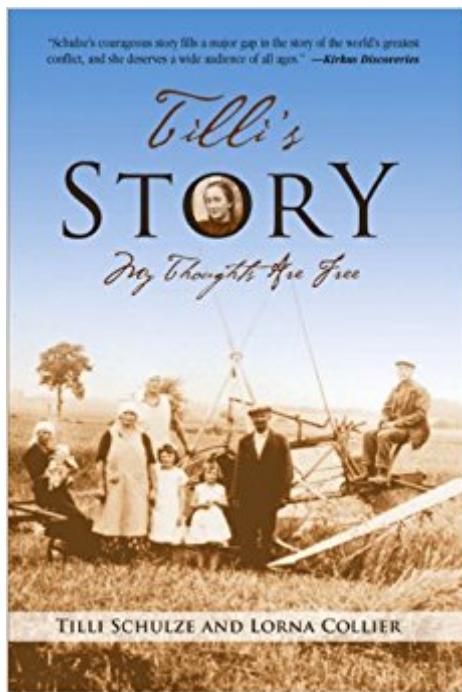


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# Tilli's Story: My Thoughts Are Free



## **Synopsis**

Tilli Horn is a five-year-old farm girl in a tiny village in eastern Germany when World War II begins. Her family opposes Hitler's Nazi Party, but is powerless to rebel. Tilli is forced to join a Hitler Youth group and participate in Nazi propaganda. As the war intensifies, she endures air-raid drills, nearby bombings, and constant fear. After the war ends, Russian soldiers invade Tilli's village, sending 11-year-old Tilli and a dozen other girls into hiding in a secret attic - a three-foot tall, dark, cramped space, where they remain for months lest they be assaulted. These and other details show what life was like for ordinary rural German children like Tilli under both Hitler and Stalin's regimes. Tilli's compelling memoir follows this brave young girl's fight to live in a place where not just her thoughts can be free. Recommended for teens and adults.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I became interested in the human stories of WWII in my teens, after meeting a Jew whose stories presented an unusual perspective. Later in life, my friendship with a woman who grew up in war-torn Germany and my reading of her stories about her childhood heightened my interest. Tilli's story

differs from most war stories. It focuses on the effect of war on ordinary families - on children and mothers. It dispels myths that suggest the German people unilaterally supported Hitler. It expose the fears, courage, and resilience of people whose lives were torn apart by incomprehensible acts of cruelty, by ignorance, and by blind loyalty to a misguided cause. It's a story about man's inhumanity to man, and about the strength of the human spirit to survive, and to pursue a seemingly impossible dream. A touching tale - sad, but also inspirational - it is beautifully told. It's a story that should be compulsory reading in history classrooms. Highly recommended reading. Lorraine Cobcroft

"Tilli's Story: My Thoughts are Free" is a wonderful book about a young farm girl in Eastern Germany during the Hitler and post-war Russian reigns. Just as "Anne Frank" is a touching story of a young Jewish girl in hiding during WWII, this is a story of another German girl during this time, who also must hide from the same evil Nazis. It reminds us that although the Nazis and the Russians were brutal torturers and killers, many of their victims were the German people themselves. We learn of the common German farm people whose lives and farms were controlled by Hitler, then the Russians. Tilli is a brave and idealistic young girl who only wants to be free. We Americans often take our freedom for granted. Tilli's journey to freedom is often a journey filled with terror and disappointment. That she survived is a testament to her determination and the love & support of her family. It is a must-read book by today's young people who may not understand the meaning of "freedom".

A really, really good book. I loved this story and the spirit of these wonderful people. No matter where we are from we are all human. I hope history never ever repeats itself. We all of us must learn from these stories. How sad to have to lower yourself to even consider hurting another person. I wonder do those Russian soldiers ever ever think about what they did to little girls like Tilli???????? And of course other people they hurt or murdered for nothing. Have they no feelings at all??? God bless all the victims of that terrible time in our world.

To realize that she and her family endured not just Hitler, but Stalin and the Russian army... Sometimes I think we are fed too much propaganda by the main stream media, but rather than the fear and poverty that resulted from the dictators, mindless followers, and unfortunately sometimes every-day people who had no choice because of the brutality of it all. Anyone with German roots - especially if you have family from this era, should read this book and recommend it to everyone they know. I fear that younger generations will never be able to comprehend what we

have today without reading about lives like this. We must never forget.

This is an amazing story. I never knew what the war was like for the german people. This lady eventually came to live in a town near me. I would have loved to meet her. It's easy to read and very interesting. I'm not one for history much, but this woman's story has stuck with me for years.

An interesting look at how the average German farmer lived during WW2. Tilli is no fan of the Nazis or Hitler. She longs to live in a free country. She and her family go through many trials during the war. I would recommend this book for those wanting a look inside the lives of Germans who did not support the Nazis. Tilli and her family were nevertheless forced to pretend patriotism. Of course, once the Nazis were defeated, Tilli and her family had the Soviets to contend with. She still wasn't free. Tilli does escape Europe, but I'll leave it to you to read the book and find out how.

It is important for us to learn not to paint everyone with a broad brush and assume everyone who lived under the control of evil leaders were complicit. Until we listen and learn from persons as individuals we will be ignorant of their true feelings and experience

This story was very interesting and kept my attention throughout. One thing I will mention, however, is that a large group of pictures have been plopped in the middle of the book. If you take the time to look at them, they reveal tidbits about the "yet-as-untold" story that I would have preferred to have had unfold in the story timeline. The pictures should have been at the end.

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