

Rena's Promise: A Story of Sisters in Auschwitz

Rena Kornreich Gelissen, Heather Dune Macadam
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#122949 in Books Beacon Press MA 2015-03-17 2015-03-17Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.49 x .82 x 5.481, .81 #File Name: 0807093130320 pagesBeacon Press MA | File size: 18.Mb

Rena Kornreich Gelissen, Heather Dune Macadam : Rena's Promise: A Story of Sisters in Auschwitz before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rena's Promise: A Story of Sisters in Auschwitz:

18 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Once in a while a story comes along that is so amazing . . .By webdevgirlOnce in a while a story comes along that is so amazing and so eloquently told that it takes your breath away. This is one such story. I could not put it down. I've been a student of the Holocaust for nearly 40 years -- since I

saw my first documentary on TV at the age of 16 and set out on a quest to understand why and how such an event could happen. This story is unique in that it adeptly illustrates someone who manages to maintain their sense of humanity despite all invitations to do otherwise. There is a soft strength to Rena and a level of caring that the world is so in need of today. Rena, wherever you are now, thank you for your courage in telling your story and thank you, Heather, for the love and care you gave and continue to give to Rena, Danke, and the others through your dedication to and loving care of their story. I, for one, will never forget. 12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. A MUST READ - I was so touched and amazed, God bless these sisters! By charlie An Amazing Story! I learned so much reading this. You would think a story like this would be depressing but I found it inspiring that these girls (and yes they were just girls) had so much strength and character that kept their spirit through everything that was thrown at them. I have such admiration for every single one of these survivors and the amazing stories. I was so very touched and could not imagine that I could have been living next door to people who had been through such atrocities and came to America and just lived their lives without looking back. I will revisit this book again! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Elegant Madness By Dfetchko How one woman, Rena, survived as well as encouraged others, especially her sister Danka, to never give up hope! A TRUE HERO AND ANGEL! I wept with rage and laughed with joy on her unbearable and relentless first person account of the atrocities she endured! To believe that the whole world didn't know about what was happening is to say there is no humanity! History will only tell if and when it could or won't happen once again! I will never forget Rena Kornreich.

An expanded edition of the powerful memoir about two sisters' determination to survive during the Holocaust featuring new and never before revealed information about the first transport of women to Auschwitz. In March 1942, Rena Kornreich and 997 other young women were rounded up and forced onto the first Jewish transport of women to Auschwitz. Soon after, Rena was reunited with her sister Danka at the camp, beginning a story of love and courage that would last three years and forty-one days. From smuggling bread for their friends to narrowly escaping the ever-present threats that loomed at every turn, the compelling events in *Renas Promise* remind us that humanity and hope can survive inordinate brutality.

From Publishers Weekly Imagining that, by volunteering for a work camp, she would somehow be protecting her family from the Nazis, Rena, at age 17, put on her best clothes, left her fiancé and the Polish village of Tylicz in the Carpathian Mountains and was sent off to Auschwitz. Presently, her sister Danka arrived, as did cousins, schoolmates and neighbors. As a child, she had promised her mother to look after her baby sister, and that promise obsessed her throughout her incarceration in the camp. It gave her reason to survive, so that one day she could bring Danka safely home. How they escaped starvation, beatings, the crematorium, the medical experiments of the notorious Josef Mengele and survived the end of the war is all recounted here in this spirited survivor's testament, written with freelancer Macadam. After the war, Rena married a Red Cross worker and emigrated to the U.S., following her sister. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Gelissen, who was on the first Jewish transport to Auschwitz, describes in this account the constant struggle for survival in the camp. She soon learns there were no guarantees. Rena's motivation came strongly from a promise to her parents to keep her younger sister, Danka, safe. Her account describes the relentless specter of death while at the same time showing how prisoners would risk their lives to smuggle medicine, clothes, and food to other prisoners. Because Rena was an early prisoner in Auschwitz, she describes some of the confusion at the beginning and the realization of what was really happening to the Jewish people. Helpful features of the book include historical notes and a section describing the fate of the people the sisters knew. This memoir captures the horror of Auschwitz in a clear way that helps the reader understand the atrocities perpetrated there. Recommended for Holocaust collections. Mary Salony, West Virginia Northern Community Coll. Lib., Wheeling Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Renas Promise is written with simplicity and grace. . . . The overwhelming feeling upon finishing is one of triumph: It is still possible to find selflessness and human connection among people living in a place of relentless horror." Los Angeles Times Book A poignant and important act of remembrance. Sir Martin Gilbert, author of *The Holocaust: The Human Tragedy* An extraordinary book, vividly written and generously told. You will not easily forget Rena Kornreich and her sister Danka. Nor should you. Harrowing as it often is, this is less a tragedy than a love story. By turns soul-wrenching, inspiring, and heartbreaking, this is a tale that should live long beyond the wonderful woman who inspired it. Alexandra Fuller, author of *Dont Lets Go to the Dogs Tonight* Through her actions during and after the Shoah, Rena Kornreich Gelissen ensured that out of the darkest night, the light of the survivors and their memory remained. Faced with destruction, she and the Jewish people survived. Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks *Renas Promise* went with us on the Zen Peacemakers first pilgrimage to Auschwitz in 1996. On our first night together, one of our monks shared a simple message of love from Rena to us. Her message changed our lives. Peter Matthiessen, author of *In Paradise* One of the most accurate accounts, and the only account of the first women's camp in Auschwitz. This is a book historians will refer to for years to come. Irena Strezlecka, director, Auschwitz Museum of Women, Oswiecim, Poland This is a book filled with melancholy wisdom and bitter artistry.... A miraculous message... a voice which we must heed and honor. --Mike Fink, Rhode Island Jewish

Herald "A personal story of courage....[Rena's] first-person account is an illustration of the power of love, even in the face of the Nazi killing machine." --Paul Nowell, Associated Press "Deeply moving." --Dena Taylor, San Francisco Chronicle