

Janet R. Kirchheimer
From her book, **How to Spot One of Us**

Maastricht, January 2007

I am outside Wilhelmina Singel 88.
The skies are gray.
I take a deep breath and enter the building.
I walk up to the third floor. That's where you lived.
Before deportation.
Before Westerbork.
Before Auschwitz.
I knock on the door, hoping someone is there.
Hoping someone will let me in.
The door is locked.
I stay for a while.
I walk back down and sit on the curb across the street.
I stare up at the third floor.
I wonder what your life was like in 1942.
Did you stay at home most times, afraid to go out on the street,
the yellow star on your overcoats announcing
you wherever you went?
The synagogue you went to is still there.
There is a plaque to those deported from Maastricht to Westerbork,
then to Auschwitz or Sobibor. That's where most of you went.
Cars go by, people walk past, and I sit
watching the third floor, waiting for something to tell me it's time to go.
The street is beautiful, you know, tree-lined, well kept.
A light rain begins to fall.
Oma, Opa, Ruth, and Josef, you jump from the third-floor window. I catch
you
and carry you to America with me.