



The Kaminsky Cure

Christopher New

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The Kaminsky Cure is a poignant yet comedic novel of a half Jewish/half Christian family caught up in the machinery of Hitler's final solution. The matriarch, Gabi, was born Jewish but converted to Christianity in her teens. The patriarch, Willibald, is a Lutheran minister who, on one hand is an admirer of Hitler, but on the other hand, the conflicted father of children who are half-Jewish. Mindful and resentful of her husband's ambivalence, Gabi is determined to make sure her children are educated, devising schemes to keep them in school even after learning that any child less than 100% Aryan will eventually be kept from completing education. She even hires tutors who are willing to teach half-Jewish children and in this way comes to hire Fraulein Kaminsky who shows Gabi how to cure her frustration and rage: to keep her mouth filled with water until the urge to scream or rant has passed.

This beautifully rendered novel of WWII, "seen through a child's eye, makes delusion and hypocrisy shockingly stark." (*The Guardian*)

The Kaminsky Cure Details

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Author : Christopher New

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From Reader Review The Kaminsky Cure for online ebook

Gale Pearson says

I received this book as a give away and considered that if I didn't care for it, my husband would enjoy it. It came at a time in my life when there was little opportunity to sit down and read, so it took me a long time to get through it. It is so well written that I read slowly in order to soak up every clever word. A Jewish / German child's point of view in a very difficult time. History that many of us want to ignore, put into an amusingly poignant story. A book of fiction that I would recommend to all. Could it be relevant today?

Stephanie says

A young boy is growing up in a half-Jewish half-Aryan household at the dawn of World War II. He is thoroughly confused as to what all of this means, especially because his father is a Lutheran minister and his mother had converted long ago. All he is aware of is that danger is all around. His mother, Gabi is forced to enter her own fight for her survival and for the rights of her children, now classified as half Jews. The children's education is constantly attacked and Gabi is ferocious in her determination to have her children educated. Classified as a Jewish woman, but a privileged Jewish woman since she is married to an Aryan, Gabi must be extra careful, especially when she speaks. For this, she employs the Kaminsky cure, holding water in your mouth for a minute before you speak.

Told from the point of view of the youngest Brinkmann son, a unique experience unfolds. Through his eyes, the confusion, frustration and bleakness of WWII is shown in an honest manner. With many moments of light humor, the plight of the half-Jewish Brinkmann's is portrayed. My heart bled as our narrator struggled with understanding what was happening, his confusion of being half-Jewish and whether or not he should say "Heil Hitler" or feel for the Jewish cause; as he grows and the war progresses his understanding increases and his attitude changes. Overall, a different, heartbreakingly insightful story of WWII.

This book was received for free in return for an honest review.

Caidyn (SEMI-HIATUS; BW Reviews; he/him/his) says

Totally got invited to read this, so why not? I'll get to it eventually since it looks good.

Darlene says

I won a copy of Christopher New's The Kaminsky Cure in a Goodreads giveaway. The book is a young adult historical fiction told from the perspective of a young "half Jewish" boy in Nazi controlled Austria. The story chronicles the life of the Brinkmann family in the Third Reich: Willibald, the temperamental and overly-dramatic Lutheran minister with some admiration for Hitler, Gabi a bold and outspoken Jewish born

Christian convert desperate to care for the interests/needs of her children, both unhappy in their marriage, Ilse their slow melancholy eldest terrified she's cursed by her Jewish "taint", Martin prideful and self absorbed favorite who can't understand why everyone doesn't see how great he is, Sara a withdrawn girl forced to be Gabi's confidant slowly losing herself to an inner imaginary world, and the youngest who is the narrator and cannot remember life before the war. A historical fiction told from a child's point of view which creates a vivid account of a stark and confusing time where evil madness becomes normal. I recommend this to the historical fiction crowd, esp. those interested in the Holocaust.

Philip Bailey says

A story of survival during the purge of Jews and other deemed defective peoples in World War II Germany. Mon-sewer Hitler's attempt to purify the world as he imagined it caused excessive hardships and resulted in some very ingenious methods of surviving a destiny with death. This story told in a unique way is the plight of one family and those around them they associated with. The story gives insight not usually seen in war stories about Hitler's Germany and provides a glimpse into everyday life more so than military facts and Holocaust horror tales although the picture painted is indeed bleak, mind numbing and at times heart wrenching. I almost passed over this book. So glad I did not.

Brooke says

Brilliant tale of life in the Third Reich as told by a half-Jewish boy living in a seemingly idyllic Austrian village. The subject matter is heavy, but it is cleverly portrayed in a mix of youthful naivete and dark humor. The way in which historical and cultural elements of the story were lightly alluded to rather than given lengthy factual explanations was a strength of the book and made it seem as though I was reading an actual memoir rather than historical fiction.

