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In 1938, Ulrike Walter, a beautiful young German musician, is engaged to be married to Erich Hinkel, a member of the Hitler Youth. But when she meets Inspector Cameron Ross, a Scotland Yard policeman, whose father is a colonel in British Intelligence, her life will be changed for ever. When war is declared, Ulrike flees Germany for the safety of England but is instead cruelly imprisoned as an enemy alien. Her only hope of rescue is Cameron, who, despite his better judgement, is falling in love with her. Then Erich is captured by the British and incarcerated in a prisoner of war camp in England. He faces interrogation by Cameron Ross, the one man who stands between him and Ulrike, the woman who means more to Erich than life itself...

Night Crossing Details

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Author : Robert Ryan

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From Reader Review Night Crossing for online ebook

Ellen says

Others will have given a synopsis of this novel so I'll not recap the story.

Much of the novel naturally is centered around lesser known real events from World War II.

Just a few comments:

Firstly, I already know a lot about certain aspects of WWII but I came away having learned more which is always a bonus for me, most especially in this book about what it was like to be part of a submarine crew during the war (NOPE, NOT GOING, NEVER, EVER) and about the tactics used and the development of the weaponry, life on board, and the competition between sub-boat captains in the Reich. I found myself holding my breath at the same time as Erich and his fellow submariners when the allied ships send depth-charges down in hopes of sinking the submarine (AIEYEIYEI). The author was very good at capturing the close, claustrophobic atmosphere in these scenes...bolts popping, water spraying (NOT GOOD). sailors hanging onto anything to keep them upright).

The author is very good at feeding us information about the time, like the various levels of British intelligence and government factions battling for really what amounted to credit for a great job done; like the development of torpedos during the war, the submariners code of honour, and the lack of communication with the mainland Reich; the British governments' problem of what to do with so many German refugees and what if there are spies among them; and about the spy networks established before the outbreak of the war among many other details.

I find there are some questions that require further study for me, just things I'd like to know more about, like: Were there really internment camps specifically for displaced German refugees which included women and children in Canada?

How many high-ranking Nazi's ended up being housed in British POW Camps? or in allied camps for that matter?

Was every German landed immigrant or former citizen rounded up and put into camps in the UK in the same way Canadians of Japanese, Ukrainian and Italian (and others) were interned?

Was there a system of red and green lights used in the interrogation of prisoners anyway or was this a figment of the authors imagination? Either way, I applaud the idea.

Unfortunately, what didn't work for me was the love story, which is the thread that binds our trio and the stories together. It just didn't really ring true for me, not because that sort of thing didn't happen during the war, but more because I stopped believing in it almost right away.

The romance with Emma I believed. Ulrike, I did not.

So for this reason I really rank this book at a 3.75/5 which rounds up to an even 4 stars.

Simon says

Ok. But his other books are better. This one doesn't have the same climax at the end as some of his better reads.

Ant Koplowitz says

Night Crossing: my introduction to Robert Ryan who apparently specialises in novels about World War II. I've ended up reading this out of sequence (it's number 3 in the series) simply because I was drawn-in by the back cover description. It concerns father and son Douglas and Cameron Ross, both working for the intelligence services and the machinations caused by the internment of thousands of German and other 'undesirable' aliens when war breaks out.

The story is well written and moves along at a good pace, keeping the excitement coming and the pages turning. Cameron's love is Uli, escaped from Germany only to become another sort of prisoner in Britain. She's torn between Ross and Erich (her schoolgirl sweetheart), who is a submariner in the German U boats. Ryan really brings to life the scenes set onboard U-40, effectively capturing the hellish physical and psychological claustrophobia of the environment.

The book also gave me some insight into the treatment of enemy aliens by the British, which doesn't seem to cover us in historical glory if taken at face value. Many of the behaviours and attitudes were not far removed from how the Germans treated their prisoners (genocide aside).

There wasn't much of a central mystery to this book; at first I'd expected some tale of cross and double-cross concerning the respective British and German intelligence networks, and whilst there were peripheral elements, the main focus was on the re-connecting of the love triangle of Cameron, Uli and Erich.

I enjoyed Ryan's writing and despite starting in the 'wrong' place, I will certainly be reading more of his novels.

© Koplowitz 2013

Stephen Hayes says

An above-average Second World War spy story, with love interest and the eternal triangle thrown in.

Fortunately I only read the cover blurb after reading the book, as it would have been a spoiler.

Harry Tomos says

Thought it clever, enjoyed the twist..

Victor Gibson says

So having read Night Crossing we now aware that the author knows a lot about Berlin before the Second World War, and quite a bit about the war itself, including the slang used on German submarines, and where the prisoner of war camps were in the UK. And since this is an "Eye of God" novel we can follow the progress of a number of people through the duration of the conflict and keep our fingers crossed that all the loose ends will be tied up by the end of the book.

In fact the plotting of the story within the context of real events is admirable, but does it lead to a gripping

story? And really, should we be present at meetings between senior military figures in Germany which result in very slightly obscure events back in Britain? And while I am prepared to suspend disbelief with the best of them, I think to have a German journalist met at a party in 1938 in Berlin, met again, years later, when she is driving a milk cart in central London so that our hero can receive some important information, is pushing coincidence a bit far.

But in the end Night Crossing is like a damp handshake, a slight unsatisfactory event which one might not want to experience again.

