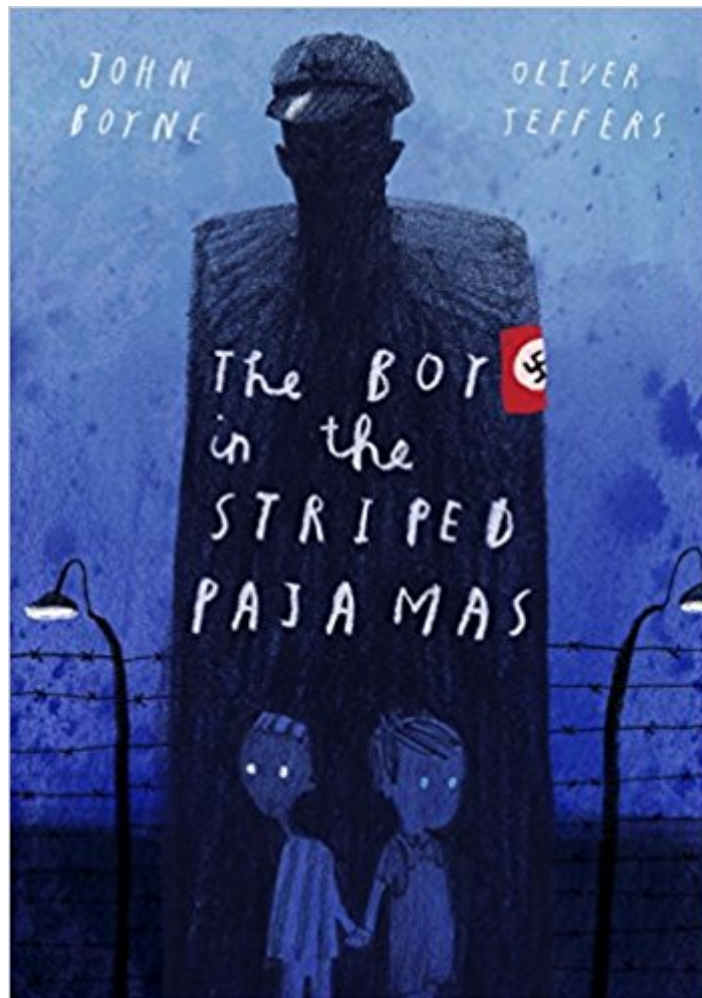




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# The Boy In The Striped Pajamas (Deluxe Illustrated Edition)



## Synopsis

The international bestseller that has touched millions of readers around the world is now available in a deluxe illustrated edition, featuring powerful illustrations by acclaimed artist Oliver Jeffers. Berlin, 1942: When Bruno returns home from school one day, he discovers that his belongings are being packed in crates. His father has received a promotion and the family must move to a new house far, far away, where there is no one to play with and nothing to do. A tall fence stretches as far as the eye can see and cuts him off from the strange people in the distance. But Bruno decides there must be more to this desolate new place than meets the eye. While exploring his new environment, he meets another boy whose life and circumstances are very different from his own, and their meeting results in a friendship that has devastating consequences. Now available in a gorgeous deluxe edition featuring stunning artwork by award-winning illustrator Oliver Jeffers, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* takes on dramatic new intensity.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Illustrations by Oliver Jeffers

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John Boyne was born in Ireland in 1971 and studied at Trinity College, Dublin, and the University of East Anglia, Norwich. His novels have been published in over forty languages, and his books for young readers include *Noah Barleywater Runs Away* and *The Terrible Thing That Happened to Barnaby Brocket*. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* won two Irish Book Awards, topped the New York Times Bestseller List, and was adapted into a Miramax feature film. He lives in Dublin. To learn more, visit [JohnBoyne.com](http://JohnBoyne.com) or follow him on Twitter @john\_boyne. In addition to his New York Times

