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## Preface

### The Series

The goal of our series is to help students read contemporary texts of moderate difficulty with relative ease and discuss these texts within their specific historical and cultural contexts. Hence, we provide supplemental factual information and illustrations, in addition to vocabulary lists, language-in-context exercises, guiding questions, and various activities for close reading, literary analysis, discussions, and dialogues. While the first reader in the series, Barbara Honigmann's novella *Eine Liebe aus nichts*, is geared to a more literary-oriented analysis, here the emphasis is on developing reading skills, vocabulary acquisition, and discussion.

The texts in our series vary in linguistic and literary difficulty but are all accessible to second- and third-year German students. All the texts have been edited to conform to the new spelling guidelines, which were updated in 2006.

### The Novel

Caroline Link's book, based on her successful movie of the same name, is a coming-of-age story, in which young Lara negotiates between the world of the hearing and the world of her deaf parents. As a teenager, she discovers her love for the clarinet, which distances her from her father, who is painfully reminded of his own childhood, when he felt excluded from his family and the world of music. Lara moves from small-town Mainburg in Bavaria to Berlin to prepare for her acceptance at the prestigious University of the Arts, meets her first boyfriend, has to deal with her mother's death, and finally is reconciled with her father.

This book, with its straightforward plot line, colloquial language, and treatment of teenage issues—such as family relations, leaving home, first love, and the search for one's goals—will appeal to students in intermediate German classes at colleges and high

schools who embark on reading their first longer text in the language. It is also geared to students who want to read the text on their own.

## The Reader

The text of *Jenseits der Stille* in our reader is presented unabridged and in its original version. The **Info-Ecken** (identified by the symbol ⓘ) situate the novel in its cultural and geographical contexts. They appear on a separate page from the body of the main text, together with vocabulary annotations, so that the flow of the actual reading is not interrupted.

Following the novel is a comprehensive chapter of vocabulary lists, exercises, and assignments for the students, **Vokabeln und Aufgaben**. There are fourteen sections, each accompanying one chapter of the novel, adhering to a similar structure and sequence.

A list of active vocabulary (📖 **Vokabeln**) and a list of idiomatic expressions (🗨️ **Idiomatische Ausdrücke**) are followed by language-in-context exercises (🗨️ **Sprache im Kontext**). These exercises practice vocabulary and grammar taken from the novel to help students use them in the written and oral discussion of the text. The following types of vocabulary exercises are employed: matching words and definitions, association exercises, expressing words differently, and vocabulary-in-conversation exercises. The **Vokabeln und Aufgaben** for the prologue, chapter 1, and chapter 2 offer additional vocabulary lists with expressions for discussion (🗨️ **Diskussionsvokabular**), with one in chapter 1 specifically relating to the theme of disabilities. For the first eight chapters we selected about two grammar topics each to ease students' understanding of the text. Sample sentences in the ensuing exercises usually refer to the novel. In the latter chapters, no specific grammar exercises are provided. Instead, students are encouraged to concentrate on vocabulary expansion through discussions and other activities. The Yale University Press website provides a link to flashcards for all active vocabulary: [yalebooks.com/link](http://yalebooks.com/link).

A third part of each section, focusing on the text (📖 **Textarbeit**), is divided as follows. Detailed questions about the text (**Fragen zum Textverständnis**) require close textual reading and should be covered in class during the initial reading process. Later, students should use these as guiding questions to test their understanding of the text, or to narrate major events and aspects of a particular passage. Questions for discussion (**Diskussion**) are geared towards a more open discussion of the text. In addition, students are encouraged to come up with their own questions (**Ihre Fragen**).

These exercises are followed by various other written and oral activities (👥 **Aktivi-**

täten), often going beyond the actual analysis of the text. Students write and perform dialogues, or they write diary entries and letters based on events in the novel or on imaginary ones. They flesh out situations narrated in the novel in order to gain a better understanding of the characters' motivations or to put themselves into the characters' shoes, and to apply new vocabulary and grammar to these situations.

We conclude the **Vokabeln und Aufgaben** with suggestions for a final discussion of the novel (**Abschließende Fragen / Aufsatzthemen**) as well as a comparison between text and film (**Vergleich Buch und Film**). Specific assignments for the discussion of the film can be found in Adriana Borra and Ruth Mader-Koltay's *German Through Film* (Yale University Press, 2006). During the discussion of the last part of the novel, instructors may rely solely on questions and observations that students bring to class. In our own courses we have found success in assigning different parts of the novel to students and having them summarize major events.

All the assignments are suggestions. Instructors should select those that appeal to their class and to their own teaching style and philosophy.

We also included a chapter of additional materials, **Informationen und Begleittexte für den Unterricht**. It assembles, for example, a biography and filmography of the author, the text of Goethe's „Prolog im Himmel“ from *Faust I* (1808), which is performed by the students at Lara's school, and some information on the history and current situation of deaf people in Germany, the various sign languages, and an illustration of the finger alphabet.

The vocabulary index (**Vokabelindex**) at the end of the volume comprises all vocabulary annotations in alphabetical order and allows students to look up a word again when it appears a second or third time in the novel without annotations.

We hope that instructors and students alike will enjoy and gain from teaching and studying *Jenseits der Stille* with our reader edition.