



# INKFLOWER BY SUZY ZAIL

*I shouldn't be kissing Adam Winter but it's my best chance at forgetting. When I kiss him, I'm not a girl whose father is dying; I'm just a girl, kissing a boy.*

Lisa's father has six months to live. And a story to tell about a boy sent to Auschwitz. A boy who lost everything and started again. A story he has kept hidden – until now.

But Lisa doesn't want to hear it, because she has secrets too. No one at school knows she is Jewish or that her dad is sick. Not even her boyfriend. But that's all about to change. And so is she.

Suzy Zail mines her family's past, and her life as the child of a holocaust survivor, in this gritty YA novel about family secrets, hope and healing.

**With powerful themes and a strong YA lead character, *Inkflower* is the perfect school text for English and History study.**

'Suzy Zail's remarkable and compelling book is a must read for teenagers. Not only is it a story about history, love and courage, **it fits perfectly into the Year 9 & 10 History and English syllabi.** Based on a true story, it's a valuable source for secondary students studying the Holocaust, bringing the past alive and creating a connection to the younger generations.'

- Sue Hampel OAM - Co-president Melbourne Holocaust Museum;  
Advisory Board Member National Archives Australia

'A compelling family story which deftly moves between the past and present, between the Holocaust in Europe and suburban life in Melbourne. **The book will resonate strongly with young readers and is highly suited as a school text.**'

- Emeritus Professor Dr Konrad Kwiet,  
Resident Historian at the Sydney Jewish Museum

'These stories of our world's darkest hours are more important than ever before, and **Zail - with her interminable talent and grace - gifts young readers with a reimagined chapter from her family's own epic history. Inkflower is a novel to be studied and savoured,** a beautiful if bruising tale any reader will be better for having read.'

- Award-winning author, Danielle Binks

'A powerful Holocaust story of love, loss and hope that will both challenge and inspire.'

- Jayne Josem, CEO, Melbourne Holocaust Museum

'Based on her own experience as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, Zail confronts man's inhumanity and the impact of war on future generations, masterfully directing readers to recognise the importance of connection and the power of celebrating difference in shaping a more humane world.'

- from the Teacher's Notes by Michelle Prawer

'It is refreshing to read a YA book where the family is close and loving ... Zail has skilfully used a contemporary narrative (it's set in 1982) to explore the horrors of the Holocaust. She doesn't shy away from the brutality that Lisa's father saw and experienced first-hand, but it is never gratuitous ... *Inkflower* would make a perfect addition to reading lists ... challenging, but also inspiring and ultimately, full of hope.'

- CBCA Reading Time

'It is difficult to convey the horrors of the Holocaust in an age-appropriate way, but *Inkflower* does precisely that. It neither sanitises nor shrinks from the truth, but is appropriate for younger audiences who are seeking to learn more about this complicated history.'

- Dr Simon Holloway, Manager of Adult Education and Academic Engagement,  
Melbourne Holocaust Museum

See over for more on the book and author Suzy Zail.



Teachers Notes are available for download from the Walker Books website

[www.walkerbooks.com.au/resources/teachers](http://www.walkerbooks.com.au/resources/teachers)



## FROM THE AUTHOR:

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*Inkflower* tells the story of a Holocaust survivor who had buried his story as a way of moving past the horror of his teen years to build a new life in Australia. It's fiction, but it's the truest thing I've ever written.

Like Lisa's dad, my father was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease and given six months to live. Like Lisa's dad, mine sat us down and told us his story, a story I've stayed true to, except to add some dialogue and detail gleaned from research and a recently unearthed testimony my father gave to the Melbourne Holocaust Museum decades ago.

Everything that happened to Lisa's father mirrors events in my father's life. The challenge was revisiting the feelings my dad's death stirred in me twenty years ago. My father had raised me to build walls and let go of pain and sadness, just like he had after the war. So that's what I did after he died, I thought of him, free of his disease and at peace, and I smiled.

This book was my chance to dig deeper and truly grieve. To be the same age my father was in the camps. To be a Jew in hiding, a girl with her own secrets.

I hope in writing *Inkflower*, I've created something young people can hold onto as they try and move us toward a kinder world.

## ABOUT SUZY ZAIL

Suzy Zail has worked as a litigation lawyer, specialising in Family Law, but now writes full time. Among other titles, she has written *The Tattooed Flower*, a memoir about her father's time as a child survivor of the Holocaust. Her first novel for young adults, *The Wrong Boy*, was shortlisted for the CBCA Book of the Year Awards, the Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature, the WAYRBA, USBBY and YABBA awards. Her second novel with Walker Books, *Alexander Altmann A10567*, was a Notable Book at the CBCA Awards. Her YA novel, *I Am Change*, is the story of a young Ugandan girl's struggle to stay in school. In 2022 Suzy published her first picture book, *Arabella's Alphabet Adventure*. Suzy's books have been published in Germany, the UK, U.S., Sweden, Italy, Romania and the Netherlands. She lives in Melbourne and has three children. Visit her online at [suzyzail.com.au](http://suzyzail.com.au) and @suzyzailauthor.

## INKFLOWER AND HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

This novel is based on a first-hand account and focuses on the experiences of characters the same age as secondary students. It provides an opportunity for deep learning and exploration of courage, adversity, upstander behaviour and resilience.

As such, it is ideal for inclusion in a quality Holocaust Education program, as described in:

[Holocaust Education – Delivery Requirements: Characteristics of a quality Holocaust Education program | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/education/vic/gov.au)

## ABOUT THE TEACHER'S NOTES AVAILABLE ON THE WALKER BOOKS WEBSITE

Written by Michelle Prawer, our highly detailed Teachers Notes link to **English, Humanities and Social Sciences**. Students engage in critical and creative thinking. They will develop ethical understanding and intercultural understanding. Personal and social capability will be enriched through learning to work with others on the projects suggested in the Notes.

## SCHOOL VISITS

Author Suzy Zail is available for school visits and Q&As. She can be contacted via her website

<https://www.suzyzail.com.au/school-visits.html>



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