



## Canción de cuna de Auschwitz

*Mario Escobar*

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**Canción de cuna de Auschwitz** Mario Escobar

**Una emocionante novela basada en hechos reales que rescata del olvido una de las historias más conmovedoras de heroísmo de una madre alemana en medio del terror nazi.**

Entre los papeles encontrados del doctor nazi Joseph Mengele hay un diario escrito en cuadernos infantiles de una mujer llamada Helene Hanneman. Se trata de una enfermera alemana casada con un hombre gitano, deportada en la primavera de 1943 al Campo Gitano de Birkenau Auschwitz II. Sector BII e. En el diario Helene describe los dieciséis meses de su estancia en el Campo de Exterminio. Helena está a punto de despertar a sus hijos para que vayan al colegio cuando un grupo de policías irrumpe en su casa. Los policías quieren llevarse a su esposo y a sus cinco hijos gitanos. Según la orden del 16 de diciembre de 1943 firmada por el líder de las SS Heinrich Himmler todos los gitanos pertenecientes a los territorios conquistados por los nazis deben ser encerrados en campos de concentración. La policía le dice a Helene que ella como alemana no tiene que acompañarles, pero decide compartir el destino de su familia. Tras convencer a sus hijos que van a un lugar de vacaciones, para que estén tranquilos, toda la familia es deportada a Auschwitz.

## Canción de cuna de Auschwitz Details

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Author : Mario Escobar

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# From Reader Review Canción de cuna de Auschwitz for online ebook

**Joanne Freitas says**

Nem tenho palavras para descrever o quanto amei este livro, o quanto vivi este livro. Este livro despertou-me todo o tipo de sentimentos. Chorei, ri. Um livro que sei que me irei recordar para sempre pois marcou-me o coração.

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**Amy (my\_bibliophilia) says**

\*\*\*\*\*4 stars.\*\*\*\*\*

[Review in my account bookstagram](#)

Este libro lo leí hace algunas semanas y fueron tantos los sentimientos encontrados y lo que me enganchó que me lo leí muy rápido, apenas un día me tomó.

***"Los seres humanos somos pequeños suspiros en medio del huracán de nuestras circunstancias, pero la historia de Helene nos recuerda que podemos ser dueños de nuestro propio destino, aunque el mundo entero se nos oponga."***

Basado en hechos reales, cuenta la historia de Helene Hannemann, una enfermera alemana que se casó con un hombre gitano y tuvieron 5 hijos. Cuando por orden del líder de las SS todos los gitanos encontrados en territorio nazi deben ser encerrados en campos de concentración, Helene se niega a separarse de su familia y decide acompañarlos al Campo Gitano de Auschwitz Birkenau II. En un diario relata su estancia por dieciséis meses en el mayor de los campos de exterminio nazi.

Este libro nos relata los episodios más trágicos desde la perspectiva de una madre que amó tanto a su marido y sus hijos, dejándolo todo por ellos, aún siendo alemana y de raza pura. Un historia durísima y al mismo tiempo conmovedora basada en hechos reales. He leído mucho sobre el holocausto, de hecho me encanta leer sobre este tipo de historias, siempre hay algo que contar sobre este episodio oscuro de la historia desde diversos puntos de vista. En este caso, el de los gitanos recluidos en Birkenau y los ya conocidos experimentos del doctor Joseph Mengele.

Debo decir que este libro pasó a formar parte de mis favoritos, aunque tiene algunas cositas que no me gustaron tanto, pienso que es muy bueno y lo recomiendo.

