



HUNGER

Sometimes you have to take a chance,

WINTER

because it's the only chance you have.

A WWII NOVEL



ROB CURRIE

PRAISE FOR *HUNGER WINTER*

I read this book with great interest. I would love to encourage everyone to read this book. *Hunger Winter* succeeds in describing a very realistic picture of the situation in the Netherlands when the country was in a very difficult time. It is important that people learn about the horrors of that awful period in time and realize that—unfortunately—in many places around the world people are still at each other's throats. Hence, it is important that each of us ask ourselves, What will I do in such a situation?

FRITS NIEUWSTRATEN, DIRECTOR, CORRIE TEN BOOM HOUSE
FOUNDATION

As someone who has been fascinated by World War II ever since I was a child, *Hunger Winter* is a realistic depiction of what life could very well have been like for children like Dirk and Anna during some of the darkest days the Netherlands has ever known. Rob Currie's ability to create and sustain a narrative that will keep you on the edge of your seat is truly amazing! I highly recommend this powerful and riveting story to *all* readers, young and old alike!

C. DAVID BALIK, ED.D., VICE PRESIDENT USA, ACSI

A well-researched novel on a topic that has rarely been explored in books for young people.

MARSHA FORCHUK SKRYPCH, AUTHOR OF *MAKING BOMBS FOR
HITLER*

I could not put this down. From the first words I felt as if I was in the same grip of fear that Dirk and Anna were facing. Each chapter built a crescendo of anticipation in the hopes of finding their sister and father. This is an excellent work in the historical-fiction genre.

KATHY PARKER, ADMINISTRATIVE LIBRARIAN, GLENWOOD-
LYNWOOD LIBRARY, LYNWOOD, IL

Join thirteen-year-old Dirk Ingelse as he takes readers on his fast-paced journey of being captured by Nazi soldiers, escaping, then avoiding their grasp. Not only does he search for his and his younger sister's safety, but he seeks answers to some tough life questions. Set in the Netherlands at the height of the Dutch Resistance during World War II, this book promises any middle school student an enjoyable and educational read.

BARBARA OLSSON, LEADER, BARRINGTON AREA HOME
SCHOOLERS, INC.

Hunger Winter is an exciting tale with great action and wonderfully likable characters. Kids will enjoy the suspense and action while being inspired by its values of love, loyalty, and courage.

JANET RIEHECKY, AUTHOR OF *THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING
MONEY*

From the opening chapter, I found myself caught up in the plight of Dirk and Anna. Join this pair of siblings in their search for safety, their flight for freedom, and their fight for

faith as they navigate a maze of Nazi soldiers, collaborators, and kidnapers.

CARL KOHNS, FIFTH-GRADE TEACHER, AVENAL ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL, AVENAL, CA

The novel connects the reader to the emotional journey of Dirk, who is an adolescent struggling with challenge after challenge in Nazi German-occupied Europe. The reader is gripped with anticipation as Dirk overcomes one obstacle only to find himself facing an even more daunting situation. Dirk's struggles are realistic and keep the reader from putting the book down.

JOSH HORTON, SIXTH- TO EIGHTH-GRADE ELA AND SOCIAL STUDIES
TEACHER, HAMPSHIRE MIDDLE SCHOOL, HAMPSHIRE, IL

This book will definitely be of interest to many. It will grab the attention of those who enjoy an action story as well as those with an interest in Dutch history. Young people will enjoy reading the story of Dirk and Anna to find out how their story unfolds.

TRIXINE TAHTINEN, DIRECTOR OF THE OOSTBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY,
OOSTBURG, WI

A realistic portrayal about the riveting events that the Dutch children and adults went through during World War II, *Hunger Winter* will compel you to keep reading. The struggle that faces Dirk and his little sister, Anna, leaves readers on the edge of their seats. Narrowly escaping all the negatives that go along with the war, Dirk and

Anna are unforgettable characters that will leave a lasting and powerful presence in your mind. This enthralling story will grab both young adults and children alike and teach them all about the Netherlands' darkest days during World War II.

KRISTIN NOACK, EIGHTH-GRADE ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE ARTS
TEACHER, SHELDON MIDDLE SCHOOL, SHELDON, IA

I pride myself on understanding what early adolescents will like. And believe me, they will like this book! I wish I would have had this book when I was teaching middle school history. Rob Currie gives readers authentic history, armchair-gripping excitement and suspense, as well as meaningful values and lessons. I heartily recommend *Hunger Winter* and already have some school libraries in mind where I would like to send it. If you have children or grandchildren in this age bracket (grades 4–8), I heartily recommend buying this book for them or even reading it together as a family reading time.

MARILOU LONG, FOUNDER/CHANCELLOR OF WILLIAM CAREY
ACADEMY

Heroes are usually born during times of war, and during those hardships we truly see the human spirit come alive for good, and we cheer when good triumphs. This is one of those books. You'll get wrapped up in the story of young Dirk and his family from page one. . . . All readers will be caught up in the wonder of the journey this brother and sister must endure in the midst of a world gone terribly

wrong. *Hunger Winter* is a treasure of truth and light, courage and strength. Enjoy!

MICHELLE HILL, HOST/PRODUCER OF FAMILYLIFE THIS WEEK

This is a fine book! I can't wait to share it with my librarian friends and young readers in my own family. Set in 1944, this story of a Dutch family during the German occupation will engage readers with riveting action, Dutch traditions, danger, loyalty, and faith. Bravo to author Rob Currie. I loved it all—every word and every layer.

