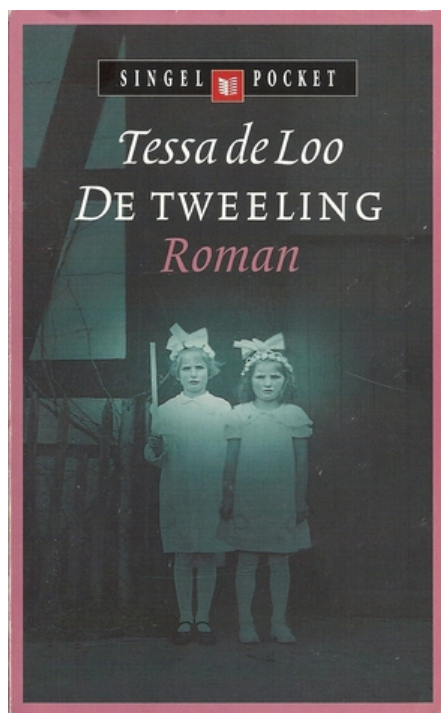




## De tweeling

*Tessa de Loo*

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# De tweeling

*Tessa de Loo*

## De tweeling Tessa de Loo

Twee bejaarde vrouwen, een Nederlandse en een Duitse, ontmoeten elkaar bij toeval in het Thermaal Instituut van het fameuze kuuroord Spa. Wat ze dan nog niet weten is dat ze samen een al in de kindertijd gescheiden tweeling vormen.

De volstrekt verhollandste Lotte, die tijdens de oorlog joodse onderduikers heeft beschermd, staat aanvankelijk uiterst wantrouwig tegenover haar hervonden tweelingzus, maar ze wordt door de verhalen van Anna geconfronteerd met de keerzijde van haar eigen werkelijkheid liet lijden van gewone Duitsers in oorlogstijd.

## De tweeling Details

Date : Published 2001 by Singel Pockets (first published 1993)

ISBN : 9789041330840

Author : Tessa de Loo

Format : Paperback 480 pages

Genre : Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, European Literature, Dutch Literature

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## From Reader Review De tweeling for online ebook

### Amy says

Twins who were orphaned at 6 and sent to live with different relatives--one in the Netherlands, one in Nazi Germany-- are reunited by chance seventy years later at a Belgian health resort. During their stay, they share their stories of lives lived on opposite sides of WWII. Well-balanced story that shows that people make choices for all different kinds of reasons, and nobody should judge another for making choices that are different from their own. And that war is hell--for everyone on every side.

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### Becky says

Yet another war novel, this book focusses on the fortunes of twins, Lotte and Anna, who are taken to live apart when their parents die. Reared from the age of 6 in separate countries, they follow quite different paths as the Second World War consumes Europe. Years later, when they are old women, they meet in a Belgian town, and attempt to dissect the stories that led them there.

The Twins is a fantastic piece of writing, a truly unique viewpoint of a conflict that has been covered many times in modern literature. It is wonderfully human, consistently moving and devastating in equal parts. It is highly readable throughout, and definitely to be recommended.

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### Jaap says

It has been a few years since I read a Dutch novel, mostly because the Dutch literature that I grew up with, the "modern" literature anyway, was invariably dour and repressed, or intentionally vulgar and shallow (with the occasional mix of both). Yes, there have been exceptions but those have been too few and too far between.

This novel, however, is very much one of the exceptions. On the surface, it deals with the story of two twin sisters that are orphaned, get separated, with one remaining in Germany and the other being moved to distant relatives in the Netherlands. Due to political differences between the foster families, the sisters lose touch, until they bump into each other at Spa in Belgium when they are old ladies.

The story develops as the two sisters tell their stories, inevitably focussing on their lives shortly before and during World War 2. These stories don't just show how different the two protagonists are, but more importantly at a deeper level the stories reflect the different attitudes of "the Germans" and "the Dutch" vis-a-vis each other. Even today, Dutch people are raised on histories of that period of time that speaks in terms of them and us, the Bad Germans vs the Good Dutch, and this novel shows there is a lot more to this.

This novel is not just for Dutchmen living in Germany; it's for everybody that wants to read a story about how real people dealt with those unreal times, and may help provide a little insight into how inter-personal relations should never be pre-judged by historical generalities. (Available in English and German too).

