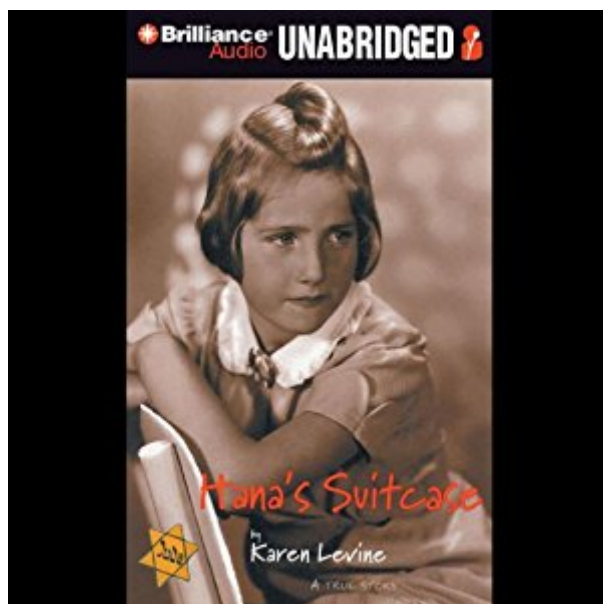


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# Hana's Suitcase: A True Story



## Synopsis

In March 2000, a suitcase arrived at a children's Holocaust education center in Tokyo, Japan. On the outside, in white paint, were these words: Hana Brady, May 16, 1931, and Waisenkind – the German word for orphan. Children who saw the suitcase on display were full of questions. Who was Hana Brady? What happened to her? They wanted Fumiko Ishioka, the center's curator, to find the answers. In a suspenseful journey, Fumiko searches for clues across Europe and North America. The mystery of the suitcase takes her back through seventy years, to a young Hana and her family, whose happy life in a small Czech town was turned upside down by the invasion of the Nazis. "Like the very best of museum exhibits, Hana's Suitcase shows how facts and objects can be put together to honour its subject in a very personal and loving way. Highly recommended." • "The Toronto Star" "Skillfully, and with great sensitivity, Levine weaves together the two stories, alternating that of a young life shattered in increments and that of Fumiko Ishioka's relentless search for answers." • "The Globe and Mail" --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Aimed at a pre-teen, early-teen audience, Hana's Suitcase appeals to all ages. I read the book with my 11 year old over a few nights: he was riveted by the story in a way I've rarely seen. Other parents report similar reactions. The book is illustrated with many poignant family photos and original documents. Hana's Suitcase will greatly advance your child's understanding of the

Holocaust and of humanity's capacity for both great evil and tremendous compassion. I've recommended the book successfully to many others; my son's class will soon study it. Be forewarned, especially if you are a parent: you may find the final chapters impossible to read without losing your composure. It is a story of unbearable loss and ultimate healing. The book follows an original radio documentary, which can be heard at the website of CBC Radio.

Hana Brady was 13 when she was sent to Auschwitz. She was immediately put to death, but her story didn't end there. With her she'd carried a suitcase which had followed her from her home to her aunt and uncle's house to a Jewish ghetto in Czechoslovakia and finally on to her final destination. Many years later, Fumiko Ishioka decides to open a Holocaust Museum in Japan in order to teach young people about the horror. One of the items she is sent to display is the suitcase which bears the name of Hana. Her children become adamant that they must know more about this girl, so Ishioka goes to work. She tenaciously goes to the prison camp where Hana lived for 2 years and discovers much more than she'd planned. This is the story of undying human spirit told in a way that children as young as 8, 9, or 10 can understand. Levine does a unique job of presenting the facts in a moving way without becoming mired down in gruesome details. This story will touch your heart and you will be unable to forget the story of Hana and her suitcase.

Even if the targeted audience is children, but this book is also much interesting for adults. It's so well written that you'll feel somebody is telling you this story lively. I've a better understanding of the impact of war from this book. The ending is rather sad, unluckily it's also a true story.

Youngsters ages 10-14 will enjoy the suspense that Levine builds as we follow Japanese curator Fumiko on her quest to find the owner of a Jewish child's suitcase entrusted to her Holocaust Museum for a children's exhibit. Levine weaves the mystery and intensity of Fumiko's modern-day search with touching, but not overly sentimental, stories from Hana's past from 1938-1944. We begin to care for Hana and her family, while simultaneously unravelling the clues that lead Fumiko into the past. Children will enjoy the simultaneous stories, which are easy to follow. Teachers or parents will love to see their children watching Fumiko at work, bringing alive the real work of historians, and bringing little Hana's legacy to life. Inclusion of Hana's drawings made in the Terazin ghetto, as well as photographs of Hana and her family in Czechoslovakia, and photos of Fumiko and her children's group, give the book something extra special. Over 60,000 people have seen the museum exhibit that inspired the book, and I'm sure that it will be millions once this book is \*truly\*

discovered!

Fumiko Ishioka lives in Tokyo, Japan. She works at the Tokyo Holocaust Museum. She contacted the Auschwitz Museum wanting artifacts from one of the children of the camps. The museum sent her a sock, shoe, sweater, a can of Zyklon B gas, and a suitcase. This suitcase was labeled Hanna Brady, orphan. How could she find out more about Hanna? The main characters in this book are Hanna, Fumiko, and a group at the Tokyo museum called Small Wings. The Small Wings are students that help teach other kids about the Holocaust. This book is set in two very different places. Some of the book is set in Tokyo. The rest of the book is set mostly in Nove Mesto, Czechoslovakia. It is in the time range of 1943 to 2000. It is a really good book. It helps you realize how bad it was. You will always hear "oh Hitler how bad." With this book you get it from a person's perspective.

This children's book (age 10+) is an engaging story, almost a mystery/detective story about a Czech girl named Hana who dies in the Holocaust. It is an unusual story because it begins in Tokyo with the curator of a newly created Holocaust Museum who is curious about the name on a suitcase from Auschwitz. She wants the people of Japan to understand the story of the Holocaust, especially children. The children wanted to know about Hana. The book has many photographs of Hana and her family. Each chapter answered questions in my mind but then created even more questions. Who was Hana? How did the author get the photographs? Did she survive the Holocaust? What was Hana like?

Has there ever been something you found that you wanted to learn more about? This happened to Fumiko Ishioka in *Hana's Suitcase* by Karen Levine. *Hana's Suitcase* is an informational book about the Holocaust and the sad story of what happened to over 6 million Jewish people. *Hana's Suitcase* is about a young Jewish girl named Hana who lives in Czechoslovakia with her family in the 1930's and 1940's. It is also about Fumiko Ishioka in Japan and a group of kids called Small Wings who find a suitcase from Auschwitz (a German concentration camp) with the name Hana Brady on it. Fumiko and all the Small Wings are eager to learn about Hana and her life, death, and family. Hana's story begins when she is a pampered girl who lives in Nove Mesto, Czechoslovakia. As Hitler's troops march into other parts of Czechoslovakia, Hana is barely affected. She still has all her rights and freedom. Soon after, Hitler and his troops marched into the rest of Czechoslovakia changing the Brady's life forever. *Hana's Suitcase* is an amazing book that I think everyone should

read. It teaches us all more about history, who these people were, and the pure evil that attacked them. The story might be sad, but it shows us just what happened to the 6 million Jews who suffered Hitler's wrath.

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