



Far From Home

Dean Hughes

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Far From Home is a moving, powerful novel about the effects of adversity, and about the love of family members for each other. If you're interested in World War II, or if you simply enjoy a great story, you won't want to miss this third volume of Children of the Promise.

Far From Home Details

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From Reader Review Far From Home for online ebook

Charly Troff (ReaderTurnedWriter) says

This was just as good as the first two books in the series. This book did have more of the actual combat in WWII, which I know was important but is not as interesting to me. It also had a lot of romance and history and character growth, though. I loved the way Hughes showed how hard the characters had it and how they didn't always just naturally want to be faithful and resilient, but still kept the themes of God and religion and human decency throughout. The struggle that Wally goes through is my favorite to read, because it is so hard for him and yet he keeps trying. I love his character development.

Tami Lowe Whiting says

I liked this book just as well as the first 2, but I'm finding the longer I spend with the soldiers in their foxholes, the feelings they are having linger with me, and I am a bit weighed down by it. My opinions on war in general haven't ever been favorable, but my dislike for them has at least doubled from these books. I like how the author adds a short list of other books you can read on applicable topics. I do have a very sincere sense of gratitude for things like simple meals, clean water, beds, blankets with sheets, and fuzzy socks. Also, this helps to explain the mindset of young soldiers getting married to the girls they love and then going back to fight in WW2, as my birth grandparents did. My birthmom was born in 1944, while her father was out fighting. I'm enjoying the books, but finding it difficult to live life, and put them down.

Bonnie says

In this continuing saga, Hughes once again does not disappoint! I can't help but feel like I know these people personally and that they really exist. Of course they don't, but Hughes once again has done such good research that he seems to clearly understand just exactly how one would think, feel and react in all situations presented. During the time spent with Alex and his buddies in battle and setting in foxholes, I couldn't help but think about my own dad and what it must have been like for him and his buddies in that same situation. The places Alex has been fighting are the same places that my dad fought, which makes the book even more interesting to me. Reading about the circumstances and conditions of those times and places makes my dad's experiences much more real to me. I found myself wishing he were still around so that I could ask him about them...but I digress..

So, in a nutshell...EXCELLENT!

04kaitlynr says

The book I just finished was Children of the Promise. It was a good book. I liked it because it is interesting to see how they survive. I think that anyone who likes WWII books should read this.

There were lots of different characters that the book referred to so I am going to talk about them and their experiences in the book. I am going to start with Alex. He is in the army right now, fighting for America

against Germany. He and his company go to Holland to fight and sort of weaken the borders but end up staying there longer than desired. They are dropped into a field and are trying to destroy some German Panzer tanks but find out that they don't have enough equipment. So Alex and his fellow soldiers are stuck in foxholes for a long time fighting the cold, hunger, and sanity as much as the enemy.

The next people I will talk about are Bobbi and Wally. Bobbi is a nurse in Hawaii and finds a boyfriend that she really likes. He gets sent out to sea with Bobbi worrying about him constantly. She worries about him so much that she becomes careless and mean to those she cares about. Wally is still a prisoner of war in Japan, who mines and digs out coal. He is skin and bone and has to survive harsh cold weather and malnutrition. Not only does he have to go through all of that, but there is nothing to look forward to and his supervisors are cruel and abusive.

LaRue, the second youngest out of the Thomas family, is the next person I will talk about. LaRue enjoys going to the U.S.O., a club that is helping the war. She meets a boy named Ned there who really likes her. The problem is that he is 18 and she is only 15 but Ned doesn't know that. They get into a really serious relationship; LaRue in it for the fun of it and Ned because he really loves her. Ned actually ends up proposing to her at one point but LaRue turned him down and crushed him.

Heinrich Stoltz is a German who fights against the Führer by giving the allies inside information by traveling to Germany, which is very dangerous. Mr. Stoltz is happy to resist in some way, but the real reason he is there is because he wants to find his son Peter. Peter was lost when he and his family were crossing the French border escaping the Nazi's. Mr. Stoltz is in Germany spying for the OSS but makes a crucial mistake and has to go into hiding. He has to think up a new identity and find work and some excuse of why he isn't in the army. Peter on the other hand is in the army. He doesn't want to be, but he did it to save his life. He eventually figures out a way to escape and will hopefully return to his family.

As you can see this book is very fascinating and fun to read. Like I said in the first paragraph, anyone who likes WWII should read this. It is worth your time. It is interesting to see what they went through and it makes you grateful that we don't have to go through that. This is a good book and you should read it.