Bestselling books *The Day the Crayons Quit* and *The Day the Crayons Came Home*, Oliver Jeffers' other picture books include *How to Catch a Star*; *Lost and Found*; *The Way Back Home*; *The Incredible Book Eating Boy*; *The Great Paper Caper*; *The Heart and the Bottle*; *Up and Down*; *Stuck*; *The Hueys in the New Sweater*, a New York Times Best Illustrated Book of the Year; and *This Moose Belongs to Me*. Jeffers also illustrated the covers of two other John Boyne novels: *Noah Barleywater* and *The Terrible Thing That Happened to Barnby Brocket*. Originally from Belfast, Northern Ireland, Oliver now lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Chapter One—Bruno Makes a Discovery—One afternoon, when Bruno came home from school, he was surprised to find Maria, the family's maid—who always kept her head bowed and never looked up from the carpet—standing in his bedroom, pulling all his belongings out of the wardrobe and packing them in four large wooden crates, even the things he'd hidden at the back that belonged to him and were nobody else's business. "What are you doing?" he asked in as polite a tone as he could muster, for although he wasn't happy to come home and find someone going through his possessions, his mother had always told him that he was to treat Maria respectfully and not just imitate the way Father spoke to her. "You take your hands off my things." Maria shook her head and pointed towards the staircase behind him, where Bruno's mother had just appeared. She was a tall woman with long red hair that she bundled into a sort of net behind her head, and she was twisting her hands together nervously as if there was something she didn't want to have to say or something she didn't want to have to believe. "Mother," said Bruno, marching towards her, "what's going on? Why is Maria going through my things?" "She's packing them," explained Mother. "Packing them?" he asked, running quickly through the events of the previous few days to consider whether he'd been particularly naughty or had used those words out loud that he wasn't allowed to use and was being sent away because of it. He couldn't think of anything though. In fact over the last few days he had behaved in a perfectly decent manner to everyone and couldn't remember causing any chaos at all. "Why?" he asked then. "What have I done?" Mother had walked into her own bedroom by then but Lars, the butler, was in there, packing her things too. She sighed and threw her hands in the air in frustration before marching back to the staircase, followed by Bruno, who wasn't going to let the matter drop without an explanation. "Mother," he insisted. "What's going on? Are we moving?" "Come downstairs with me," said Mother, leading the way towards the large dining room where the Fury had been to dinner the week before. "We'll talk down there." Bruno ran downstairs and

even passed her out on the staircase so that he was waiting in the dining room when she arrived. He looked at her without saying anything for a moment and thought to himself that she couldn't have applied her make-up correctly that morning because the rims of her eyes were more red than usual, like his own after he'd been causing chaos and got into trouble and ended up crying. "Now, you don't have to worry, Bruno," said Mother, sitting down in the chair where the beautiful blonde woman who had come to dinner with the Fury had sat and waved at him when Father closed the doors. "In fact if anything it's going to be a great adventure." "What is?" he asked. "Am I being sent away?" "No, not just you," she said, looking as if she might smile for a moment but thinking better of it. "We all are. Your father and I, Gretel and you. All four of us." Bruno thought about this and frowned. He wasn't particularly bothered if Gretel was being sent away because she was a Hopeless Case and caused nothing but trouble for him. But it seemed a little unfair that they all had to go with her. "But where?" he asked. "Where are we going exactly? Why can't we stay here?" "Your father's job," explained Mother. "You know how important it is, don't you?" "Yes, of course," said Bruno, nodding his head, because there were always so many visitors to the house – men in fantastic uniforms, women with typewriters that he had to keep his mucky hands off – and they were always very polite to Father and told each other that he was a man to watch and that the Fury had big things in mind for him. "Well, sometimes when someone is very important," continued Mother, "the man who employs him asks him to go somewhere else because there's a very special job that needs doing there." "What kind of job?" asked Bruno, because if he was honest with himself – which he always tried to be – he wasn't entirely sure what job Father did. In school they had talked about their fathers one day and Karl had said that his father was a greengrocer, which Bruno knew to be true because he ran the greengrocer's shop in the centre of town. And Daniel had said that his father was a teacher, which Bruno knew to be true because he taught the big boys who it was always wise to steer clear of. And Martin had said that his father was a chef, which Bruno knew to be true because he sometimes collected Martin from school and when he did he always wore a white smock and a tartan apron, as if he'd just stepped out of his kitchen. But when they asked Bruno what his father did he opened his mouth to tell them, then realized that he didn't know himself. All he could say was that his father was a man to watch and that the Fury had big things in mind for him. Oh, and that he had a fantastic uniform too. "It's a very important job," said Mother, hesitating for a moment. "A job that needs a very special man to do it. You can understand that, can't you?" "And we all have to go too?" asked Bruno. "Of course we do," said