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## **Joselito Honestly and Brilliantly says**

A brilliantly-conceived plot. Lotte and Anna were born twins, in 1916, to German parents. Soon after, their mother dies, then their father. They were orphans at three. Relatives have to raise them. For some reasons, Anna remained in Germany with her grandfather's family; Lotte was brought up in the Netherlands with her uncle. World war two came upon them when they were young adults, one was German whose young husband, a German soldier, was killed in the war; the other was Dutch, who had sheltered Jews, and with the love of her life killed in a Nazi concentration camp. Seventy years later, the twins meet in a spa, both trying to get some relief from their age-induced ailments. Both are past 80 years old. They talk. Mostly of the past. Mostly about the war.

The enjoyment I had while reading this was modest. I've been the company of a German Nazi officer who was everywhere during the second world war in Jonathan Littell's "The Kindly Ones" and this concept of good Germans during the second world war is therefore no longer novel to me. I can't help but notice this, however: literature now abounds with those trying to picture the traditional "bad guys" during the last world war in a more sympathetic light (they're doing this not only for the Germans but also for the Japanese and the Italians). First they get their materials from the civilians of the wrong countries and here there can possibly be no serious debate: innocence is everywhere and I do not believe in ascribing a collective guilt upon whole nations. Then they ease up to the common soldiers, and minor functionaries of the war machine, i.e., those who were simply there at the wrong place and at the wrong time, and who tried their best to act as human beings in the midst of atrocities. But after this, what? Is it possible that the time will come, a very long time, that even the likes of Hitler would be completely rehabilitated, like they were just some benign, tragic, misguided, well-meaning geniuses which history had long misunderstood?

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## **Robert says**

Lotte and Anna are identical twins who are separated when they are six years old (it is the 1930's) and other than one disastrous chance encounter in their teens they never remained in contact with each other.

That is until they meet at a spa in Belgium over 50 years later.

Naturally this gives the twins a chance to catch up on what has happened during their separation and each has a unique story.

Lotte went off to live in the Netherlands, which was a supposedly neutral country during the war, although the Jewish persecution takes place. Despite the fact that her lover is arrested and killed in Auschwitz, Lotte herself leads a comfortable life with few restrictions and her family smuggle Jews into their house. However she is angry at Germany for the loss of her boyfriend and lack of freedom.

Anna, on the other hand stays in Germany and goes through many disappointments. Her foster family treat her badly. Hitler's reign is preventing her to express herself and when she finally does meet and marry a soldier (who joins the SS so he can stay close to her) he dies in a bombing and Anna devotes the rest of the war period to helping injured soldiers. Although she has suffered she makes it clear that not all Germans were cruel heartless killing machines as history tells us. Lotte refuses to believe this, until the last few pages when she accepts her sister's personal history.

De Loo did do her research on this novel about wartime Germany and she does mention the horrors but through Anna we see that Germans were had a hard time living a normal life during the war and despite being the Aryan race, still were no different from other Europeans during this tumultuous period.

Personally I liked the novel but I did find it a bit dragging at times and the passages dealing with the American 'invasion' of post-war Germany a bit exaggerated ( Although Lotte does bring things back down to Earth a wee bit) Still though The Twins does pose a lot of ethical questions and sheds light on some of history's misconception's. What do you out there think?

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### **Annemarie Visser says**

Het verhaal begint in Spa, in een kuuroord. Waar de dames Anna en Lotte elkaar tegen komen. Ze raken aan de praat en dan komt al snel aan het licht dat ze tweelingzusjes zijn.

Door flashbacks ga je mee terug in hun jeugd, wanneer ze uitelkaar gehaald worden wanneer Lotte door een Hollands gezin wordt geadopteerd en Anna in Duitsland blijft.

Ze beleven de oorlog en maken het einde van de oorlog mee. Ieder verteld haar eigen verhaal.

De belevenissen in het kuuroord vond ik wat saai, de belevenissen uit de tijd van de oorlog sprak mij meer aan.

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### **Barbara Kinsky says**

This is the most poorly written book I have ever read about WWII. Many times, I wanted to stop reading and just put the book down but I persevered. I blame it on the poor translation as it was translated from Dutch to English. It is extremely stilted and it could have been 100 pages shorter.

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### **Goele Lousbergh says**

Interessant opzet maar ik vond de raamvertelling doorzichtig, puur functioneel uitgevoerd en daardoor uiterst oninteressant. De historische stukken waren meeslepend.

