**Book Summary: Among the Hidden**

Luke is a third child. In this dystopian world, that means that he must stay hidden, always. Years earlier the government prohibited people from having more than two children, to prevent overpopulation and starvation. They forced women to be sterilized after having their second child. If the sterilization didn’t work and a third child was born, the government would take it and dispose of it. Luke’s parents didn’t want that to happen. So, he had to remain hidden in their house. It wasn’t so bad when their farm was surrounded by farm and woods. Luke could still go into the backyard to play catch with his brothers.

Then the government demanded his father give them the woods to build housing developments on. Once the houses went up, Luke not only couldn’t leave the house, but he couldn’t go into any rooms with open windows. He had to spend most of his time in his attic bedroom. He spends his day peering out of a vent at the neighboring houses. One day, he sees a face the window of a house where the family had all left for work or school.

[SPOILER] Luke believes he has seen another third child. He is so desperate to talk to someone about things, that he risks his life by running to their house and breaking the screen to get inside. There he finds a girl, who is a third child. She is sick of being a shadow child, hidden away. She is planning a demonstration at the White House to make the government acknowledge the shadow children. She wants Luke to go with her, but he can’t. He feels it is too dangerous. She goes and for weeks, he hears nothing. Finally, in desperation, he breaks into her house again. The step-father come home and tells him the terrible news. His daughter and all the other children who protested were gunned down and dead. But the stepfather also offers Luke a new chance at life. He’ll have to leave everything he’s ever known to accept it.

**Author Biography: Margaret Peterson Haddix**

Margaret Peterson Haddix was born on April 9, 1964 in rural Ohio. She had two brothers and one sister. As a child, she was an avid reader. She participated in activities such as singing, acting, running, and playing musical instruments. However, her main interest really lay in reading and writing.

Margaret decided to study journalism at Miami University. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1987. She worked jobs such as a newspaper writer, a newspaper copy editor, and a freelance writer. While she worked as a newspaper writer, she married a man named Doug, who was the newspaper editor. She decided to leave her job because she didn’t think it would be good for their marriage if she was his employee. Instead, she focused her time on writing fiction. She published her first book, “Running Out of Time” in 1995. Since then, she has written many books for children and young adults. Some of her most famous books are the Missing series and the Shadow Children series.

Margaret lives in Columbus, Ohio with her husband and two children.
Discussion Questions: Among the Hidden

1. If you were a shadow child, what do you think the hardest thing about having to be hidden would be? Are there any things you think would be easier if you were a shadow child?

2. The government controls nearly all aspects of people’s lives. Are there governments like this in the world right now? Do you think this type of government is good or bad? Why?

3. When Luke sees the face of a child in the window of a house that is supposed to be empty, he becomes convinced it is another third child like him. Why do you think he decides to risk his life to see if he is right? Would you do the same thing in that situation?

4. Luke’s parents are very strict about what he has to do to remain hidden. Jen’s parents let her use the computer and watch TV and give her more freedom. Whose parents are doing the right thing? Why do you think so?

5. Would having friends, like Jen does, be worth the added risk of being found out as a third child by the government? Would you risk your life for friendship?

6. Jen’s parent’s purposely had a third child even though it was against the law. Do you think it is okay? Is it okay to break unfair laws or laws you don’t agree with? Why?

7. Jen is determined to demand the government give third children rights, even though she knows there is some risk. Would this be worth the risk? Can you think of a similar situation where people have risked their lives to gain equal rights? Were they right to do so? Why or why not?

8. Do you think Luke is a coward for not going with Jen to the rally? Why or why not?

9. When Luke doesn’t hear from Jen for a week, he breaks into her house again to see if he can find out what happened. Her stepfather catches him and tell him Jen was murdered along with all the other protesters, but it was hushed up by the government. Do you think something like this could be covered up in our society? Why do you think so?

10. Luke has the opportunity to take on a new identity and to live a normal life. To do so, he will have to give up his old life and his family. If you were him, what would you chose to do? Why?