Mandy says

This heart-rending story of a half-Jewish family in war-time Austria is told from the perspective of the youngest child of the family, who inevitably doesn't understand all that is happening around him. Mother Gabi fights frantically to keep her family safe whilst Nazi persecution becomes ever more threatening, and she isn't helped by the fact that her gentile husband has a sneaking admiration for Hitler. At times terrifying, at times heart-breaking, but always leavened by some dark humour, I found this book totally immersive. It's beautifully written, well-paced and well-plotted, with memorable, unforgettable and convincing characters, and all in all is one that will stay with me for a long time. There are many books about Jewish persecution, and this one is up there amongst the very best.

Roxanne says

This is a Goodreads win review. This wonderful book has been noticed internationally. It is about a Jewish family living in Austria during the years of Hitler. It is told through the eyes of a child and things not understood. My father was shot down over Austria in 1944 and marched to a lumber camp by the Austrian

people who treated him kindly before the Nazis came to get his crew. So in some ways I relate to the story in this book.

Fran says

The Kaminsky Cure was a way to control sudden bursts of rage and frustration. Fraulein Kaminsky, a tutor to a brood of half-Jewish children suggested keeping water handy. Filling one's mouth with water when angered prevented one from lashing out and spewing words that could not be retracted.

Lutheran Pastor Willibald Brinkmann and family have fled Berlin finding a parish in pre-Nazi Heimstatt, an Austrian village. They reside in Austria to avoid Hitler's Final Solution to what Hitler calls an International Jewish Conspiracy.

Willibald, the Aryan patriarch closets himself in his study. He admires Hitler and concurrently feels trapped in a marriage with a Jew. His frustration causes sudden explosive outbursts of emotion.

Gabi, the matriarch is Jewish by birth but converted to Christianity as a teenager. She will stop at nothing to fend for her half-Jewish/half-Aryan children. The Kaminsky Cure often helps her ward off potential verbal encounters with Willibald or with government authorities.

Narrated by the youngest son, we learn of Gabi's determination and resourcefulness. She arranges schooling and then tutoring when her children are no longer allowed to attend school. She travels to a nearby village to procure much needed medical care weaving a path around the rules and regulations imposed on a Jewish mother with half-Jewish children.

The Kaminsky Cure by Christopher New provides a stark, realistic portrayal of the difficult lives of half-Jewish families during WWII.

Thank you NetGalley for the digital copy of this amazing book.

Donna Davis says

The Kaminsky Cure is a satire of Nazi Germany previously published and now offered anew in digital format. Thanks go to Open Road Integrated Media and Net Galley for the invitation to read and review, and for the DRC, which I received free of charge. This title is available to purchase now.

Who would have thought it possible to satirize such a terrible time and have it come out in anything other than terrible taste? But New carries it off, using a pre-school aged child in a mixed family—with one Jewish parent and one Anglo parent—as his narrator. Several times the precocious tot points out aspects of his own narrative that are actually impossible, as for example when the child tells us exactly what is contained in something written and then blandly points out that he cannot read yet. It just makes it funnier.

The appealing thing about this novel is that it brings up the reality which should be obvious to any thinking person that has paid any attention to this particular time and place: most Germans as well as Austrians were entirely in favor of Hitler's takeover, and although there were Jewish families, many of them in fact, that

wanted out of Nazi-occupied Europe as quickly as they could go, there were others that had never embraced their culture and had converted to Christianity in some cases generations earlier; and such is the case with our protagonist's family, which wants only to pass itself off as Aryan so that it can join in the party. Young Martin, the protagonist's older brother, longs to become a member of the fearsome SS, Hitler's storm-troopers. Ah, the uniforms! The ferocity! The authority!

Our toddler-narrator, meanwhile, observes his own family with platonic remove, contemplating which members have violated one edict or another and should therefore be turned in to the authorities. After all, that's one of the things he has learned in school. Children are the future, and it's up to them to weed out those older folk that fail to comply with important social changes.

It's what Hitler would want him to do.

There's one twist and then another, but overall I found that the story's momentum lost steam as it progressed, because there was really just one joke here, and it could only be played so many ways before it became repetitious. Nevertheless, it's wholly original, and when faced with an event as horrific as the Holocaust, one either has to laugh or cry.

And amazingly, New has created a way to help us laugh, at least for a little while.