Mother. "You wouldn't want Father to go to his new job on his own and be lonely there, would you?" "I suppose not," said Bruno. "Father would miss us all terribly if we weren't with him," she added. "Who would he miss the most?" asked Bruno. "Me or Gretel?" "He would miss you both equally," said Mother, for she was a great believer in not playing favourites, which Bruno respected, especially since he knew that he was her favourite really. "But what about our house?" asked Bruno. "Who's going to take care of it while we're gone?" Mother sighed and looked around the room as if she might never see it again. It was a very beautiful house and had five floors in total, if you included the basement, where Cook made all the food and Maria and Lars sat at the table arguing with each other and calling each other names that you weren't supposed to use. And if you added in the little room at the top of the house with the slanted windows where Bruno could see right across Berlin if he stood up on his tiptoes and held on to the frame tightly. "We have to close up the house for now," said Mother. "But we'll come back to it someday." "And what about Cook?" asked Bruno. "And Lars? And Maria? Are they not going to live in it?" "They're coming with us," explained Mother. "But that's enough questions for now. Maybe you should go upstairs and help Maria with your packing." Bruno stood up from the seat but didn't go anywhere. There were just a few more questions he needed to put to her before he could allow the matter to be settled. "And how far away is it?" he asked. "The new job, I mean. Is it further than a mile away?" "Oh my," said Mother with a laugh, although it was a strange kind of laugh because she didn't look happy and turned away from Bruno as if she didn't want him to see her face. "Yes, Bruno," she said. "It's more than a mile away. Quite a lot more than that, in fact." Bruno's eyes opened wide and his mouth made the shape of an O. He felt his arms stretching out at his sides like they did whenever something surprised him. "You don't mean we're leaving Berlin?" he asked, gasping for air as he got the words out. "I'm afraid so," said Mother, nodding her head sadly. "Your father's job is—" "But what about school?" said Bruno, interrupting her, a thing he knew he was not supposed to do but which he felt he would be forgiven for on this occasion. "And what about Karl and Daniel and Martin? How will they know where I am when we want to do things together?" "You'll have to say goodbye to your friends for the time being," said Mother. "Although I'm sure you'll see them again in time. And don't interrupt your mother when she's talking, please," she added, for although this was strange and unpleasant news, there was certainly no need for Bruno to break the rules of politeness which he had been taught. "Say goodbye to them?" he asked, staring at her in surprise. "Say goodbye to them?" he repeated, spluttering out the words as if

his mouth was full of biscuits that heâ™d munched into tiny pieces but not actually swallowed yet. âˆ“Say goodbye to Karl and Daniel and Martin?â™ he continued, his voice coming dangerously close to shouting, which was not allowed indoors. âˆ“But theyâ™re my three best friends for life!â™

âˆ“Oh, youâ™ll make other friends,â™ said Mother, waving her hand in the air dismissively, as if the making of a boyâ™s three best friends for life was an easy thing. âˆ“But we had plans,â™ he protested. âˆ“Plans?â™ asked Mother, raising an eyebrow. âˆ“What sort of plans?â™

âˆ“Well, that would be telling,â™ said Bruno, who could not reveal the exact nature of the plans âˆ” which included causing a lot of chaos, especially in a few weeksâ™ time when school finished for the summer holidays and they didnâ™t have to spend all their time just making plans but could actually put them into effect instead. âˆ“Iâ™m sorry, Bruno,â™ said Mother, âˆ“but your plans are just going to have to wait. We donâ™t have a choice in this.â™

âˆ“But, Mother!â™

âˆ“Bruno, thatâ™s enough,â™ she said, snapping at him now and standing up to show him that she was serious when she said that was enough. âˆ“Honestly, only last week you were complaining about how much things have changed here recently.â™

âˆ“Well, I donâ™t like the way we have to turn all the lights off at night now,â™ he admitted. âˆ“Everyone has to do that,â™ said Mother. âˆ“It keeps us safe. And who knows, maybe weâ™ll be in less danger if we move away. Now, I need you to go upstairs and help Maria with your packing. We donâ™t have as much time to prepare as I would have liked, thanks to some people.â™