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### **Amanda Tuinstra says**

binnenkort op mijn blog. [boekenlezeramanda.wordpress.com](http://boekenlezeramanda.wordpress.com)

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### **Huy says**

M?t cu?n sách có c?t truy?n thú v?, hai ch? em sinh ?ôi, m? côi, chia c?t và g?p l?i sau 70 n?m. Gi?a 70 n?m ?ó là bao bi?n ??ng kh?ng khi?p c?a l?ch s?, ch? ? ??c, em ? Hà Lan, ch? l?y m?t s? quan SS, em yêu và che d?u m?t ng??i Do Thái, ch? ? bên phe chi?m ?óng, em ? bên vùng ??t b? chi?m ?óng.

Chi?n tranh n? ra, không ai có th? là k? ??ng ngoài. Tessa De Loo m??n câu chuy?n hai ch? em ? hai bên cu?c chi?n nh? m?t lý do ?? hàn g?n, vì dù b?n ? phe nào, sau cu?c chi?n luôn là nh?ng v?t th??ng v?nh vi?n không bao gi? ch?a lành ???c, c? v? th? xác l?n tình th?n. Và n?u hai ng??i có cùng huy?t th?ng ?y không th? hàn g?n, hòa gi?i và ch?a lành v?t th??ng lòng c?a nhau thì v?nh vi?n, dù b?n ? phe ??ng Minh hay Phát xít, ?ng h? Nga hay v? phía ??c, là ng??i Do Thái hay lính M?, làm sao có th? quên ?i nh?ng n?i ?au c?a chi?n

tranh ?? tha th? và yêu th??ng?

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### Tita says

Uma história de duas irmãs, gémeas, que por circunstâncias da vida foram afastadas uma da outra, e que passado muitos anos se reencontram por um acaso.

A escrita é fluída e cativa-nos logo nas primeiras páginas com a história de Anna e Lotte. Ao longo das páginas vamos acompanhando as suas vidas, através de lembranças que estão a partilhar uma a outra. Grande parte dos seus relatos são passados durante a 2ª Guerra Mundial, e são capítulos interessantíssimos. Afinal de contas, Anna ficou a ser educada na Alemanha enquanto que Lotte foi para a Holanda, desta forma temos a visão da guerra de cada um dos lados, narrados sobre o ponto de vista de cada um das irmãs. Fácil como podemos julgar que o povo alemão não sofreu e que todos apoiavam os ideais de Hitler, no entanto este livro faz-nos ultrapassar esse preconceito.

Ainda uma mensagem importante que o livro nos transmite: "Um dia, será tarde demais!"  
Recomendo!!!

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### Ng?c says

Bu?n, bu?n ?i là bu?n, bu?n n?u h?t c? ru?t.Nh?ng mà mình không khóc, ch? th? dài t? ??u ??n cu?i sách thôi.Ch?t l?ch s? r?t nhi?u, th?m ??m vào t?ng con ch?.T?ng s? ki?n, t?ng ??t ph?n công cho ??n cái nhìn t? c? hai phe, t?t c? t?o nên m?t b?c tranh sáng t?i tr?m m?c, ??i ngh?ch nhau.Mình ?ng Anna, không thích Lotte.Và ph?i dành t?ng cho d?ch gi? m?t l?i khen to b? vì ?ã quá c?n th?n, quá toàn tâm toàn ý trong vi?c chú thích ??y ?? và rõ ràng, chỉ ti?t.D?ch m??t và h?p d?n, toát ra ???c cái th?n c?a tác ph?m.

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### Anastasia Hobbet says

A clunky translation fails to ruin this tragic story of two sisters who meet by chance as old women in a Belgian spa after almost a lifetime apart, lifetimes punctured by World War Two. One sister grew up desperately poor in rural Germany, the other in a cultured middle class home in the Netherlands. They begin to tell one another their stories, but the gulf between them isn't easily bridged. In fact it yawns open even as they try to understand one another. Their difficult lives come clearly and hauntingly to life on the page. This is a story that won't leave me.

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### Laura says

Kom niet verder dan 58 blz.

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### Sacha says

Pfoe, eindelijk af van dat geouwehoer! Niet dat ik het een slecht boek vond, verre van dat, maar het werd op

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een gegeven moment wel een beetje langdradig. En de lieve zusjes, Lot en An, werkten elkaar continue op de zenuwen, wat mij weer op de zenuwen werkte... Bloedirritant, die zogenaamde 'bejaarden-bitchfight'. Daarentegen was het verhaal zelf prachtig. Het is erg goed uitgewerkt en er zijn veel aspecten van de oorlog in verwerkt. Het begrip 'familie' wordt in een heel ander daglicht geplaatst dan normaal. Het einde was wel een beetje stom; gemeen en lief tegelijk. Maar niet te veel spoiler, want het is geen slecht boek en niet moeilijk om te lezen, dus ik zou zeggen: go your gang.