Stan says

I think one of the best things about Dean Hughes' authorial style is that it's clean and transparent. The story pulls you in, but you're not constantly being reminded that you're **in** a story--that, to me, is a mark of a skilled author.

I had to laugh, a little, when I realised that after reading (well, listening to) "Far From home," and a few of the sequels, that I had become engrossed in what essentially amounts to an LDS literary soap opera. But Hughes has definitely done his homework, making the background and historicity of his novels very accurate and believable. His characters are also very compelling and 3-dimensional, and I guess there's just something in me that enjoys following the lives of a couple of families across several generations.

This is clean, easy reading that doesn't insult the readers' intelligence, and doesn't compromise any standards (at least not LDS standards). It's a good escape, reading-wise, and though it has the semi-meandering quality of any soap opera, the stories are ones that are good enough that you want to keep following them--even across consecutive series.

It's not great literature, necessarily (hence 4-star vs. 5-star), but Hughes makes for good reading that's engaging and entertaining. I'm going to recommend his books.

Kylene says

This wasn't my favorite in the series. Parts of it were interesting, but some parts just weren't my cup of tea. I wish more time was spent on Peter and Bro. Stoltz in Germany, Bobbi in Hawaii, and Wally in Japan. I kind of kind tired of reading all the battle info with Alex's adventures (although my grandfather was at the Battle of the Bulge, so that was a bit interesting), and I got so sick of LaRue and her selfish attitude. She drove me nuts with how she was going around with Ned, leading him on because she liked it. Anyway, I felt like this was an "Empire Strikes Back" type of book. It's important to go through all the events and character development, but it's not necessarily anyone's favorite. I'm looking forward to the next book, because that should have the war ending and we can see where everyone starts to end up.

Heidi says

The third book of this series started wearing a little bit thin for me. Each character has one single storyline: Bea trying to maintain some independence from her domineering husband, LaRue chasing boys, Bobbi trying yet again to decide whether she really wants to marry her latest fiance, Anna just being her sweet little optimistic self (does that girl have any personality at all?), President Thomas struggling with his tendency to control all aspects of his family's lives, the Stoltzs still on the run, etc.

And perfect Alex, the track star, the former missionary, the apple of his father's eye, continues to be the Golden Boy as he performs all sorts of improbable wartime feats and gets decorated with medals. Alex bugs me. But his exploits made for interesting reading.

Wally. Wally's story saved the book for me. As a POW captured in the Philippines, Wally had to struggle every day to survive, yet his struggles turned him into a man of honour.

And everything just gets worse. If I had been reading these books as they came out instead of reading them all at once, I might have just killed myself at the end of book 3 and been done with it.

Patti says

"Far From Home" is #3 in "Children of the promise" series of five. I liked it just as much as the first and second. There are a few happy moments, but the majority is still the anguish of WWII from every angle you could imagine.

I love that these volumes follow significant characters and their individual trials. We know what Peter is facing as he struggles to survive in the German army, even though he is so opposed to Hitler; he has no choice. Bobbie is faced with what fate her beloved Richard has met. Alex continues to fight courageously. Anna bravely waits for Alex. Wally endures inhuman treatment as a POW in Japan. And the Stoltz family has their own challenges. My heart is filled with compassion for each one, including the Thomas family home in Utah that worries and prayers for safekeeping of loved ones. For each character's story, I'm sure

many actual people can truly identify.

I have to admit that there were some parts of Wally's story, and Alex's war experiences that I just had to scan. I can only take so much agony and at times I just couldn't handle every detail. Still, I definitely got the gist and it was tough.

I have learned so much! These books have touched my heart and I can hardly wait to go on to #4...

Heather says

Another good book in the series! The war continues and families are still separated, but even amid the trials there are blessings and miracles for the Thomas family. Some of them are brought together and they all continue to push forward. I like reading about familiar places - Hawaii and its culture, Japan, Salt Lake City, London. I like learning about the history, although it's very sad to think about the realities and horrors of war. I can't imagine the horrible hardships and then memories the soldiers and prisoners and others face.

As it mentions a few times in this book, war definitely takes a toll and changes people. I'm grateful for the message of the importance of family and the hope of their consistent love, the power and strength of friendships, and the blessings of repentance and forgiveness. It's amazing to think about the full-scale world conflict and watch families torn across cultures and borders on both sides of the conflict, causing people to really think about what they believe - will they be kind to the German sitting next to them in church in England and the Japanese American in Hawaii? But, it's the trying times that teach us the most.

