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# I Am Hutterite



## Synopsis

A fascinating journey into the heart and culture of a reclusive religious community. *I Am Hutterite* takes listeners into the hidden heart of the little-known Hutterite colony in southern Manitoba, where author Mary-Ann Kirkby spent her childhood. When she was 10 years old her parents packed up their seven children and a handful of possessions and left the security of the colony to start a new life. Overnight they were thrust into a world they didn't understand, a world that did not understand them. Before she left the colony Mary-Ann had never tasted macaroni and cheese or ridden a bike. She had never heard of Walt Disney or rock-and-roll. She was forced to reinvent herself, denying her heritage to fit in with her peers. With great humor, Kirkby describes how she adapted to popular culture, and with raw honesty her family's deep sense of loss for their community. More than a history lesson, *I Am Hutterite* is a powerful tale of retracing steps and understanding how our beginnings often define us. Controversial and acclaimed by the Hutterite community, Kirkby's book unveils the rich history and traditions of her people, giving us a rare and intimate portrait of an extraordinary way of life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*A Hutterite Story* It was several years after I left the Amish that I first heard about Hutterites through a magazine article. At the time I was astonished that there could be a third branch of Anabaptists that I had never heard about during my 23 years of living in an Amish community. (The other two are Amish and Mennonites). Since then I have read more articles about Hutterites, but I was always left wanting for more information, which left an air of mystery and intrigue around them -- I imagine

much the same way most people feel about the Amish. (Except maybe even more so, for unlike the Amish, the Hutterites live on cloistered colonies, which does not include anyone who is not Hutterite.) After learning about this culture, I wished I knew someone who grew up on a Hutterite colony, or at least that I'd have the opportunity to read a story by a Hutterite. I found just such a story when I recently read "I Am Hutterite" by Mary-Ann Kirkby. In this beautifully rendered story, she serves her readers a slice of life on the colony from her perspective of a young child after her mother had given birth to a younger sibling: "As soon as she arrived home from the hospital, Mother entered "die Wuchen," a six-week period of special treatment extended to women after the birth of each child. This included a nine-week exemption from colony duty. Peterana was the cook for nursing mothers, and she delivered delicacies to our house every day. Rich foods like "Nukkela Suppen" (buttery dumplings), waffles soaked in whiskey, and plump cuts of chicken were carried over from the community kitchen in bowls and stainless-steel pails.

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