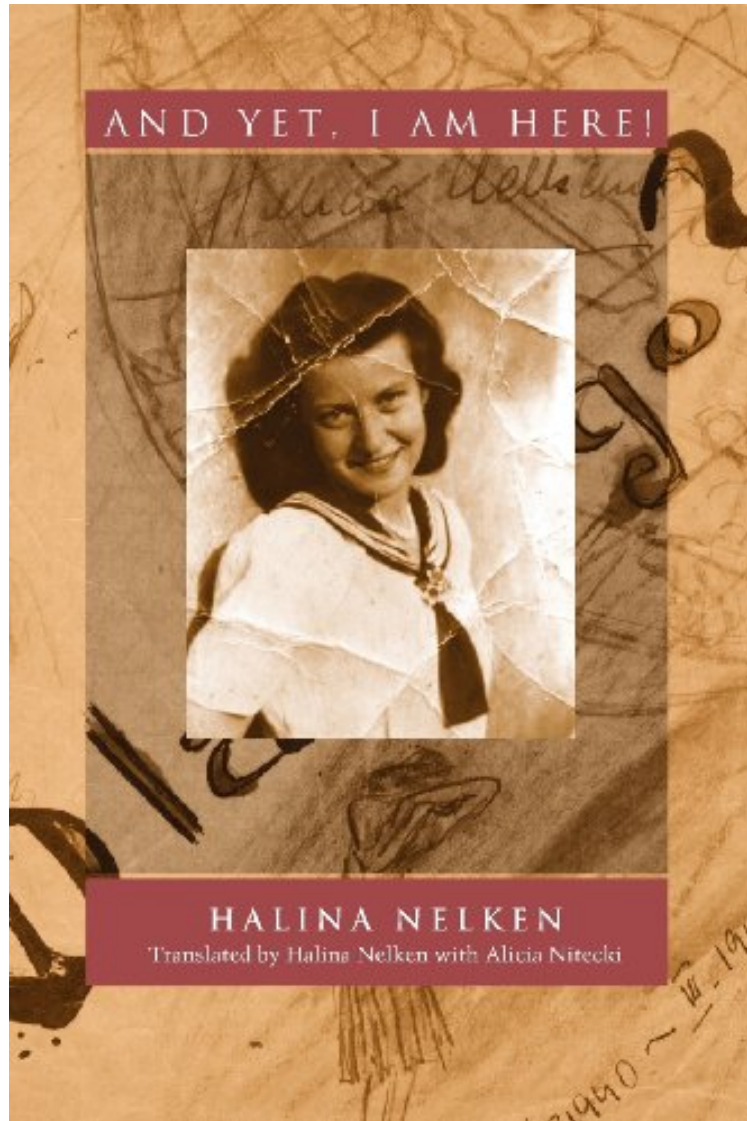


[Free pdf] And Yet, I Am Here!

And Yet, I Am Here!

Halina Nelken

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Halina Nelken : And Yet, I Am Here! before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised And Yet, I Am Here!:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. And Yet, I am Here! Purchased at .comBy depWhen I first read this book in October 2013, I didn't like it very much. After rereading it I changed my mind. And Yet, I Am Here takes quite a while to get into, it takes at least fifty pages to get up to September 1 and the beginning of World War II. Those first pages explain so much about her childhood and the life Halina lived before the war. Halina and her family were