Bruno nodded and walked away sadly, knowing that âˆ“some peopleâ™ was a grown-upâ™s word for âˆ“Fatherâ™ and one that he wasnâ™t supposed to use himself. âˆ“He made his way up the stairs slowly, holding on to the banister with one hand, and wondered whether the new house in the new place where the new job was would have as fine a banister to slide down as this one did. For the banister in this house stretched from the very top floor âˆ” just outside the little room where, if he stood on his tiptoes and held on to the frame of the window tightly, he could see right across Berlin âˆ” to the ground floor, just in front of the two enormous oak doors. And Bruno liked nothing better than to get on board the banister at the top floor and slide his way through the house, making whooshing sounds as he went. âˆ“Down from the top floor to the next one, where Mother and Fatherâ™s room was, and the large bathroom, and where he wasnâ™t supposed to be in any case. âˆ“Down to the next floor, where his own room was, and Gretelâ™s room too, and the smaller bath-room which he was supposed to use more often than he really did. Down to the ground floor, where you fell off the end of the banister and had to land flat on your two feet or it was five points against you and you had to start all over again. âˆ“The banister was the best thing about this house âˆ” that and the fact that Grandfather and Grandmother lived so near by âˆ” and when he thought about that it made him

wonder whether they were coming to the new job too and he presumed that they were because they could hardly be left behind. No one needed Gretel much because she was a Hopeless Case â ” it would be a lot easier if she stayed to look after the house â ” but Grandfather and Grandmother? Well, that was an entirely different matter.Â Bruno went up the stairs slowly towards his room, but before going inside he looked back down towards the ground floor and saw Mother entering Fatherâ™s office, which faced the dining room â ” and was Out Of Bounds At All Times And No Exceptions â ” and he heard her speaking loudly to him until Father spoke louder than Mother could and that put a stop to their conversation. Then the door of the office closed and Bruno couldnâ™t hear any more so he thought it would be a good idea if he went back to his room and took over the packing from Maria, because otherwise she might pull all his belongings out of the wardrobe without any care or consideration, even the things heâ™d hidden at the back that belonged to him and were nobody elseâ™s business.

My friend who teaches High School English recommended this book to me several years ago. She was going to have her 10-12 graders read it. While homeschooling my boys this year WWII was in our lesson plans so I gave it as an option for my boys. My 11 year old (VERY reluctant reader) and I read this separately at the same time. I knew there would be situations that would require explanation. He says "everyone should read this book because it's a good but sad story. The boys were good friends in a bad environment. If they can be good friends then anyone can." The last few chapters we read aloud together because he didn't quite understand what was happening. This was fine because it allowed me to explain and have a more in depth discussion about the world during that time period. If you are looking for a book that has a happier ending, look at Number the Stars by Lois Lowry. We read that first. My 11 year old wanted to know more, my 10 year old son (natural reader) stopped there. It depends what your child can handle at this age.

This story is of the innocent love friends have for each other when they are young. They are too young to understand true evil, such as experienced during the Holocaust. Their young hearts do not understand the fence separates them in the concentration camp or how anyone could be filled with such hate. A young boy seeking to help his friend find his father, walks into his own death not understanding what was happening to him. What evil things mankind can do when they are taught to hate and are led by leader crazed by hatred like Hitler. This book is a grim reminder that if we do not teach the young to remember the horrific crimes of our past, they may be led to repeat them in the future. This is a book I will be using in my classroom when I teach about the Holocaust. Give to

a young person in your life to begin a discussion about this subject.

