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THE RADIO SIGNAL



The True Story of a Harrowing Escape and a Love that Arose from a World War Friedhelm Radandt

Growing up in bucolic Eastern Pomerania during the early years of World War II, young Friedhelm Radandt has listened with his family on the *Volksempfänger* (people's radio) to the many victory news bulletins. At the same time, Elizabeth Jobs and her family have lived in urbane Warsaw as loyal citizens of Poland who cherish their ethnic German heritage.

As the war intensifies, the Radandts continue to hold worship meetings in their home and defy the pressure of local party leaders to send their sons to the notorious school for future Nazi leaders. Meanwhile, across the border, Elizabeth's family must cope with the death sentence from the Polish resistance movement for her father, Ludwig, the researcher and developer of radio tubes. When both families are driven from their homes, each embark on harrowing, yet thrilling parallel escape routes across war-torn Germany. Amid the darkness and rubble, can the light of love emerge?

The Radio Signal captures the true story of two separate families who share a vibrant faith that imbues their actions with courage and trust. During the war, neither family knew of the other. Neither family knew that their paths would ultimately cross.

Includes discussion questions for book clubs.

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About the Author

FRIEDHELM RADANDT

Friedhelm Radandt served as a college president for a quarter of a century, first at Northwestern College in Iowa and then at The King's College in New York. After arriving from his native Germany as an immigrant, he earned graduate degrees at The University of

Chicago and enjoyed a rewarding teaching career at that institution and at Lake Forest College. Radandt never lost the spark for engaging students in discussing ideas and historical events, drawing often on his and his wife's dramatic and vivid memories of World War II. Now living in the Seattle area in his retirement, Friedhelm has once again returned to his calling as teacher and mentor while imagining his and Elizabeth's college-age grandchildren as readers. It's for them and thousands like them he created the captivating memoir, *The Radio Signal*.

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B O O K S

Praise for THE RADIO SIGNAL

We can hardly imagine what it was like for Christians living in Germany during the Third Reich. But now we don't have to, because my friend Friedhelm Radandt was there and has given us this extraordinary book about his experiences. He writes about it in such a fresh and compelling way that you almost feel it happened yesterday. And unlike many stories from that terrible time, this one has a happy ending, in which God brings Friedhelm through these trials to America—and eventually to be the president of The King's College in New York. What a story this is, and I'm so grateful we can now read it for ourselves.

—Eric Metaxas, *NYTimes* bestselling author of *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*

A moving account of how faith and love can flourish even in the midst of the nightmare of Hitler's Germany. Friedhelm Radandt provides not only an intimate, first-hand view of decisive turns in history, but a story of hope, grace, and inspiration.

—Michael Medved, nationally syndicated talk radio host

This is a gripping tale, masterfully told. Few could tell it as Friedhelm Radandt has. Though a youth in Germany as the Nazis came to power, he and his family never lost hope—a hope that was rewarded in the Radandt's heroic escape and for Friedhelm, meeting and marrying Elizabeth, a fellow refugee.

Friedhelm and Elizabeth have become dear friends. Though we have known them best as outstanding leaders in higher education, we now understand how an awful war forged their character and produced endurance that has distinguished them to multitudes and endeared them to us. We heartily commend *The Radio Signal*.

—John Beckett, author of *Loving Monday*, and Wendy Beckett, author of *God Keeps Covenant*

I am impressed with Friedhelm Radandt. I came to know him as I served on the board of The King's College. His and his wife's deep love for Jesus Christ stems from facing and surviving tremendous challenges before and during World War II. He has made excellent contributions to the field of Christian education. I trust their story will be an inspiration to you.

—Steve Douglass, president of Campus Crusade for Christ International, and Cru

In today's day and age, we hear about concerns of threats against religious liberty both at home and abroad. To steady ourselves for the challenging days ahead, we must turn to history for fresh supplies of encouragement. Enter Friedhelm Radandt's *The Radio Signal*—a true story of conviction and faith among religious dissenters and exiles at the height of Nazi aggression. If your faith needs a boost, read this book.

—Gregory Alan Thornbury, PhD, president of The King's College, New York; author of *Recovering Classic Evangelicalism: Applying the Wisdom and Vision of Carl F. Henry*

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More Praise for THE RADIO SIGNAL

The story of Nazi Germany is of interest because of the lessons we all should learn from Hitler's rise to power and subsequent downfall. However, history books do not tell us the stories of individual families who had to endure the oppression of the Nazi regime. In telling the story of two of these families, Friedhelm Radandt reminds us that behind the headlines were Christians who wrestled with how to live out their faith in the midst of legal and political pressure. Even as Christianity is being marginalized in our own country, this book affirms that amid suffering, injustice and disappointments, God is faithful to His people."

—Dr. Erwin W. Lutzer, Moody Church, Chicago

As children in Europe during World War II, Elizabeth (Job) and Friedhelm Radandt and their families experienced firsthand events many of us have only read about in books or seen in movies: Kristallnacht, the German occupation of Warsaw, the segregation of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, bombing raids in Hamburg, and life as displaced refugees of war. The Radandt and Job families were shaped and sustained by their faith and moral convictions. Friedhelm's father decided not to complete the Nazis' Aryan purity questionnaire and refused to enroll his sons in a Nazi training school, placing himself and his family in a precarious position. Elizabeth's father advocated on behalf of the Poles with whom he worked, but he was still named on the Polish Resistance death list. Yet at every turn, the Radandt and Job families sought and saw the Lord's providence time and time again. Though they lost everything they owned, they did not lose one another. As Friedhelm's grandfather August shared with him, 'Even the sad things in life have blessings hidden inside them.' Amid one of the darkest times in our history, their family's story of faith and God's providence, shared in *The Radio Signal*, is compelling and inspiring.

—Greg Christy, president of Northwestern College

A treat not to be missed, this book is filled with the exploits of two young children and their families, one in Germany and one in Poland, during the last days of World War II, and their escape from ruthless Russian occupiers. Both luck, and indeed perhaps miracles, and secret faith in covert religion, guide their journeys. Young as well as old will find this page-turner a reminder of times too quickly forgotten by later generations.

—Eugene Hotchkiss, PhD, president emeritus, Lake Forest College

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Suggested Interview Questions

For Friedhelm Radandt, author of *The Radio Signal*

The True Story of a Harrowing Escape and a Love that Arose from a World War

- How did you go about collecting materials and information for the book?
- This is more than a refugee story. Why did you describe the lives of these two families for the entirety of the Third Reich, not merely the war years?
- What do you see as the significance of this story of faith for the understanding of Christians in Germany during the Nazi era?
- How does *The Radio Signal* set itself apart from other World War II stories?
- Does the image of the grandfather in the story go beyond the real August Rattunde?
- Why do you think that the story of changing from Gothic to Roman writing during the war has received so little coverage in books and studies of the Nazi era?
- What is the significance of this story of faith for following Jesus today?
- How does this memoir elevate family?
- How was Ludwig's scientific work affected once the transistor came to replace radio tubes?
- How might *The Radio Signal* be used to teach about cultural and geopolitical aspects that made the Third Reich possible?

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