Majanka says

Book Review originally published here: <http://www.iheartreading.net/book-tou...>

The Kaminsky Cure is a poignant tale of a half Jewish/half Christian family during Hitler's reign. Gabi, the mother of the family, was born Jewish but converted to Christianity as a teenager. Her husband, Willibald, is a Lutheran minister who struggles with a certain admiration for Hitler, while on the other hand, he desperately wants to protect his family. Frustrations run high, as Gabi struggles to make sure her children are educated, even if this proves troublesome and they have to hire private tutors who are willing to teach half-Jewish children. One of these tutors is Fraulein Kaminsky, who teaches Gabi "The Kaminsky Cure" to control her rage.

I enjoyed the complexity of the characters. The book is very character driven, and I thought in particular Gabi and Willibald were very interesting. Willibald's struggle between his Aryan beliefs and his family, who he loves and hates at the same time, felt very realistic. Gabi is a very brave woman, willing to defy and stand up for her children. The story is told from the POV of the youngest son, which is a refreshing change, and allows for an interesting perspective.

Historical fiction fans, particular those with an interest in the World War II era, I highly recommend you take a look at The Kaminsky Cure.

Morris Berg says

Absorbing - an engrossing and very important tale. New has written a dark and frightening story that also

contains - even in the meaning of its title - some dry humor as well. Those whose knowledge of the Second World War is limited to battles and the most lurid of the Holocaust tales should read this book, which documents the gradual process by which a country becomes hell on earth thanks to a poisonous ideology and the weaknesses of the human species that harbors it. New is one of the great writers, I think. This book should be taught alongside Anne Frank's diary and Catch-22. It should endure.

Sara says

Amazing! Amazing! Amazing!

This is the story of a half-Jewish family living in Austria during Hitler's rein. Part of what makes this story amazing is that it is told from the perspective of a young boy (7 at the beginning) mixed with the cynical humor of an adult looking back at their childhood. I absolutely love the voice of the main character. All of the characters are well drawn and the pacing is perfect.

You really feel immersed in the story and the trials that the family goes through.

I also really like the idea of the Kaminsky cure - I should give it a try!

(Historical fiction is not my favorite genre, so for me to fully enjoy this book says a lot!). I will be looking to read other books by this author.

Note that I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Lynda Dickson says

The story begins Christmas 1939, when our unnamed narrator is only five-and-three-quarters years old. He lives in the Austrian town of Heimstatt (which cleverly translates to "homeland") with his parents - Willibald and Gabi Brinkmann - and three siblings - Ilse, Martin, and Sara. Willibald is a Lutheran pastor, an Aryan, a staunch supporter of Hitler, and very much an absent father, who perpetually locks himself in his study to write religious plays that no one will ever perform. His wife Gabi was born a Jew but converted to Christianity in her teens. Nevertheless, in this time of the Nazi regime, she is not accepted by the townspeople - or even by her own husband. Her main goal in life is to ensure the education of her children. She constantly hatches new schemes to get around the laws that continually change to prevent Jews from getting educated. Along the way, she employs tutor Hertha von Kaminsky, who teaches Gabi the Kaminsky Cure - the art of taking in a mouthful of water to prevent oneself from speaking out inappropriately; this technique will come into play at crucial times throughout the narrative.

The story is told through the eyes of our child narrator. His tone remains light and humorous despite the constant "disappearances" and atrocities being committed around him. He reports with an air of innocence and naïveté, but with the wisdom of an adult, using a lot of foreshadowing and portent to keep the reader engaged. Another trick the author employs is to cut off the last sentence of each chapter, thereby forcing the reader to turn the page to read the end of the sentence, which also becomes the name of the next chapter. The writing conveys a great sense of atmosphere and is peppered with striking metaphors and similes. The author paints beautiful portraits of each of the many supporting characters, showing us their flaws, foibles, and eccentricities. There's the slow and infirm Ilse; Martin, who's desperate to join first the Hitler Youth and later the Luftwaffe; the practical Sara, who serves as a sounding board for her mother, Gabi; Annchen, the Down's Syndrome child of their poetic housekeeper, Jägerlein; and Fraulein Kaminsky's former pupils, the

Habsburgs, whose family is in line for the Austrian throne.

This is storytelling at its best. The poignant ending will stay with you for a long time to come.

One of my favorite lines: "Every scene in the drama of her life plays on that inner stage of hers, and no one gets invited to the show."

I received this book in return for an honest review.

Full blog post: <https://booksdirectonline.blogspot.co...>

San Diego Book Review says

Christopher New's historical fiction "The Kaminsky Cure" takes place in Austria during the Third Reich. It tells the story of one family with both Jewish and Aryan blood trying their best to survive in a time of great upheaval. The patriarch of the family, Willibald, is a pure-blood Aryan as well as a Lutheran minister, is married to Gabi, a Jew who converted to Christianity when she was a teenager. (read the rest...)

You can read this entire review at San Diego Book Review
