

# **A Prisoner's Love** by Fiona Black

## **Synopsis**

The story takes place near the end of World War II. Our hero, Karl Kern is a German soldier, fighting on the front line in Holland. Despite the bitterness of war he demonstrates the warmth, humanity and leadership qualities which will be so important to him later.

After a couple of narrow escapes Karl and his friend and mentor, Walter, are captured and transported to England. They are sent to a POW camp in Otley, Yorkshire. Conditions are harsh, but Karl's inventiveness enables him to get enough food, stay healthy and even learn English. The war ends, but the POWs are kept in camps and used as cheap labor in many construction projects. Karl is sent to work on the foundations for a new housing development.

The local residents cross the building site but are expected to ignore the prisoners. Fraternizing is strictly forbidden. Karl soon notices a beautiful girl, who crosses the site regularly and after arranging for her to notice him, it is love at first sight on both sides.

There then follows a series of fascinating and increasingly daring escapades, which the two undertake just to spend a few minutes together. Aided and abetted by friends and relatives the romance flourishes. Karl regularly sneaks through the barbed wire to be with his sweetheart outside the camp. Once he is chased around a field by a farmer wielding a pitchfork, yet still gets back into camp undetected. When the missing prisoner is searched for, Karl is snoring in his bunk. Another time he escapes by climbing down a sheer quarry face in a borrowed uniform to meet with Sue. He then has the nerve to ask a passer-by for a light for his cigarette. Even when Karl is sent over 100 miles away they still manage to keep in touch.

Finally restrictions are lifted and Karl and Sue are allowed to meet openly. Sue's generous and open-minded parents take Karl to their hearts. But the war has long been over and the prisoners are being repatriated. Karl and Sue decide it is for the best if Karl returns to Germany.

Another enforced separation. Karl has to support his father and sisters and cannot raise enough extra money to return to England. After visiting him in Germany, Sue alienates her family by recounting how kind the people were to her there.

These obstacles, too, are overcome, and Karl and Sue are married in Germany, with good wishes and gifts from everybody in the little village where they will live.