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### **Deanne Patterson says**

This is an incredibly hard review to write because of the emotion invested in reading this. I just finished reading an incredibly heart-wrenching book that is based upon the life and story of Helene Hannemann and her 5 children. She was a German woman married to a Gypsy man. Her husband and her 5 children being gypsies are sent to Auschwitz and held in the Gypsy camp at Birkenau. Now she was German and not required to go with them but being a mother you don't just let your children go off on their own unprotected so she went with them voluntarily. Immediately separated from her husband and the children their father she sees him once while there and it took quite a lot for that few minutes meeting to happen. Fearing for their lives the whole time they are at Auschwitz, cold, neglected, starved..... The lucky ones are the ones who have thrown themselves against the electrical fence. As a nurse Helene and her children do get slightly better treatment and privileges than the commoners and she is asked to run a school of sorts for the other children. Such a dark, sad and disgraceful time in history my heart just clenched, it brought out such emotion in me. Seeing the other children around dying from neglect it gives you a sense of hope that Helene's children somehow manage to survive despite the horrendous circumstances. Towards the end the bottom falls out though as true to the historical events the end comes for them as well. Why, why, why I keep asking myself as I was so invested in this family. I wanted to scream, cry, bang my head and change what happens. How could this happen? How, why? Where is human decency, there is not a shred of it here! But like a mama tiger even though she wasn't required to go with her children to their death and it meant her own death as well she went. That is a protective mama for you. On the way she sang a Auschwitz lullaby and calmed them all down. I have read other books about Auschwitz but none have gripped my heart the way this one has. Excellent book! I look forward to reading more books by this author!

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I was given a complimentary copy of this book by Thomas Nelson--FICTION through Netgalley. Thank you. All opinions expressed are my own.

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### **Dora Santos Marques says**

A minha opinião em vídeo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOHEe...>

A-VA-SSA-LA-DOR! Este livro deu cabo de mim...é só o que me apraz dizer...

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### **Marialyce says**

4.5 heart breaking stars

A mother wakes in the morning, prepares for her day with her five children, and then there is pounding upon her door and life turns to the horrific. The world is on fire and now that fire has come to her door. This is the world of the Auschwitz Lullaby: A Novel

Helene Hannemann is a young German mother of five. She is caught up in the conflict that is raging and is married to a Romani man, a gypsy, a person, a race, the SS and Hitler has determined needs to be caught,

confined and eliminated. Helene's children are of mixed blood according to the Nazis and they too must be sent away. She is told she is free but instead, as a loving and caring mother, chooses to go with her family and they are sent to Auschwitz. We have heard all the stories, read the books, listened to survivors so we are well aware of the atrocities, the inhumane conditions, the death that awaits millions at the hands of Hitler and his bunch of devils.

Of course Helene and her husband are separated but she is allowed to remain with her children, dedicating herself to their protection and providing the best of care for them if that is at all possible. Helene was a nurse so she was assigned to nursing duties which brings her into the sphere that is inhabited by Dr Joseph Mengele. He seeks her out and encourages her to head up a nursery for infants and children up to the age of six. Helene agrees to do so in the hopes that she and others can provide a few moments of safety and a bit of care and maybe even happiness to these children. Helene and six others open their nursery/school to the children while less than five hundred feet away the gas chambers are systematically exterminating people. Can she and the others keep the children alive? Can she save her own five children?

This was a sad tale and although I have read and there have been written many stories of the Holocaust, this one seemed to take on a special aura. Perhaps it was because of Helene's being a mother, being a person who cared so much. She was us. For a time she was a person who was able to make a few moments in time happy and safe for some doomed children, a person who took risks, a person who was a hero. I recommend this book to all those who need to always realize that life, all life, is precious and that we are a fortunate people who always have to bear in mind that this horrendous time has occurred and this hate continues to happen throughout the world.

Thank you to Mario Escobar, Thomas Nelson Fiction, and NetGalley for providing me with a copy of this real life heroine.

<https://www.thoughtco.com/auschwitz-c...>

My reviews can be seen here: <https://yayareadslotsofbooks.wordpress...>

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## **Tammy says**

5 ? Auschwitz Lullaby is a heart-wrenching treasure based on the TRUE story of Helene Hannemann, an Aryan German mother of 5 who was married to a Roma. When the Germans who were rounding up gypsies came knocking on her door in 1943 to collect her husband and children she follows them into the trains cattle car immediately giving herself a death sentence just to be with her family.