LOUISE BORDEN, AUTHOR OF *SKI SOLDIER: A WORLD WAR II BIOGRAPHY*

THE NETHERLANDS



THE JOURNEYS



----- Dirk and Anna
----- Els

WESTERN EUROPE



HUNGER WINTER

HUNGER WINTER



A WWII NOVEL

ROB CURRIE



Tyndale House Publishers
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Visit the author online at robcurrieauthor.com.

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Hunger Winter: A World War II Novel

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Hunger Winter is a work of fiction. Where real people, events, establishments, organizations, or locales appear, they are used fictitiously. All other elements of the novel are drawn from the author's imagination.

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*Grant that I may remain brave,
Your servant for always,
And may defeat the tyranny.
Which pierces my heart.*

THE DUTCH NATIONAL ANTHEM

The weeks before us will be the most difficult in the existence of our nation.

RADIO ORANJE

[The Dutch people] have been called on to endure sufferings probably worse than those so far inflicted on any other country in Western Europe.

THE TIMES (LONDON)



CHAPTER ONE



OOSTERBEEK, NETHERLANDS
NOVEMBER 11, 1944

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Dirk Ingelse's eyes flew open, and he raised his head off the pillow. Who could be knocking on the front door? *Gestapo?* His insides turned to ice.

The pounding resumed, the sound carrying easily up the stairs into Dirk's bedroom. It didn't sound like the rap of knuckles—it was more like the thumping of an angry fist. *Or the butt of a rifle.*

It had to be the Gestapo. They had been doing more raids lately, and they often came at night. Who else would pummel the front door of the Ingelses' farmhouse in the middle of the night and risk getting arrested?

Dirk rolled out of bed and crept to his bedroom window. Easing the curtain open just a bit, he kept his face away from the window, like Papa had taught him. He couldn't

see a vehicle. *But what if they hid their car?* Dirk's right hand shook.

He couldn't hide. They would tear the place apart to find him. And he couldn't run—they would have the place surrounded. He'd heard stories. His right hand shook harder. It had been doing that a lot ever since—

The assault on the door resumed, even louder this time. "Open up!" growled a deep voice.

Dirk turned from the window and crept down the stairs. "I'll peek outside," he said under his breath. "If it's the Gestapo, I'll say I have to grab the key to let them in." He ran his fingers through his short blond hair. "Then I'll dash through the house and burst out the back." They would catch him for sure, but maybe they would leave his little sister alone.

The banging got faster. "Open up, Dirk!" the voice demanded above the battering being inflicted on the door.

Have the Gestapo come because of Papa? Have they arrested him?

How long would they wait before they broke into the house? Dirk scurried into the kitchen and grabbed a sharp knife. Weighing about forty-eight kilograms and standing a little over one and a half meters tall, he was average weight and a bit tall for his age, but if the Germans thought they would capture him easily, they were dealing with the wrong thirteen-year-old boy. Waving the knife would keep them back so he could sprint out the rear of the house. *And lead them away from Anna.* He edged toward the window closest to the front door.

Dirk swallowed hard and squeezed the knife handle harder. He pushed the curtain aside a few centimeters, gasped, fumbled with the lock, and swung the door open.

“Mr. van Nort!”

Why would his neighbor leave his farm at this hour of the night to come here?

Mr. van Nort hurried in, looked back at the street, and closed the door behind him. His chest heaved.

Dirk stared at the barrel-chested man, who took off his hat and fingered it nervously. “How did you—?”

“I ran.”

That has to be two kilometers!

“I had to come right away to warn you.”

Dirk gulped. Mr. van Nort stared at the knife.

“Oh.” Dirk relaxed his hand, and the knife clattered to the floor. “I thought—”

“The Gestapo took Els,” Mr. van Nort said.

“No!” Dirk slammed his hand on the table. “Why?” But he knew why.

Mr. van Nort looked at him sadly. “The Nazis will do anything to find your father.”

Even torture my eighteen-year-old sister. “But Els would rather spit in their faces than tell them anything. Especially about Papa.”

Mr. van Nort shook his head. “They are animals, and they can force anyone to talk. One man held out for fifteen days before spilling secrets.” He stared at the floor. “The next day he died from his injuries.”

Dirk grabbed the back of a chair and forced himself to

swallow a sudden sour taste in his mouth. “How did they capture Els?”

“I came as soon as it happened. Els left our house, and I heard a scream a few moments later,” Mr. van Nort said.

Dirk squeezed his eyes shut, his stomach twisting.

“I ran to the window.” The neighbor grimaced. “She did her best to fight them off, but there were too many of them.”

Dirk put his head in his hands. “Why was she at your house in the middle of the night?”

“You’ve got to leave,” Mr. van Nort said.

“She helps the Resistance, doesn’t she? And that means you do too.”

Mr. van Nort held up a finger. “If Els doesn’t talk right away, they’ll come here for you and your little sister. That’s how they work.”

The room swam before Dirk’s eyes. “We’ll go to Tante Cora’s house in Doorwerth.”

“But there’s no food in the cities,” Mr. van Nort said. “Ever since the Germans—”

“I know. But that’s where Els told me to go if anything ever happened to her.”

“Take as much food as you can carry.” Mr. van Nort looked through the window at the street, then back at Dirk. “You need to leave right away. They’ll be coming for you, son. Take Anna and go. Now!”