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## **Bibi says**

Tot tranen geroerd.

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## **Mee Chok says**

Well written, amazingly done at describing the scenery and mood. Tessa de Loo manages to scetch an supreme view on the Second World War, telling both the Dutch and the German side of the story.

The book itself was hard to conquer, my target of 25 pages a day took me (what felt like) hours to complete. On one side, there ain't anything happening, it's all done in flash-backs. On the other side, you can see the whole developement and progress of WOII for your eyes and think of ways you would have dealt with the situations Anna and Lotte come across.

I'd honestly say you need to have read this book at least once in your life, as hard as it can be to plunge through it.

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## **Marc says**

Separated twins are an extremely fascinating research object for scientists because they are ideal to illustrate the "nature versus nurture" debate: what is the deciding factor in a lifetime?, the genes you inherited, or the education you got? According to the first view separated twins would live more or less the same lifes; whilst the second school insists the different contexts (cultures) lead to very different lives.

Judging from this book Tessa De Loo seems rather to adhere to the second school: Lotte and Anna, separated when they were 6 years old, definitively lived very different lives, until they found each other again, 70 years later in the Belgian health resort of Spa. Especially the war turns out to have driven a wedge between them. De Loo extensively recounts how Anna, who stayed behind in Germany, underwent the Nazi regime, married a soldier who eventually became an SS-man, and after the war underwent the harsh years of the reconstruction. Lotte was raised by a family member in the Netherlands, saved Jews from the hands of Nazis and developed an outright hatred for all things German.

Fascinating, of course. But I don't think that the De Loo intentionally focussed on an experiment around separated twins. That is my impression, since especially Anna can tell her story in full and articulate how ordinary Germans came to rally around Adolf Hitler, how they just tried to live their own lives and overcome the war events and finally also trying to make the best of their lives after the disastrous defeat. To my knowledge De Loo is the first author to give such explicit attention to the German "suffering", long before the wave of scientific studies on the impact of the Allied bombings of German cities.

You can feel free to call this a justifiable correction of the unilateral and simplistic story of the justified fight against absolute evil. But for my taste De Loo falls short the other way round: Anna and especially her (SS-

husband Martin are pictured as truly "good" Germans, who are just trying to do well, saints almost; and that is just as simplistic and romanticizing. In that sense, the novel is a bit disappointing. But all in all, an interesting and readable story.

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## Gail says

One of the best books I've ever read. It will stay with me for a long time. The author is Dutch and few of her books have been translated but I ordered what I could find. This one is about German-born twins separated at 6 years because of the death of both parents. One is taken by her German relatives and the other is taken by her Dutch relatives. They experienced very different wars. They meet again in their 70s at Spa in Belgium and relate their life stories to each other. You can sympathize with both. Riveting!

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## Marjolein says

### READ IN DUTCH

Sommige boeken moet je gelezen hebben. En dan heb je ook nog een literatuurlijst die je moet vullen. Ik had de film al verschillende keren gezien (zowel thuis als op school) en daarom moest ik meteen aan dit boek denken. Bovendien had ik al veel positieve verhalen over De Tweeling van Tessa de Loo gelezen.

Twee vrouwen, die zussen blijken te zijn, ontmoeten zich voor het eerst in vijftig jaar weer in het Belgische kuuroord Spa. Toen ze klein waren zijn ze uitelkaar gehaald en Lotte kwam bij socialistische Nederlanders, Anna kwam terecht in een primitief boerendorpje. Dit allemaal aan het eind van de jaren 20 van de vorige eeuw. Zoals te verwachten valt, groeien zij totaal anders op, en beleven zij de tweede wereld oorlog helemaal anders. In Spa nu vertellen zij elkaar hun levensverhaal en de keuzes die zij maakten.

Het boek is inderdaad indrukwekkend, al waren er geen grote verrassingen, aangezien ik de film al gezien had. Het boek is beter dan de film in mijn ogen, al is het absoluut geen slechte verfilming. De schrijfstijl is mooi, alleen had het tempo van het verhaal voor mij af en toe iets hoger mogen liggen (waarschijnlijk omdat het meestal hoger ligt), maar dat was geen groot probleem verder. Het verhaal wordt goed uitgewerkt, en in mijn ogen is er genoeg ruimte voor het verhaal van de zussen. De verschillen worden goed neergelegd, en het is ook weer eens een kijkje in het leven van 'normale' Duitsers tijdens de WOII. Het klopt, dit zou een van die boeken moeten zijn die je gelezen moet hebben.

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