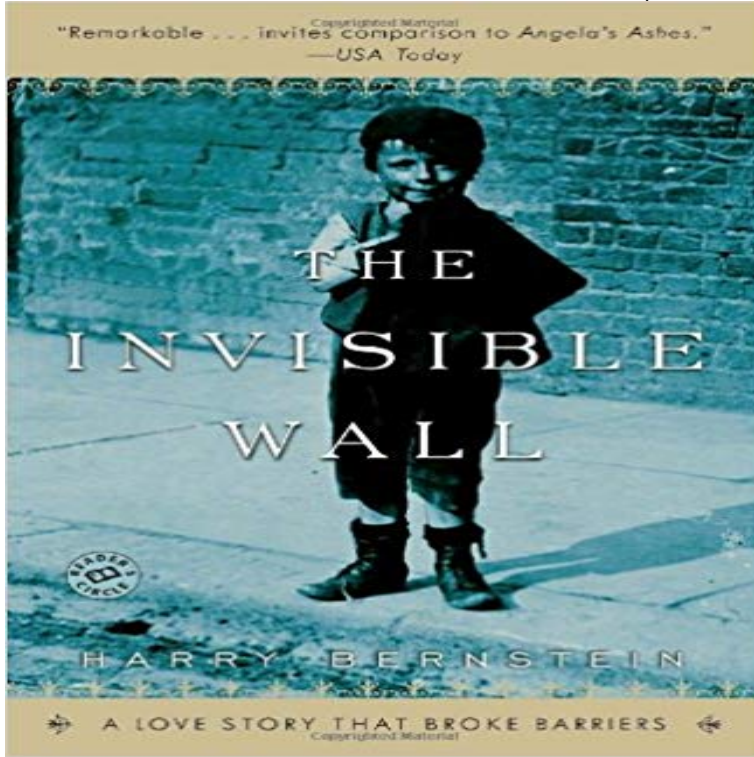


The Invisible Wall: A Love Story That Broke Barriers



There are places that I have never forgotten. A little cobble street in a smoky mill town in the North of England has haunted me for the greater part of my life. It was inevitable that I should write about it and the people who lived on both sides of its Invisible Wall. The narrow street where Harry Bernstein grew up, in a small English mill town, was seemingly unremarkable. It was identical to countless other streets in countless other working-class neighborhoods of the early 1900s, except for the invisible wall that ran down its center, dividing Jewish families on one side from Christian families on the other. Only a few feet of cobblestones separated Jews from Gentiles, but socially, it they were miles apart. On the eve of World War I, Harry's family struggles to make ends meet. His father earns little money at the Jewish tailoring shop and brings home even less, preferring to spend his wages drinking and gambling. Harry's mother, devoted to her children and fiercely resilient, survives on her dreams: new shoes that might secure Harry's admission to a fancy school; that her daughter might marry the local rabbi; that the entire family might one day be whisked off to the paradise of America. Then Harry's older sister, Lily, does the unthinkable: She falls in love with Arthur, a Christian boy from across the street. When Harry unwittingly discovers their secret affair, he must choose between the morals he's been taught all his life, his loyalty to his selfless mother, and what he knows to be true in his own heart. A wonderfully charming memoir written when the author was ninety-three, *The Invisible Wall* vibrantly brings to life an all-but-forgotten time and place. It is a moving tale of working-class life, and of the boundaries that can be overcome by love. From the Hardcover edition.

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