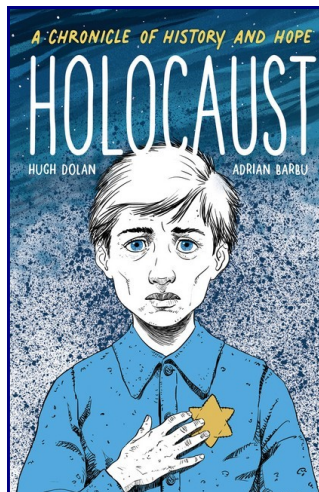
Reviewed by Rob

## **Holocaust**

By Hugh Dolan & Illustrated by Adrian Barbu  
Publisher: Omnibus Books / Scholastic  
ISBN 9781742996202 SCIS: 1999724  
\$14.99

### *Blurb:*

Adolf Hitler's regime has enveloped Europe, and now David, along with all Jews in the Nazi's reach, are in danger. This extraordinary graphic novel traces the story of the rise of Nazism and Hitler's persecution of the Jews, merging historical imagery and documents with the haunting tale of David and his family. A story of fear, resilience and compassion, and a legacy of love and hope.



### *Lamont Review:*

This graphic novel is an emotional and moving way to explore the horror of the Holocaust.

Seen through the eyes of our main character, David, the story is told through David's memories of life as a child who lived through the Holocaust. It follows the rise of Hitler and Nazism, and the unrelenting persecution of the Jewish people throughout the war.

This will make a great addition to your library and will appeal to those interested in history, as well as those who enjoy the visual aspect of storytelling through the graphic novel format.

Best suited to those in Year 7 and up.

*Reviewed by Michelle*

## **Everything We Keep**

By Di Walker

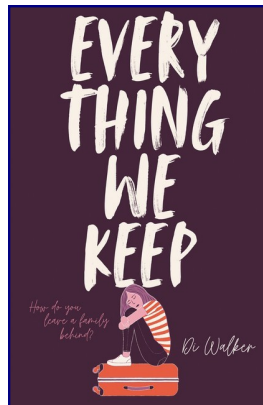
Publisher: Omnibus Books / Scholastic

ISBN 9781760972349 SCIS: 1999438

\$18.99

### *Blurb:*

Trailing her orange suitcase, and a heart full of worry, thirteen-year-old Agatha is about to go home. She has been in and out of foster care for years now, but her latest new life lived with naval precision with Katherine, Lawson and their dog, Chief, has proved to be the salvation that Agatha needed. She has new friends, a sense of place, and space to breathe. But when the social worker says it's time to return to her parents, her world comes crashing down. "Home" has always made her anxious and ashamed—and she can't understand why now she is being forced to go back. Is it possible to find a way to love her parents without having to live with them?



### *Lamont Review:*

Agatha is thirteen, and she wants to move on from the trail of broken promises that her life is littered with.

Ever since the accidental death of her five year old sister, when Agatha was seven, her life has spiralled out of control. The loss hit her parents hard, and they became excessive hoarders who cannot bear to part with anything and who do not want to leave their house. As a result, Agatha has been in and out of foster homes for years.

But her new life with Katherine, Lawson and their dog Chief is providing hope. But can Agatha dare to believe that everything could ever work out ok for her?

Agatha blames herself for not holding her sister's hand and still loves her parents. She just can't see a happy ending to her story.

This is a gently written story of anxiety, courage, compassion and hope, including themes of family and foster families, mental health, friendship and belonging, this is a terrific novel best suited to a 10–14 year old reader.

*Reviewed by Rob*