After days in the stench filled cattle car thirsty, hungry and watching people die along their journey they finally arrive at Auschwitz. Once inside the concentration camp due to her being a nurse she's told to run the camps Romani nursery and school of sorts overseen by Mengele himself. My heart sank while reading Helene's story. I felt overwhelming sadness for the camps prisoners, some even throwing themselves on the electric fences to end their agony. I'm especially heartbroken over the children as we all know of the horrifying evil things Mengele did. Helene was a courageous determined woman that did whatever it took to help the children in her care at Auschwitz. Helene's story is incredibly sad and one that needed to be told. Grab the Kleenex as this is a very descriptive story based on fact from her diary. I highly recommend to anyone that reads historical fiction, especially of the Holocaust.

Recommending: The Tattooist of Auschwitz which is exceptional also. Both true stories and prisoners at Auschwitz during the same time period.

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## Sharon Metcalf says

Stephen King is quoted as categorising three types of terror. The gross-out. The horror. The terror.

Personally, I'm not into any of these things but Mario Escobar's novel of historical fiction plonked me firmly into a place where all three were daily facts of life. This was real horror on a level fiction doesn't go close to.

**The place? Auschwitz.**

**The novel? Auschwitz Lullaby.**

Helene Hannemann was a German woman, married to the love of her life, and mother of five children. It just so happened her husband was Romani and it was 1943 Germany, so when the SS came to round up her family she insisted she was going wherever they were going. Thus, all seven of them found themselves on a cattlecar bound for the deplorable conditions of the Gypsy camp at Auschwitz. Whilst there Dr Josef Mengele entrusted Helene to set up a Kindergarten and school for the children of Auschwitz. To her surprise they were provided with extra rations and supplies for the Kindergarten and Dr Mengele showed a particular interest in the children. With the benefit of hindsight and history books readers can guess at Mengeles interest but there was no such luck for Helene and the children. This is their story - two protagonists, both real - told according to the heartbreaking and distressing facts.

Auschwitz Lullaby is not an easy read but it is an important one. As WWII and the Nazi crimes against humanity slip further into the past it is easy for us to lose sight of the impact of the events that shaped the world and for the lives lost to become reduced to a series of numbers. Reading closes this distance and brings the horrors of Auschwitz and the lives of at least one family up close and personal. There's no way I will forget this story any time soon. And though I don't gravitate to horror stories, this is one I'm glad to have read because it's so important we remember.

Despite the difficult content the writing was beautiful, the story sad, and I found myself highlighting great chunks of text. Being an historian, Escobar included a Chronology of the Gypsy Camp at Auschwitz and Historical Clarifications in which he points out the few places his fiction veered from the facts.

I know some people have tired of, or avoid, reading these kinds of stories. This is one I strongly recommend. I give my thanks to Mario Escobar for sharing Helene's story and would like to reassure him that his fear of *"... not being able to capture the greatness of Helene Hannemann's soul within the lines of these pages"* was completely unfounded.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Thomas Nelson through NetGalley. Opinions expressed in this review are completely my own.

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## Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says

**4 powerful stars to Auschwitz Lullaby! ?? ?? ?? ??**

Auschwitz Lullaby, now available from Thomas Nelson, came highly recommended by my dear Goodreads' friend, Angela. When she says a book is four or more stars, I don't miss it. She gave this one 4.5.

My Thoughts:

I never tire of these World War II stories involving the Holocaust. I must sound like a broken record at this point, but I have to say, because of the insurmountable number of people affected, there will always be new perspectives and stories to tell, and I am here to read them and listen.

It is 1942 in Germany when Helene's family home is broken into by the police. They are there to take away her husband, deemed a "gypsy," and their five children. The police say that Helene can stay because she is German, but she chooses to leave with her family. They are all taken to Auschwitz.

After her family is set-up in the crowded barracks, Dr. Mengele arrives to see Helene because she is known to be a nurse. From there, he directs her to run the concentration camp's nurseries, set across two barracks; one for newborns and one for children older than six.

In these incredibly harsh and dire conditions, Mengele provides child-friendly items like movies and toys, while people are dying in gas chambers close by. Helene works tirelessly to save the children, her own and all those under her care. What will happen to her family?

Auschwitz Lullaby is based on a true story of one woman and her family. It sheds an important light on the prejudice against, and extermination of, the Romani people by the Nazis during WWII. I found the writing to be straight, and with that, my own emotions could fill in the full picture of this living, breathing story.

