Lovereading4kids Reader reviews of 
The Winter Horses by Philip Kerr

Below are the complete reviews, written by Lovereading members.

Benedict Simpson, age 12

‘The Winter Horses’ is an interesting and exciting book, which would appeal to older boys and girls, especially those who like animals.

I liked all the characters but my favourite one has to be Taras the wolfhound because he is loyal and kind.

I think Philip Kerr has done very well with the feelings that he has given the animal characters, especially with the horses as they seem to possess human feelings.

I read this book really quickly as it was easy to read and flowed nicely and there was a good mix of chapter lengths.

I wouldn’t change anything about this book as I think it is that good and I will definitely look for other books by Philip Kerr in the future.

Rachel Galbraith, age 9

A Fantastic way to see a World War through the eyes of a child.

My favourite character was Captain Grenzmann as I liked his violent ways and skills in detective work.

Kalinka showed great courage and determination on her long walk to Russia, it was exciting to read of her next adventure and the ways Kalinka was going to get through them.
I found this book intense on the last scenes in the zoo as Phillip Kerr described it in the same way as I had imagined it to be.

I would recommend this book to friends who liked to read ‘Animal Ark’ and those who enjoy learning the lessons of history.

Isabel Kardos-Stowe, age 10

I really enjoyed reading ‘The Winter Horses’. It always kept you on the edge of your seat, wondering what was going to happen next. It is about Kalinka who is all alone in the world as her parents and grandparents were killed by Germans because they were Jewish. She has traveled the three hundred and fifty kilometres from Dnepropetrovsk to where Max lives on foot with only the company of two Przewalski horses. However, meeting Max seems such a good thing that it can’t possibly last. When it is likely that the Germans will find her in her hiding place she runs away with the two Przewalski horses and Max’s dog, Taras, whom both act extremely bravely to protect Kalinka. But Kalinka is no coward she has faced the brutal winter of the Ukraine and the loss of many loved ones, but, since their departure, will Kalinka and Max meet again?

I loved this book, it was very well written and made me really feel the emotions of the characters. My favourite character is Max because, despite not being the most friendly looking of people he has a loving heart and welcomes Kalinka warmly into his home. This book was also interesting because at school we are learning about World War II but we have not learnt about it from this country’s perspective.

I would recommend this book to anyone over the age of 8 and adults too. I would give it 10/10. Truly a good read.

Elle Cogan, age 11

The amazing story of Kalinka and her mission to save two wild horses will have you hooked within the first few pages.

It’s 1941, and World War II has killed thousands in Ukraine. Kalinka is on the run, after her entire family was murdered by Germans. After weeks on the run, she comes to the State Steppe Nature Reserve, where she soon meets the ancient Przewalski horses. However, when almost all of the horses are killed by Germans who come to live on the reserve, Kalinka’s main goal is to save the last two Przewalski horses on the reserve—perhaps in the world. Then as the Ukraine winter begins to appear, Kalinka seeks help from the old man living on the
reserve, Maxim Melnik. Together, they heal the mare of the two horses, and everything seems peaceful, at least for a while... This book is packed with suspense, and a heartwarming story between the growing friendship of Kalinka and the two horses.

Lucie Harrison, age 11

**A tale packed with friendship and facts on WW2 in Ukraine.**

Set in Ukraine, ‘Winter Horses’ is a stunning tale of friendship, fear and fighting. The rare Prezwalskis horses have all been shot by Nazis: except for two. And, after all else fails, it is up to a young, abandoned girl to save them.

I think that ‘Winter Horses’ is an excellent recommendation for older readers who enjoy history and learning about how people live in different areas of the world. Personally it wasn’t for me, but I thought that the relationship between the young homeless girl, Kalinka, and the gamekeeper, Max, was a perfect example of how old and young, homeless and comfortable, can come together to form a friendship that can inspire generations.

Calum Stillie, age 11

This is a fantastic story that would appeal to children aged 8-14. It is long enough to get you involved and keep you going but not so long that you get bored. ‘The Winter Horses’ has an amazing storyline with lots of detail. My favourite character is Max and I think he will appeal to all who read this book. He also has a very loveable little dog called Taras. The main character, a young girl called Kalinka, is very determined and inspirational.

Although tense and traumatic at times, ‘The Winter Horses’ has a heartwarming ending and I would recommend this book for girls and boys.

Rachel Ilsley, age 11

Kalinka is the only survivor in her Jewish family; they were all killed by the German bombs. She is alone and has no reason to live until she meets two Prezewalski horses. These horses are extremely cunning and are being hunted to death by the Germans. They hide together on the steppe. On the coldest night the horses bring Kalinka to meet Max, a friendly, old man and his dog, Taras. Together Kalinka, the horses and Taras go on an incredible journey across the
wintery steppe, running from the Germans.

Kalinka is a sensible, solemn girl who would do anything to save the Przewaski horses. She is also one of the bravest characters I have ever read about.

This book was amazing, I truly loved it however it was really sad and made me want to cry. Philip Kerr is a great author. I now want to own a Przewaski horse.