

A nostalgic adventure story

# The Night of 2 April

JAN SIMOEN

The Belgian coast, in the early 1960s. Joris is ten and likes nothing more than playing war in the dunes, where German bunkers are still part of the scenery. Inside his dad's old army trunk, he finds not only fantastic war paraphernalia, but also a mysterious photograph of his parents with a young man he doesn't recognise. Who is he? And what does he have to do with the night of 2 April, when a German machinegun shot up the tower of the town hall?

Written with a lot of warmth, humour and empathy

NBD BIBLION

Jan Simoen sketches his childhood with a great deal of warmth, a time when the war was a source of play for children, while the horror was still fresh in their parents' memories. Joris discovers to his dismay that history is a combination of circumstances, and that if everything had gone just a little bit differently he would not have been born. This is a book full of small adventures, gentle humour and with a psychological foundation.

And yes, there is sadness between the lines. But the sort of sadness that veils itself in humour and gentle irony.

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## AUTHOR



**Jan Simoen** (1953-2013) grew up by the Belgian seaside. After careers in teaching and theatre photography he tried his hand at writing plays, and in 1993 he published his debut novel for children. He claimed that prose and theatre found each other in his books, with their many dialogues and perspectives. He won a Boekenleeuw and a Gouden Zoen, among a few other prizes.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** De nacht van 2 april (2012, Querido, 225 pp.)

**AGE** 11+

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