My favorite aspect of this book was the characterization. It made the story real. Helene was a hero and a risk-taker, and most of all, she was a mother.

Thank you to Thomas Nelson for the complimentary ARC. All opinions are my own.

My reviews can also be found on my blog: [www.jennifertarheelreader.com](http://www.jennifertarheelreader.com)

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## **Angela M says**

4.5 stars .

I've read many books about the Holocaust, memoirs, and many novels, some of which were based on real people. Yet, there always seems to be something new to learn. The author's dedication: "To the more than twenty thousand ethnic Gypsies who were imprisoned and exterminated in Auschwitz and to the quarter million murdered in the forests and ditches of Northern Europe and Russia." I didn't know. This is based on a true story, a real family. This novel tells the story of Helene Hannemann, a German woman married to a Roma, a Gypsy, who is taken to Auschwitz with her husband and five children as gypsies were rounded up by the Nazis in 1943. Even though she is German and doesn't have to go, she refuses to let her family go without her. This is a book about the horrors of the concentration camps, but it is also a book about a mother's unbridled love for her children.

Helene is a nurse and is called on by Mengele to run a school for the gypsy children at the camp. Of course, knowing who the vile Mengele was and the horrific things he was capable of, my heart sunk. How could this be a good thing? This is not easy to read as are other stories of the concentration camps; it is horrific as we see what Mengele does to children in the name of medicine and how these people suffer the conditions too awful to imagine. But Helene and the women who help her managed to bring smiles to the faces of these children when it seemed impossible. It's a short book and it reads quickly because it's hard to stop reading,

wondering about the fate of Helene and her family. This is another book that I woke up thinking about, thinking about the many millions of Jews and others such as the Gypsies who were victims of the twisted beliefs that are so contrary to what it means to be human. Escobar's publisher told him that "the world needed to know" Helene Hannemann's story. Escobar call on us, the readers and our "love for truth and justice" to help him "tell the world the story of Helene Hannemann and her five children." As with other Holocaust books, I passionately believe that we cannot forget and so with my short review, I hope that anyone who reads it will know a little of Helene's story.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Thomas Nelson through NetGalley. Opinions expressed in this review are completely my own.

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## **Esil says**

Auschwitz Lullaby is yet another heartbreaking and jarring novel depicting the horrors perpetrated by the Nazis. I have trouble with novels based on the Holocaust that use the war as a backdrop for romantic or saccharine stories. But there are some excellent novels based on real events that serve as an important reminder of this dark time in history. Auschwitz Lullaby mostly worked for me. It is based on the true story of Helene who was a German woman married to a Roma man, who at the time was referred to as a Gypsy and was part of one of the groups targeted by Hitler for annihilation. At the beginning of the book, the Nazis come to Helene's house to apprehend her husband and their five children. Unable to let her children go, Helene makes the decision to go with them. She ends up interned as a prisoner at Auschwitz with her five children and separated from her husband. Because she is German, she is entrusted with running a nursery for her children and other gypsy children under Mengele's supervision. The novel is an account of how Helene does what she can for her own children and for the other children in the nursery, while surrounded by death and depravity. The writing is straightforward but it works to convey Helene's story and the story of the horrific treatment of the Roma people by the Nazis.

My one quibble is that the story is presented as Helene's journal as found and read by Mendeley many years after the war. This is apparently not based on fact. It feels hokey and I felt that it diminishes the story of Helene's courage and the suffering of the people she tried to help. This flaw is only evident at the beginning and end of the book, and wouldn't deter me from recommending it.

Thanks to Netgalley and the publisher for an opportunity to read an advance copy.

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## **Anna says**

Based on the true story of Helene Hannemann. Helene was German, but had married a Romani man, Johann. Together they had five children.

What began as an ordinary day quickly became a nightmare when the SS come to their apartment, demanding Johann and the children come with them. As a German, Helene is safe from arrest, but she refuses to leave her children. They are transported to Auschwitz and placed in the Gypsy camp. Helene proves that a mother's love is stronger than hate and terror as exemplified in this quote: "Mothers have no ideologies. Our children are our only cause, our fatherland. For men, killing and dying for ideas may come naturally. For us bearers of life, to murder for ideals is the worst aberration created by humankind. Mothers capable of generating life could never become accomplices to so much death."



