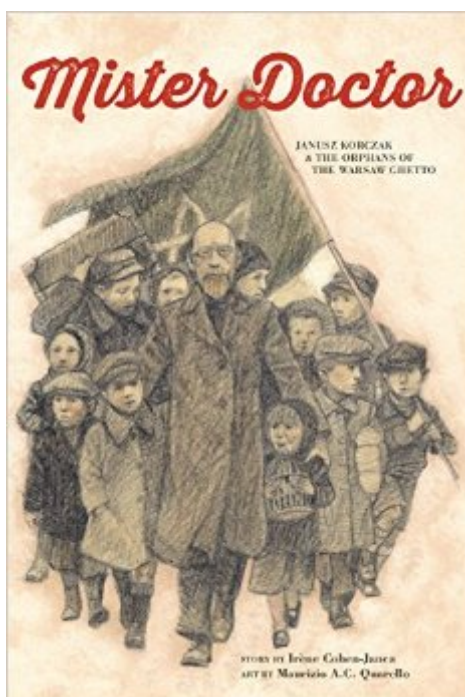


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Mister Doctor: Janusz Korczak & The Orphans Of The Warsaw Ghetto



Synopsis

Forced by the Nazis to leave their orphanage, 160 Jewish children march through the streets of Warsaw. Led by their beloved director, Doctor Korczak, the children are defiantly joyful as they enter the ghetto. Two years later, the same children are rounded up to be transported to the death camp, Treblinka. Offered his freedom, Doctor Korczak refuses to abandon the children and proudly joins them to make sure that they are comforted even at the very end. This extraordinary true story introduces young readers to a remarkable man whose humanity and bravery shone through during one of history's darkest periods. Beautifully poignant drawings accompany the text, adding to the somber tone of the book. A gatefold page towards the end shows the line of children led by Doctor Korczak as they leave on their last journey.

Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

Janusz Korczak was a pediatrician who gave up a potentially lucrative practice to found an orphanage for the children he loved. And the children loved him; the nickname they gave their mentor was "Mister Doctor." In this book by the same title, his story is told from the perspective of one of the orphans who could be any of the orphans or all the orphans. The book opens with the last days in final period of the famous orphanage on Krochmalna Street; the Nazis invaded Warsaw on September 1, 1939, and shortly thereafter ordered the city's Jewish population into the Warsaw Ghetto. The journey is one fraught with

darkness and fear, as shown by the somber illustrations showing barbed wire. They walk past the house of horrors they know as the Black Palace. (I believe the author was referring to the infamous Pawiak Prison; I doubt the children actually passed that landmark, as it was on the opposite side of the Ghetto. However, the episode adds literary value to the narrative.) The horrors of the trek are in marked contrast to the soft, warm hands of Doctor Korczak and illustration of his favorite fairy tale character, Puss in Boots, bounding over a barbed blockade. Their new home was the best Korczak could find, but *“the house of tears”* at 33 Chlodna Street is clearly nothing like their beautiful old home; in one illustration, even the houseflies on the window sill are dead. Though flashbacks, the narrator recalls all the Old Doctor’s innovations: the children’s court, their newspaper, the bulletin board, postcards. In the Ghetto, everyone clings to hope by celebrating their Jewish heritage and identity. Some children learn Hebrew. A professor teaches the children a poem, *“Brothers,* by the great local poet, I.

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