Alistair Edwards says

A World War II story. It includes characters from both sides of the war – and some for whom it is not entirely clear which side they are on. In that way it is clever, in making you question your own sympathies.

karen says

In this book, Detective Inspector Cameron Ross reluctantly takes on an investigative assignment for his father, who works for British intelligence, placing him in 1938 Berlin. While on the job there, he meets a young woman musician, Ulrike, and is also recruited to do some intelligence work of his own. Both of these events alter his world in far-reaching ways. I was pleased to read a copy of this book through Netgalley. I found the writing to be compelling, with well-paced action, an interesting setting and a far reaching plot. I was also impressed with the character development portrayed throughout the book. Highly recommend.

Huw Rhys says

Apparently, this is one of a "double trilogy" of spy stories based roughly on true stories. Does a good spydiscern from that that there is no such term as "sexology" - it is a double trilogy?

Anyway, it's a cracking yarn, based on the true story of German POW's escaping from a camp in Bridgend during WW2, and weaving in a Foyle type character, part detective, part intelligence agent. All good fun, and a very easy read.

I must discover more of the double trilogy....

Pouting Always says

Cameron Ross is a policeman from Scotland Yard sent to Germany to investigate a mugging for his father who works in British intelligence when he is reacquainted with the Walters who he knows from his youth. Ulrika Walter is already engaged to a German Soldier named Erich who has been stationed on a U boat for the war. The story of the book unfolds around World War II and the three character's lives and the love triangle between them. I didn't know that this book was part of a series which is good because it stands alone and I only realized there were two books before this one when I went to write my review. The writing is really good also. I just got really bored while reading this one. There's a lot of fiction about the World Wars

so after a while you need something more to make it interesting. I didn't care about the military strategy stuff or the intelligence aspect at all. I think someone who is more interested in the war side of things would enjoy this more than I did though, and it's well written so if you like World War II fiction totally pick this one up.

Geoff Baldock says

A wel written book about the second world war from both sides.

Devashree Vyas says

Date read: 17.08.2017

Date of review: 21.03.2018

Rating: 3.5/5

Story:

Night Crossing is a novel based during the times of the Second World War, and we explore individuals, Erich, Ulrike and Cameron, the former two German individuals, and the latter British. Each of them have completely different perspectives and stand-points about the war. While Erich has been roped into the Hitler Youth in his prime, Ulrike and her father are Germans who do not support the ideals of racism, and genocide. Cameron, on the other hand, belongs to the police force, with his father being an esteemed Colonel, and immensely involved in the war scenario and secret service. The three of the interact before the war breaks, and their meeting is such that it leaves an indelible impact upon them. Erich and Ulrike were engaged, and it did not take Cameron more than a second glance to start falling for Ulrike too. When the war begins, all of them are thrown into different scenarios and undergo strife, only to meet again when Erich is a prisoner of war in the UK, and Ulrike is torn between the affections of both men.

The book is based on a time which is not easily relatable to me, and perhaps, people akin to me, belonging from my generation, and in countries that did not sense a direct connect to the war. The writer explains not just the scenario but even the technicalities involved in the battles extensively, but to me, a layperson, it was difficult to really imagine the battalion and the submarine and its function, and more often than not, felt slightly like a gap in the storyline. However, it does paint a picture of the time of the war and makes you realise how horrific it was, and how many people lost lives and livelihoods. It indicates the mentality of people varyingly involved in the war, ranging fro exasperation to fanaticism.

Writing Style:

Robert Ryan paints a haunting picture of the wartime scenario, be it through the eyes of the cautious English officer, the spirited German soldier or the insightful German young lady. While each character is attempting to pick up their pieces and find their own peace, their stories have been tied up together very well. The focus on the technical aspects of warfare is rather impressive.

Will I recommend it?

My limited experience of reading wartime novels makes me refrain from passing a judgment, if I were to choose to make one, but I sure am glad I read this book.

Favourite Quote:

"Night rises tranquil on the land;
Dreaming, she leans on the wall of the hills.
Her eyes behold the golden scales
Where time's at rest in peaceful vessels.
But bold the springs and the fountains rush fort,
They sin in the ear of the Night, the mother, of day,
Of the day that is ended now."

Happy Reading!

-Love, Devashree

Helen says

Very Good. Based on Historical events

Jade Heslin says

I normally look forward to writing a review as soon as I have finished a book as it gives me a chance to reflect upon what I've read and share the experience with those of you willing to suffer my rantings and gushings. I casually logged on to my Goodreads account today and realised that it has been a full two weeks since I completed the book and I still hadn't got round to writing anything.

The reason for this is that I don't really have anything to say. This book was a bit 'meh' and I have no strong feelings either way.

I can't critique Ryan's writing style as it flows really well, there isn't too much description (something I find agonisingly redundant in a book), and he has obviously done his research. It's just that it's not really my cup of tea.

I will normally give any genre a go, as I usually find that even if I don't like the story, I will generally learn something from it. But if I had to choose my least favourite genres they would be 'war' and 'romance'. You can see, then, why Night Crossing wasn't really up my street.

In fact, I disliked the war parts so much that I actually looked forward to the romantic bits. I was gutted again when he started talking about U-boat torpedoes and the secrets of military intelligence. This book was, in a nutshell, forgettable.

There was a twist at the end, but two weeks later I can't even remember what that was.
If you like war, you'll probably enjoy this. Nothing personal, Robbo lad – It's just not for me.

Manchester Military History Society (MMHS) says

A bit too contrived for my liking

Having read Robert Ryan's Dr John Watson's WW1 series I was looking forward to this, however I sorry to say I found it little too contrived.

The period detail and historical facts are sound, but there were a few too many implausible coincidences for me.

It's an entertaining read that progresses at quite a pace, but not credible enough for me.