Helene, a trained nurse, draws the attention of Dr. Mengele, who puts her in charge of the Nursery school at the camp. Hesitant at first, Helene agrees so that the camp's children have an opportunity for extra food, warmth and medical care. She does her best, but life at Auschwitz is hell on earth, and Dr. Mengele is a monster. But Auschwitz could not destroy Helene's humanity as shown in this quote: "Sometimes we have to lose everything to find what is most important. When life robs us of what we thought we could not live without and leaves us standing naked before reality, the essential things that had always been invisible take on their true value."

A compelling, heartbreaking story of the plight of the Romani during WWII, and the strength of a mother.

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## Debra says

"Auschwitz stands as a tragic reminder of the terrible potential man has for violence and inhumanity." - Billy Graham

The book begins in 1943 when Helene Hannemann is preparing her five children for school. A knock on the door, changes all their lives forever. It is not a friendly neighbor knocking looking to borrow some milk, no it is the Nazi's and they are there for her gypsy husband and children. Being a German, Helene does not have to go with her family, but she insists. She will not leave her husband or children. So, the entire family is taken - deported to Auschwitz. After they survive the horrific conditions on the trains, Helene is permitted to stay with her children while her husband is taken to the men's side.

\* As many as 6,000 people were killed each day in the Holocaust.

Once in Auschwitz, she is approached by Dr. Mengele who has learned that she is a nurse. He asks her to direct the camps nursery. A nursery where children play with toys and watch movies while gas chambers are less than 400 feet away is constantly killing. How do you preserve a child's innocence in such a place? How do you keep children safe? How to keep them healthy in such unhealthy conditions? How do you take care of other's children while at the same time struggling to take care of your own?

What makes this book even more powerful is that it is based on a true story. Helene Hannemann refused to leave her children. She did not have to go to Auschwitz. She refused to let her children go to the camps without her. She stayed with her children and tried to encourage them and keep them from being afraid. Reading this I wondered how many people were put in this situation. How many were told they were being separated from their children. How many choose to go with their family when they could have gone free. What a choice to make. Not only did she care for her children, but she tried to take care of all the children in her care. How do you provide happiness in such a place?

I found this to be a powerful book that once again showed how kindness, empathy and love still shined in a place of such hatred and darkness. That no matter what, a light still burned within and there were those who never lost their humanity no matter what they witnessed, endured or suffered.

***"I believe in the sun even when it's not shining. I believe in love even when I don't feel it. I believe in God even when he is silent."*** poem etched into the wall by a prisoner in Auschwitz.

How many people were aware that nursery's existed at Auschwitz? How many people knew about Helene and her actions? How many people know just how many people were killed there? In the Author's notes he gives a breakdown in how Gypsies were affected by the Holocaust - how many were killed including

timelines. It is very educational and informative.

I found this book to be well written and captivating. I found it to be a fast read as it was so engrossing. I think for some this will also provide some education as to just how many people suffered during the holocaust. How many people were targeted for extermination may be shocking to some.

Powerful, moving, sad, hopeful, and tragic, this is another story about the Holocaust that needs to be told.

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### **Diane S ? says**

Whenever I start a book that is based on a real person, a real family, I feel a deeper sense of responsibility, as if I am a witness to this particular time of their life. Helene Hannemann, was the wife of a gypsy, the mother of five children, a nurse, and though as an Aryan, she could have saved herself, she did not. She refused to allow the SS to take her husband and her children without taking her. They found themselves in Auschwitz, eventually in the gypsy camp. She would go on to be assigned to Dr. Mengele, and ordered by him to start a school for the young children in the camp. Of course, his concern for the children was far from altruistic.

I'll admit I didn't like how this book started, something about the way the author chose to begin Helenes story, bothered me. I made another error, trying to listen to this on audio, with a narrator that I felt didn't relate the gravitas of the situation, but instead made it sound as if she were going to a picnic. I quit listening and grabbed the book, started over, and found what many other readers felt reading this story. Bravery, concern, people struggling to live, mothers struggling to keep their children alive, and yes, so much horror. Dr. Mengele never paid for his crimes and he was a man who was beyond evil.