It is quite possible that more has been written about The Holocaust than any other historical event in history. Not just in regard to hard research, but many of the world's finest novelists have fictionalized the story, film makers have touched upon the subject, playwrights, composers, painters and poets. If there has been a way to express the shock- and shock is an understatement in this case- it has been attempted. John Boyne, a gifted and now internationally known Irish author, wrote the book "The Boy In The Striped Pajamas" in about two weeks time. As he said, in order to maintain "the voice," once he began he was afraid to stop. The same is true when reading it- we are compelled to continue and it is evident from early in the book that Boyne has disguised the terminal words so that it can apply to any and all of the other holocausts' that occurred prior to and after this one. In fact, only once does Boyne choose to use a "telling" word; on page 54 one of the officers says, "Heil Hitler" but then we are told that the boy assumed that this was like saying, "Well, goodbye for now and have a pleasant afternoon." The boy, his name Bruno; his age nine, misunderstands the key words and Auschwitz is written as "Out-With" every single time. The negative pun- the only way I could describe this- suggests the old work rhythm, "In with the good; out with the bad." Then the boy mishears the Furher as The Fury" and this negative pun needs no description at all. We have a moment when Bruno meets "The Fury" as well as "her" when they come for dinner and Bruno is appalled at how small The Fury is, but how kind the beautiful blonde woman with him is (her name is simply Eva). The innocence and ignorance of this young boy is as critical to the brilliance of this work as the story of the Titanic. (I speak not just of Cameron's film, but Maury Yeston's musical, "a Night to Remember" and the three other films made between 1938 and 1984) Boyne uses the literary tool that his audience not only knows so much more than Bruno, but that we are anticipating the sadness that ends the novel. So we are prepared to cry but when the end does come, Boyne shocks us in such a way that instead of tears, our mouths are opened in the O shape that he uses to describe several characters through the book. This book is by no means a "Sophie's Choice" though the horror is just as shocking, but few writers in history have been able to achieve what William Styron did. Still Styron's novel and Boyne's novel use a similar foundation but their books are about very different things. Where the ending is horrifyingly shocking and, like Styron's "Sophie's Choice," completely unexpected (who in fact could have imagined an ending such as this one) the poignancy of "The Boy In Striped Pajamas" makes it impossible for this book- and the fame it will bring Mr. Boyne, you heard it here first- to become satirized in any way. Because the innocence and ignorance, as a result of the way his parents have shielded Bruno, is a metaphor for



the way in which the population who was aware of the death camps were inactive; complacent and how the same continues to occur day after day from the beginning of recorded time to the continued genocide in Darfur- the world's largest death camp- to which the UN has placed sanctions against while The full force of the American military tore apart Iraq in search of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The current political winds in the United States suggest that Gay Americans and Female Americans are just as vulnerable. All of these circumstances suggest that you could very well be next. John Boyne manages to suggest all of this in his two hundred page fable using a modicum of brilliantly chosen words. John Boyle has sub-titled his book, "A Fable" and it is. His final words are like a double edged sword: "And that's the end of the story of Bruno and his family. Of course all of this happened a long time ago and nothing like that could ever happen again. Not in this day and age." The irony of this ending reminds us that this is a fable, but more so, it makes us stop and think of the responsibility that we all owe to anyone who has been maltreated, either in the form of Bruno, Anne Frank, Sophie Zawotoski or Carol Stewart, Amy Fitzpatrick, Dave Pelzer and the millions of others. This novel is worthy of a prize. It's not a children's book, though my children should read it. It's not an adult book, but all adults should read it. This would rule out the Newbury or Caldecott. In regard to its literary merit, the American version needs some editorial work (only once did the editors miss a pajamas and leave pyjamas) but the writing is pristine and brilliant and worthy of The Pulitzer. As far as The Nobel Prize for Literature, it is worthy there too. But mostly it's is worthy of you. And, like "Sophie's Choice" I am told that a motion picture is in the making. Depending on whose hands it falls into this could be a miracle. The innocent eyes through which Bruno's story unfolds are critical and these innocent eyes are just as important as Sophie's guilty and lying soul. If Benton could do it, perhaps "The Boy In The Stripped Pajamas" will as well. But there are a lot of "Maybes" involved with the hopes of John Boyne, this critic and every other artist who has attempted to move us. As far as I can see, Boyne has done his part. This book, like Elie Weisel's "Night" needs to be published in as many languages as possible and marketed toward as many customers as possible. No one should keep this book from the hands of a nine year old nor should anyone consider it a book too young for adults. In short, this is a remarkable book in every way and perhaps, after more times has passed for thinking and another read through or so, I may well see that there is no other possible way for this story to have ended. Not in this day and age.

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