Here are a few quotes that I liked from the book:

"It seemed that a few people in the world were making all the decisions for everyone else now. She wondered what would happen if all the weary soldiers simply decided to quit fighting (p. 28)."

"Haoles. Every time you enjoy yourselves, you stop, look around, and say, 'What if someone sees me having a good time?' Hawaiians aren't like that. We know how to be happy (p. 45)."

"You have to trust the Lord, my dear. That's what haoles never want to do....It's like the hula. You have to let go a little (p. 47)."

"We should not forget that there are faithful Latter-day Saints in many of the countries involved in the war....[we should not] wound the feelings of our brothers and sisters in defeated lands (p. 181)."

*"Can you put it in God's hands? Can you trust him, and wait?"
"It's not God doing this....We're all killing each other--and what's God supposed to do about that (p. 203)?"*

"I'm just saying that good people have to stand up for what's right. We've lost our moral bearings during this war, and we need to get them back (p. 276)."

"All I want you to know is that war is the greatest evil Satan has invented to corrupt our hearts and souls. We should honor our soldiers, but we should never honor war (p. 278)."

"I'm sorry for my anger. I accept the things as they are. But Father, please comfort me. Please let me feel

'thy love.' And then the comfort came, the love....She didn't know why things happened the way they did, but she trusted that God did, and she finally felt able to accept (p. 285)."

"Sooner or later everyone has to go through something--some kind of pain or suffering. And I think that's how it's supposed to be. It doesn't even out exactly, but we all have to pass through our own tests, and if we make it through, we're better for it (p. 287)."

"Religion isn't a list of rights and wrongs to him. It's who he is (p. 306)."

"God certainly hates this war, but he can be with you, giving you strength, even at the worst moments of your life. Even in war (p. 313)."

"And no matter what this war costs us, maybe it's taught us some things, too (p. 415)."

"Merry Christmas. I want to give you a gift. You don't kick me anymore, and I want to thank you for that....I'll work during dinnertime today. You'll get a little more done. And you like that (p. 416)."

Jaclyn says

It's strange that all my books are rereads this year, but I can't help it. I need to see the Thomas family through to the end of the war, and I definitely have favorites amongst the kids. Already have the next book in the series out...bring on the cheesy dialogue and warm fuzzies as the family members finally get to see each other again. Happy reading and happy new year!

Stan Crowe says

I think one of the best things about Dean Hughes' authorial style is that it's clean and transparent. The story pulls you in, but you're not constantly being reminded that you're **in** a story--that, to me, is a mark of a skilled author.

I had to laugh, a little, when I realised that after reading (well, listening to) several of the "Hearts of the Children" series that I had become engrossed in what essentially amounts to an LDS literary soap opera. But Hughes has definitely done his homework, making the background and historicity of his novels very accurate and believable. His characters are also very compelling and 3-dimensional, and I guess there's just something in me that enjoys following the lives of a couple of families across several generations.

This is clean, easy reading that doesn't insult the readers' intelligence, and doesn't compromise any standards (at least not LDS standards). It's a good escape, reading-wise, and though it has the semi-meandering quality of any soap opera, the stories are ones that are good enough that you want to keep following them--even across consecutive series.

It's not great literature, necessarily (hence 4-star vs. 5-star), but Hughes makes for good reading that's engaging and entertaining. I'm going to recommend his books.

Julia says

I gave this book only 3 stars for a few reasons. First off, I'm still having a hard time reading mostly about Alex's experiences on the battle front. I liked reading about his missionary experiences in the first book far more. It's not that I'm completely uninterested, it's that I'd prefer to read about pretty much any other character in this series, especially the Stoltz's. I'm amazed how Dean Hughes has portrayed Heinrich Stoltz as a man of bravery, devotion & determination. I really wish this book had been more about him, his wife & their children, Anna & Peter. I got to the point where I wanted to slap LaRue because she was such a brat towards her parents, but what satisfied me about her was that Ned finally decided to put her in her place & tell her straight out that she wasn't a good girl. I have very little patience with a good, Mormon girl who chooses to wear the most immodest clothes that she can get away with, and who relishes in the attention that she gets from boys because she uses her beauty to toy with them. I didn't dislike reading about Bobbi, & I was so happy when I read that Richard had been spared & that they're to be married soon. I was also really interested in reading about Wally's ordeals in the Japanese prison he was sent to. I really hope this next book is more about him, the Stoltz family & the Thomas family than Alex.