An emotional read like so many written about the Holocaust, but the first I have read about the Romany. As many I have read, I am surprised by how many stories still need to be told, an evil without end.

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### **Brenda says**

Removed from her home in Germany, it was 1943 and the police were taking all gypsies to rehouse them. Although Helene Hannemann was German, her husband and therefore her five children were gypsies. Helene would not leave them – as a mother, her determination to look after her children was paramount.

The long, arduous, filthy and traumatic train journey eventually stopped at Auschwitz, which was to be Helene's home for the next sixteen months. The horrors would be revealed in an instant to the shocked family – the immediate separation of the men from the women and children meant Johann was taken from them, while Helene and the children were allocated a barracks in the Gypsy Camp.

With the arrival of a new doctor, Dr Mengele, Helene's life became worse and, in some ways, better as well. Helene was a nurse, and he needed her to assist. The guarded hope which came with the new nursery school that Helene would run meant the camp children would have a little more food and care, for a few hours during the day. But they were surrounded by monsters; Nazis who were unfeeling, uncaring, hard and evil. Helene did her best under the circumstances, while missing Johann desperately.

Could she save her innocent children in a place that knew no compassion? Would she ever see Johann again?

*Auschwitz Lullaby* by Mario Escobar is based on the true story of Helene Hannemann and her five children who were sent to Auschwitz in May 1943 to the Gypsy Camp at Birkenau. Dr Josef Mengele and many of the other characters were real people. It's important that readers don't read the "Historical Clarifications" at the end until after the story is over, as there are spoilers there. It's also extremely interesting – albeit horrifying – reading. *Auschwitz Lullaby* is an uplifting story of a mother's strength and determination; of hope and desperation; and of the horrors one human being can inflict on another. Highly recommended.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Thomas Nelson through NetGalley. Opinions expressed in this review are completely my own. With many thanks.

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### **Jeanette Lewis says**

The author has recreated a beautiful but harrowing account of the interment into Auschwitz of German born, blue eyed, Helene Hannemann who as a young woman fell in love and married a man of Romani (gypsy) heritage. Helene is initially offered the chance by the Nazis to remain and not be taken as prisoner but how could a mother of five and one with a strong love for her husband stay, not ever to know the plight of her family. The Nazis did not generally discriminate when it came to mixed marriages and so called pure blood Germans found themselves taken as prisoners along with Romani, Jews, Homosexuals etc. The author takes the reader into the trains the cattle carts, overcrowded, lacking water and sanitary facilities, the heat, the cold and the death within the carts. Helene and her husband Johann with their five children survive. On arrival at their destination families are separated with young children staying with mothers and the men taken to work and to clean up for the Nazis. Helene and her children find themselves in a makeshift unfinished building living in deplorable conditions. The author's descriptions leaves no doubt in the mind of the reader the desperate situation the prisoners found themselves in. Dr Mengele arrives at the camp where he favours Helene because of her German heritage and different appearance compared to the Romani prisoners and she is a nurse. She is able slowly to improve conditions for her family and others immediately around her. Helene emerges as a brave and strong woman who is able to create a calming presence amongst her fellow prisoners. Mengele's personality, psychopathic madness needs little to be said, however the author gives a view that he is really drawn to Helene for which she is able to utilise for increased improvements, food etc for the children. Mengele of course lies about his actual purpose in the children's nursery/school and in particular regarding twin children. Helene possibly because of her naive character fails to read Mengele correctly until she witnesses the physical proof of his experiments on children. When the children through hunger and fear cry, Helene sings lullabys to them to help them settle. The terrorising is building to a crescendo as the Germans begin to realise they are losing the war, starvation in the German people creates a madness in those running the camps, there is less food for prisoners and so to reduce demand the mass extermination rapidly increases. Helene's older children have discovered a method of escape but Helene fails to act, discovery would mean being shot. Mengele offers a final exemption to Helene for her freedom but again she declines.

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