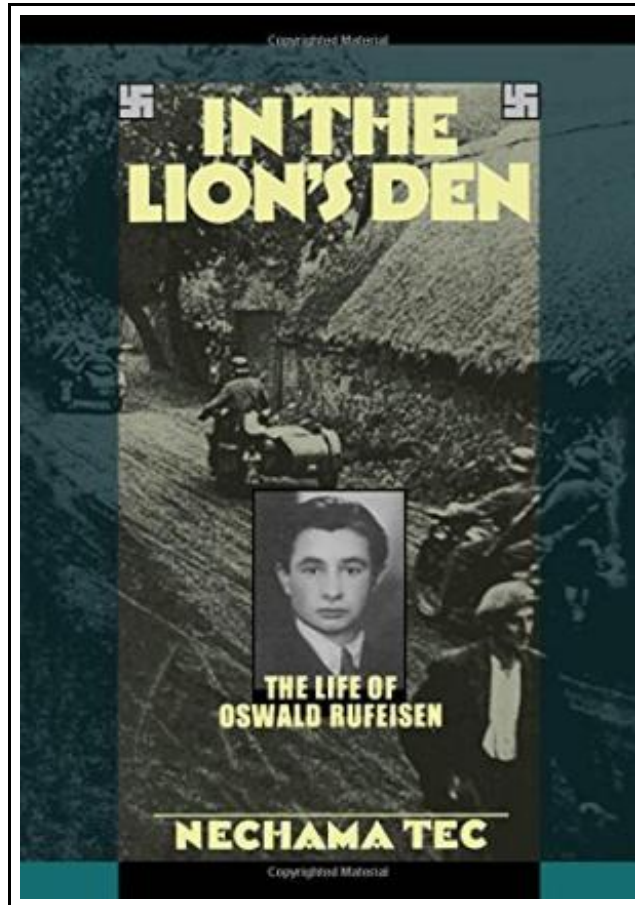


In the Lions Den: The Life of Oswald Rufeisen



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Reviews

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(Christelle Treutel)

IN THE LIONS DEN: THE LIFE OF OSWALD RUFEISEN



Oxford University Press, USA. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. Hardcover. 298 pages. Dimensions: 9.4in. x 6.3in. x 1.1in. Few lives shed more light on the complex relationship between Jews and Christians during and after the Holocaust--or provide a more moving portrait of courage--than Oswald Rufeisen. A Jew passing as a Christian in occupied Poland, Rufeisen worked as translator for the German police--the very people who rounded up and murdered the Jews--and repeatedly risked his life to save hundreds from the Nazis. In this gripping biography, Nechama Tec, a widely acclaimed writer on the Holocaust, recounts Rufeisen's remarkable story. A youth of seventeen when World War II began, Rufeisen joined the exodus of Poles who fled the approaching German army. Tec vividly describes how Rufeisen used his ability to speak fluent German to pass as half German and half Polish in Mir, where he came to serve as translator and personal secretary to the German in charge of the gendarmerie. As he carried out his duties--reading death sentences to prisoners, swearing in new police officers before a portrait of Hitler--he earned the trust and affection of the German commander, yet lived in constant fear of discovery. He used his position to pass secret information to Jews and Christians about impending actions and to sabotage Nazi plans. Most notably, he thwarted the annihilation of the Mir ghetto by arming hundreds of doomed Jews and organizing their escape, and saved an entire Belorussian village from destruction. Denounced, Rufeisen escaped and found shelter in a convent, where he converted to Catholicism. Though a pacifist, he spent the rest of the war fighting in a Russian partisan unit. After the war, Father Daniel (as he is now known) became a priest and a Carmelite monk. Identifying himself as a Christian Jew and an ardent Zionist, he moved...



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