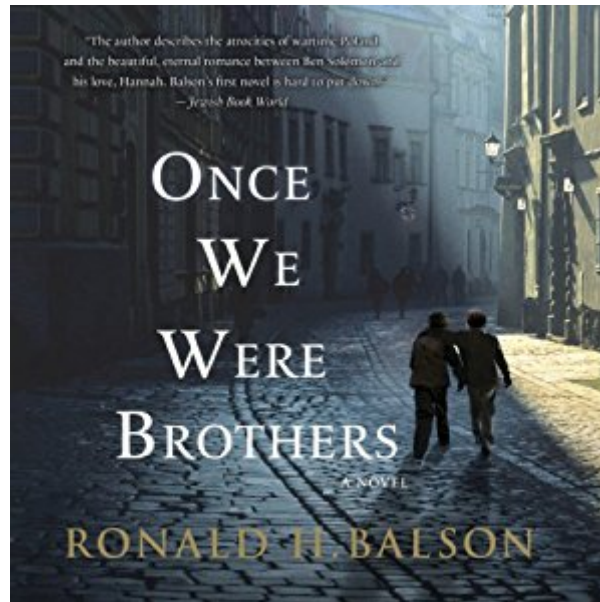




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# Once We Were Brothers



## Synopsis

The gripping tale about two boys, once as close as brothers, who find themselves on opposite sides of the Holocaust. Elliot Rosenzweig, a respected civic leader and philanthropist, is attending a fundraiser when he is suddenly accosted and accused of being a former Nazi SS officer named Otto Piatek, the Butcher of Zamosc. Although the charges are denounced as preposterous, his accuser is convinced he is right and engages attorney Catherine Lockhart to bring Rosenzweig to justice. Solomon persuades attorney Catherine Lockhart to take his case, revealing that the true Piatek was abandoned as a child and raised by Solomon's own family only to betray them during the Nazi occupation. But has Solomon accused the right man? *Once We Were Brothers* is Ronald H. Balson's compelling tale of two boys and a family who struggle to survive in war-torn Poland, and a young love that struggles to endure the unspeakable cruelty of the Holocaust. Two lives, two worlds, and 60 years converge in an explosive race to redemption that makes for a moving and powerful tale of love, survival, and ultimately the triumph of the human spirit.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

THIS IS A PAGE TURNER. COULD NOT PUT IT DOWN. A VERY LONG NOVEL ABOUT POLAND WHEN THE NAZIS OCCUPIED IT AND TODAY. THE TWO MAIN CHARACTERS ARE A POLISH JEW WHO SURVIVED THE HORRORS AND A FEMALE LAWYER IN CHICAGO WHO TOOK HIS CASE AGAINST A MAN WHO HAD BEEN LIKE A BROTHER BUT BETRAYED HIM AND OTHERS WHO HAD LOVED HIM. I COULD NOT PUT IT DOWN, IT IS LONG AND

COMPLICATED. THE CHARACTERS ARE SO WELL WRITTEN THAT ONE FEELS HE KNOWS THEM, BY THE END OF BOOK. I DID SHED A FEW TEARS. BUT SOMEDAY I WILL READ IT AGAIN.

Truly one of the better books I have read lately, and it held my interest from the first to the last page. It delves with the age old question of how someone might really be, as opposed to who they pass themselves off as, in addition to the test of family loyalty and how it can be shattered when historical circumstances come into play. Ben, the protagonist, is a hero for us all, surviving the nearly unsurvivable with courage, determination, and dignity. I would recommend this book to anyone!

Well tell you the truth I'm only on chapter 12 and so far its alright. I thought it was gonna be something different. The story starts off good but I just hope it doesn't turn out to be "predicable." I hope I didn't discourage anyone that wants to read this book. Its a great story line but I thought it would be all about the two brothers growing up and how their lives took place. It's about one brother telling a story to "someone" and this "someone" keeps interrupting this brother. That right there, I do not like. Hopefully through the chapters it will be better. Thanks for reading...!

Being a bit of a student of World War II history, I found the book to be fascinating. Ben's description of his experiences as a Polish Jew going through the lead-up and during the Nazi occupation of Poland to be realistically developed and described. The book was well paced and led the readers through the experience of a Polish Jew living through and surviving the days of the "final solution." At the same time, it portrayed some of the horrors of that time, and also led to the rise, betrayal, and fall of one of the persons who was a key player of carrying out a portion of the "final solution." The book was well researched, historically sound, well written, and helped the reader understand the horrors of that era of history..

This story is heartwarming, emotional, interesting, sad and tells of man's horrible treatment of fellow man. Also though, it shows the faith of one man to obtain justice. And one woman's growth, perseverance and empathy. A story all should read if for no other reason than to keep the atrocities of the Nazi era from never happening again. I read this author's second book, Saving Sophie, and really liked it. I'm going to read his third book next. Thank you, Donald H. Balson!

I must take my "hat off" to Mr. Balson for writing such a great book. Although starting off a bit slow

the story does nothing but gain momentum. Exposition is slower for some authors than others. As you finish Ben's story, you the reader understand why each and every detail is important. I liked the way Mr. Balson handled the character of Otto. We got just close enough to smell how rotten he is inside. He needed no more dialogue than what was given. Rarely is an author gifted enough to make the reader feel empathically. However, this author played his readers up and down until we thought we knew how this book would end. Boy, were we wrong!! I will not delve into the story, for others have already done so but when I am moved as much as I was with the entire story, then it is time to congratulate the author. Note of something I felt missing was the inner workings of Catherine. She lacked dimension at times. Make sure the reader knows the "why" each decision was made. Sometimes, I thought of her as just a "pencil" character. Anyway, in conclusion, I have notified my friends of ONCE WE WERE BROTHERS and hope they will buy the book.

Once We Were Brothers will captivate readers as Ben Solomon tells his heart-wrenching story of his families journey in Poland during World War II. Ben and his family take in a German boy who's parents aren't able to raise him, but in the end Otto Piatek ends up betraying the family when he joins with the Nazis. Later in life, Ben sees a famous man he believes is Otto and he hires an attorney to bring justice to Otto for his war crimes. The only negative of this book is the unnecessary profanity. Balson keeps the reader interested by reflecting from the past to the present. The slow pace of Ben telling his story of the war to his lawyer Catherine keeps you wanting to know what happened to the rest of his family. The fate of the family is slowly revealed keeping the reader intrigued throughout. Using these two strategies the reader won't want to put down the book. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who likes to learn about World War II, this book will describe how peoples lives were personally effect in the war.

Compelling from start to end. I looked forward to picking it up each night. Even better than The Paris Architect, and I thought that was wonderful. For those of us who know very little about this horrid time in history, it is brought to light in a story that makes the book very readable. Bravo!

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