

Dora Bruder

By Patrick Modiano

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Dora Bruder By Patrick Modiano

In 1988 Patrick Modiano stumbles across an ad in the personal columns of the New Year's Eve 1941 edition of *Paris Soir*: “Missing, a young girl, Dora Bruder, age 15, height 1 m 55, oval-shaped face, gray-brown eyes, gray sports jacket, maroon pullover, navy blue skirt and hat, brown gym shoes.”

Placed by the parents of Dora, who had run away from her Catholic boarding school, the ad sets Modiano off on a quest to find out everything he can about her and why, at the height of German reprisals, she ran away from the people hiding her. There is only one other official mention of her name: on a list of Jews deported from Paris to Auschwitz in September 1942.

What little Modiano discovers about Dora in official records and through remaining family members becomes a meditation on the immense losses of the period—lost people, lost stories, and lost history. Modiano delivers a moving account of the ten-year investigation that took him back to the sights and sounds of Paris under the Nazi Occupation and the paranoia of the Pétain regime. In his efforts to exhume her from the past, Modiano realizes that he must come to terms with the specters of his own troubled adolescence. The result, a montage of creative and historical material, is Modiano's personal rumination on loss, both memoir and memorial.

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Dora Bruder By Patrick Modiano Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #338245 in Books
- Published on: 2014-11-07
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x .40" w x 5.50" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 128 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
In 1988, French novelist Patrick Modiano happened upon a notice in a 1941 Paris newspaper placed by the parents of a 15-year-old Jewish girl, Dora Bruder, who had disappeared from the Catholic boarding school where she was being hidden. The notice stuck in Modiano's memory, and it launched him on a quest for information about the girl's life that resulted in *Dora Bruder*. Modiano's lengthy investigation turned up only tiny scraps of information about Dora--but every scrap made the mystery of her disappearance more haunting. Most strikingly, Modiano found her name on a list of Jews deported from Paris to Auschwitz in 1942. "It takes time for what has been erased to resurface," Modiano explains. "It took me four years to discover her exact date of birth: 25 February 1926. And a further two years to find out her place of birth: Paris, 12th arondissement. But I am a patient man. I can wait for hours in the rain." Eventually Modiano's search forces him to come to terms with his own difficult adolescence. Yet this book defies categorization in both history and memoir. It is something more complex, and harder--a poetic acknowledgment and a philosophical refutation of common and terrifying human fates: being isolated, forgotten, and lost. --*Michael Joseph Gross*

From Kirkus Reviews
A hauntingly fetching book, centered on one teenage girl's avoidable death. Modiano's novel Out of the Dark (1998) is also a short, nostalgic work fixated on a woman. This work is even darker, in that it weaves research, logical speculation, and emotive imagination around a Jewish girl who runs away from the convent school that is hiding her and soon disappears in Auschwitz via Drancy. Modiano's obsessive search began about ten years ago when he saw an old 1941 newspaper notice about a missing 15-year-old girl named Dora Bruder. Using the powerful description that makes him a noted novelist in his native France (``the black interminable wall, the penumbra beneath the metro arches''), Modiano goes to the listed address and to many uncooperative offices to follow the paper trail, the bureaucratic banality of evil, that leads to Bruder's bolting from her tedious but safe hiding place during the Nazi occupation. The tragedy took place in parts of Paris familiar to the author, though much has changed in 50 years, ``and it takes time for what has been erased to resurface. What resurfaces through months of patient investigation are details about Dora's parents and his own Jewish father, who abandoned the family, with speculation placing Dora and his father in the same predicament. Beyond the guesswork, like describing Mr. Bruder's likely battles during five years with the French Foreign Legion, Modiano comes up with a few photos of Dora and her family and interviews a few survivors that knew the family. The author combines empathy and facts to see the suicidal ecstasy of Dora running away and hiding out on the wintry Parisian streets until her documented arrest and transport to oblivion. Not a Holocaust memoir or historical fiction but a skillful reconstruction of a life that strides the two genres. (3 b&w photos, 2 maps) -- *Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Review
"Modiano has an almost paranormal capacity to sense vibrations from the past or intimations of the future." --Debarati Sanyal"Public Books" (10/01/2015)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dan Williams:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important take action, like looking for your favorite reserve and reading a reserve. Beside you can solve your condition; you can add your knowledge by the e-book entitled Dora Bruder. Try to face the book Dora Bruder as your pal. It means that it can to get your friend when you truly feel alone and beside those of course make you smarter than before. Yeah, it is very fortuned for yourself. The book makes you far more confidence because you can know anything by the book. So , we should make new experience as well as knowledge with this book.

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Susan Crowell:

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Levi Ryan:

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