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I Have Lived A Thousand Years



Synopsis

The author was 13 when the Nazis took Hungary. In intimate and excruciating detail, Livia Bitton-Jackson describes how her young life was transformed by her experiences, from suspension from school to surviving the horrors of Auschwitz.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I would like to start off by saying that I'm NOT a book reader. Infact, I usually fall right asleep. With that being said, I must say that this book took me to a whole different world. It was intense and full of emotions that it was impossible to stop reading. I read it to my children many years ago and I was amazed. We moved and somehow I lost the book. My mother in law introduced to me and I found it and now I'm gonna start reading it over again.If you want a book to keep your attention this will do it but be warned, you will cry, you will be angered and it will make you appreciate life today.

Needed for school summer reading.

Elli writes the memoir of her experience during the Holocaust. She was thirteen in Hungary when she became a prisoner. At first her family is deported to a ghetto, and are allowed to take a few possessions From there, they are next deported in cattle cars, on a four day ride. Once at Aushwitz the initial shock and procedures occur, and then routines happen. She does not concentrate on the gas chambers. She organizes her thoughts at the morning roll call, they stand for hours. She has much will to go on living, despite horrific, inhuman conditions. She and her mother move to several concentration camps. They are prisoners and slave laborers, enduring torture and surviving. At

Dachau, they reunite with the brother. This is so astounding. The family is being transported again. Prisoners get off the train, shouting we are free. German soldiers start shooting, sending them back on the cattle cars. The soldiers shoot into the cars, the prisoners are dying and wounded. Elli stands to look thru the cracks, a plane and lightening flashing thru the air, the Americans are shooting at German soldiers. A girl loses the bottom of her leg, another girl cried she was blind. Ellie looked at her and saw two empty sockets. The young girls die. Soon after, it is liberation. The family becomes refugees living in a refugee camp. A couple of months later, American soldiers drive them in vehicles, back to their changed country. From over five hundred people from their town, thirty four children and four adults return.

I have read a lot of books about the holocaust, and I especially like to read memoirs written by survivors of the Holocaust. This is one such memoir that is compelling and heartbreaking in the descriptions of the horrors suffered by the writer and her family during the Holocaust. Initially, we witness the author's desire to be loved and praised by her mother, her ambition to be a poet, and her descriptions of simple, everyday life in her little village. Later, we are led on a horrific journey beginning with the restrictions imposed upon the Jews in the village, the deportation of Elli's father to a labor camp in Hungary, and finally Elli's own deportation together with her mother and brother to Auschwitz. Their journey of terror doesn't end at Auschwitz for Elli finds herself and her mother constantly battling for survival under the most deplorable conditions, being forced to endure unimaginable suffering and degradation, being shunted from one concentration camp to another, and finally liberation. Elli's journey is one of horror, hope, faith and resilience, and truly inspiring.

I Have Lived a Thousand Years, by Livia Bitton - Jackson "Los!" Move on... "Marschieren!" March! "Zählappel!" Roll call. Imagine hearing these words on a daily basis, as you drag your sun scorched body through a Nazi concentration camp, day after day, week after week, month after month, and even year after year. Imagine no more, because Livia Bitton - Jackson's book, I Have Lived a Thousand Years, takes you on an emotional ride through the trials and tribulations of a teenage girl living through the Holocaust. The Holocaust is a hard topic to write about, and I Have Lived a Thousand Years has exploited the truth behind the Holocaust. It starts with an ideal situation of a girl going through her teenage years; however, in the first couple of pages, her life is turned upside down. Rumors of Nazism taking over her small Hungarian town are growing larger, and slowly but surely, her greatest possessions are taken away from her. Soon she is taken to a ghetto, where she resides for quite a few weeks. But then a mass deportation starts, every man older than

eighteen, yet younger than forty was taken away to some concentration camp far away, almost outside of Germany. Ellike, the main character, lost her father to this mass deportation. Her elder brother, who was seventeen, her mother, and mother's sister, was the only people left in her family. Soon after the deportation of the young men came the evacuation of the ghetto, making every family leave all their belongings, which were later burned. Ellike was fourteen at the time, and at the "screening" point that they went to at Auschwitz the "rules" were that any girl younger than sixteen and their mothers were to be "exterminated" or sent to the gas chambers. Ellike though, had long blonde beautiful hair, and the prison guards decided that even though she was only fourteen, they would let her go. At first Ellike and her mother were elated; they had passed and were going to be free. Later they learned the terrible truth, which was that they would be passed from concentration camp to concentration camp for the next year. They started out at Auschwitz, where they were stripped of all clothing; all their hair was shaved off and they were stuck in prison uniforms. Day after day they were beaten and sun - scorched. Each concentration camp was worse than the rest. But, there was a new light. Ellike and her mother had been sent to a work camp, or a camp that worked much like the real world. Civilian officers ran it, and people were given homes, clothing, and no hard labor jobs. Ellike and her mother survived this long struggle, but many family members were hurt, and some even dropped off the face of the earth. The book ends in a suspenseful tone, but it does not lose its theme of "try and try again." The plot of *I Have Lived a Thousand Years* is a hole - less plot that will keep you on the edge of your seat while reading it. Although there are more than five hundred books about the Holocaust out there, I have only read a few. This book has leapt off the pages to me; it keeps a suspenseful tone, even though the knowledge of the outcome of the Holocaust is pretty world wide. I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a book that'll never be put down, and best of all, you even learn a little German! So next time you are craving a history lesson in the Holocaust, remember the book, *I Have Lived a Thousand Years*.

I'm surprised I'm the first to comment. I was searching for books on the Holocaust and stumbled upon this one. I went out and bought it, thinking it would be a pretty good read. Not only was I right about that, it turned out to be one of the best books I've ever read. This time period really interests me for some reason, and this book doesn't hold back like some others. I've learned so much more from this book; two thumbs aren't enough. If you like any books about the Holocaust, you will certainly love this one.

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