Heidi Rothert says

This one, for me was harder to get through. I still loved it.

livvy.jane33 says

Gosh. I can't. 4.5 stars.

Didn't hit me as hard as book two, but I still cried. Many times. I love these characters so much, even Wally, who I hated in book 1. But he's changed so much since then and now he's one of my favorites.

Ronald says

The five books in this series have the facts so well researched, and the plot with its multi sub-plots works extremely well. All of the books in the series stand by themselves. At times I forget that these stories of the Thomas Family members could almost make a series of novels by themselves, but Dean Hughes has intertwined the family members so well that "Far From Home" had many gory details and explosive feelings towards the Japanese war efforts but that's to be expected and this volume portrays it accurately from what I've read in other books . I don't think any author can capture the true pain, suffering, resentment, killing well and from our own experience during these times

Ashtynne Degroff says

In the beginning of this book, there was a guy named Alex and he was going back to the war after he recovered from his injury during the war. While he is in the war, he has a brother and a sister that are also

helping out in the war. The brother's name is Wally and he is a prisoner of war in Japan. Alex's sister, Bobbi is working as a nurse in Pearl Harbor. Alex comes back to the war to find that things have really changed while he was away. There were a bunch of war guys who were brand new and were only like 17 or 18 years old. Can Alex do all he can to try to save them without getting his own life taken.

I think that the theme of this book was "You can never give up." I thought of this because in this book, some people are completely treated terrible by the people they work for like Wally. He has to deal with all of the Japan people, who honestly, aren't very nice to the prisoners. Before Wally left his home, he was always very arrogant to all of the people in his family, especially his father. When Wally was at war, he really changed and I think in the upcoming books, his family will be surprised at how much he has changed from the time when he was doing track in high school, up until the time he was a prisoner of war in Japan. Always keep trying and you can never give up.

Some things that I really liked about this book were all of the events that were going on in the book. Another thing that I liked was how well the author put everything together and made it feel like I have experienced it on my own. I felt like everything was meant to be and nothing was out of place or wrong in this book. I really didn't have to say anything bad about this book. I will rate this book as a five out of five. Great job, Dean Hughes (author)

Gena Lott says

Get ready to shed a few tears.

Laura Gubler says

American history is my absolute favorite school subject! This is the reason Historical Fiction is my favorite book genre. WWII, however, has always been the part of our history that I only learned what was needed to "pass the tests" this being because of all the things that happened to the Jews. It was always a very hard thing for me to think about. I have owned the Children of the Promise book series for over 5 years now and finally brought myself to read them THANKS to my father in law. This book series was absolutely profound to me. I cannot really put into words all the feelings I had while reading these books. There was so many spiritual feelings throughout. So many times I cried for good and for bad. Dean Hughes touches on so many areas of the war all around the world. He stayed as close to the "real thing" as I think was possible. So many movies romanticize this war, the biggest war in history but Hughes told it like it was. But at the same time it is not a series that was to hard to read as far as the gore of it all. He gives a very real look into a fictional family and all that they experienced during "the duration". I could go on and on. This book series is now and will always be my favorite book series. I would recommend this series to all.

Shari Allen says

A great prepared novel about the effects of adversity. Well documented events that open understanding and defenses to the use of mankind for power control...

Anna liked Mr. Dillingham's Understatement about the war. Surely everyone in the world had learned enough to last for a long time, she thought. She knew that people had a way of forgetting quickly, but this amount of suffering had to stick with people for generations to come, it seemed.

One of Dean Hughes favorite way to research experiences is to sit in a library and read old newspapers on

microfilm. To help him feel what the forties were like he read the ads, the editorials, the society pages, even the comics. he guarantees that it's more fun than almost anything you're likely to see on TV.

I am now making a list of reads Dean studied to write this book. . .

Tiffany says

This is my summary of the entire series. I love this series of books. It is a great history of the World War II and how it affected a regular family trying to deal with the changes the war brought. It is LDS historical fiction, so it's about an LDS family living in Salt Lake City during the war. It follows the story of the six children in the family. The four oldest go off to fight the war; Alex in the army, Wally in the Army Air Corps, Bobbi as a nurse in the navy, and Gene in the Marines. It is an amazing read about their experiences all around the world, and their coming together again when the war is over.

I learn best through historical fiction, and had a hard time putting these down. I feel like my eyes were opened to what life was like during this time period. By the last book though, I was ready to move onto a new subject.
