

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR – Melinda Braaksma



Photography: CoJan van Toor

Melinda Braaksma (Amsterdam, 1968) became fascinated by the childhood stories her father, Henk Braaksma, told about the Second World War. In 1943, at the age of six, he moved into an empty house in Amsterdam's Jewish quarter. This real-life detail became the foundation for the fictional story *Do Not Betray Me*, built around one central question: *What if...*? What if a Jewish girl had been left behind in that house?

Drawing on her many years of experience as a copywriter and teacher, Melinda brought colour and depth to her father's memories, resulting in a gripping youth novel filled with realistic—and at times unbelievable but true—details about everyday life during the Second World War. Between the lines, readers will find a quiet hope for a peaceful society free from prejudice.

Melinda's greatest wish is for the book to be read in classrooms now that the Netherlands has lived in freedom for more than 80 years. Through her website, [MelVertel.nl](http://MelVertel.nl), she hopes to contribute to promoting reading among young people in the Netherlands.