upper class Polish Jews, she realized quite well how much she and her family lost materially as the war dragged on. Halina suffered through the Krakow Ghetto, Plaszow camp, Auschwitz, Ravensbruck, and Malchow. She also took care of herself and of her Mother and sister-in-law who went through most of the war with Halina. Her brother, Felek, also made it through the war. I gave the book four stars for two reasons. One, was that there was so little information about Halina's life after the war. I know she and her remaining family made it to the United States, but little else was said. Two, was about her relationship with her sister-in-law Genia that she very much didn't like. There was one paragraph where she mentioned Genia which refers to something that happened in the United States. Nothing else was said and you were left wondering what happened. Overall, though, a good book and a very inspiring read that I highly recommend. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Informative By Tara One of the things I liked best about this memoir was the author's description of what her life was like before it fell apart and as another reviewer said the ordinariness of it. It set the tone for the book. I also liked the way she added comments from her perspective in later years to clarify points in the diary. It was a remarkable diary detailing life in the ghetto and work camps. What I didn't like was the feeling of being left hanging when it was over. I wish she had gone into her life after the war. Also, she tended to intimate things that she never clarified but left the reader wondering. I would have rated it higher had she done more with the ending and given some hint of her life after the war. 21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Puts the Holocaust in human terms. By A Customer Halina Nelken's book starts slowly - a book anyone over 50 might write about his/her childhood home town--who lived where, what kind of personalities they had, what became of them and their children.... Ah, suddenly it's not so mundane, as so many of these humdrum lives of ordinary people were snuffed out by the Nazis. It is this very ordinariness that serves as a foil for the horrors that Halina Nelken experienced as an adolescent and young woman and writes about - powerfully - in this book. We all know something of what happened in those dark days, but Dr. Nelken makes it personal by telling exactly what happened to her and her family. The book is actually based on the diaries that she kept. Anyone who has seen and appreciated "Schindler's List" should read what kinds of things happened to the people who were not on that list. There are unforgettable moments in this book, such as the young Halina working in an office in Auchswitz and finding a record of the murder of her father. Or the terrible choices she had to make when her mother was too exhausted to continue on a forced march. Only my knowledge that her mother had survived the war made it possible to keep reading this painful account. But, after finishing this book, my overwhelming reaction was that Halina Nelken had taken on the Nazis and won! They tried to reduce her to a sub-human and failed. She came through these terrible experiences without being twisted, without being as bitter as she had a perfect right to be! She not only survived, she survived as a whole person with a sense of humor, a will to succeed, and an ability to relate to other people - even to German people. In a larger sense her book is about the triumph of the human spirit. It is, admittedly, painful to read about the atrocities that took place before and during that horrible war. But we must not ignore the testimony of this strong woman who lived through the things that we don't want to have to think about and came out of it alive and even stronger. Ada M. Prill

When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Halina Nelken was a precocious fifteen-year-old, living a middle-class life in Krakow. Like other girls her age, she recorded her personal observations and feelings in a diary. As conditions in Krakow deteriorated and her family was forced into the Jewish ghetto, she continued to write, eventually smuggling her diary out with a Catholic friend. This remarkable book tells the story of Nelken's experiences in the ghetto and later in eight Nazi concentration camps, including Plaszow, Auschwitz, and Ravensbrck. Her diary entries, written between 1938 and 1943, form the core of the volume and are supplemented by recollections written shortly after the war, and by later commentaries and explanatory notes which she added in the mid-1980s. Although there exist numerous published and unpublished memoirs by Holocaust survivors, Nelken's book presents one of the few extant diaries written at the time. Already released in Polish and German editions, it has been hailed as one of the finest works of its kind. Now it is available in English for the first time.

From Kirkus sAs a teenager, Nelken, who is Jewish, kept a diary of the permanent destruction of her comfortable life when the Nazis overran her homeland. Unlike Anne Frank, this girl survived the Holocaust to tell the full story. Now an art historian, she was born to a prosperous, assimilated Polish family. And she recalls, with bittersweet verisimilitude, her idyllic early days in Krakow the people and the pastry, the kitchens and the streets. Moved from home to the ghetto and to ever more confined quarters and constricted living conditions, Nelken goes on to describe the travails of her parents and brother, her friends at gimnazium (when she was allowed to attend school), her work (including enforced street cleaning), and, with special grace, her youthful yearnings and romances. Despite lack of rest and food, she notes the music, poetry, and aspirations she found in the ghetto. "Somehow," she wrote in her diary, "I hope that something will happen and my life will change for the better." Then the ghetto was closed, and Nelken, her mother, and sister-in-law were sent to the Plaszow, Auschwitz, and Ravensbrck concentration camps, where the likes of Amon Gth, Franz Hoessler, and Dr. Mengele were her keepers. By the closing days of the war, some prisoners were able to escape and, save for her father, the author and her immediate family endured. Her story of purgatory is a lifetime ago and a world away from her present life in academic Cambridge, Mass. But she fulfills a moral obligation

to remember the past, while urging us not to heed the "professional Holocaustniks" who weren't even there. "If only," she wishes for those who were, I could protect all of us from forgetfulness, individually, as we were, we living people!" In moving testimony, her legacy is another story snatched from six million. An intelligent and writerly memoir. (16 illustrations, not seen) -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "While memoirs of the war years abound, diaries kept at the time are rare. Still rarer are diaries as moving, intelligent, and well-written as this one. The work of an independent, highly observant, and talented girl, it invites comparison to The Diary of Anne Frank and does not lose in the comparison. . . . Nelken's book is a brilliant and engrossing portrayal of the coming of age of a Polish Jewish girl during the Second World War, as well as an authentic, eyewitness account of life in all its moral complexity in German-held Krakow and the concentrations camps." Alicia Nitecki, author of *Recovered Land* "A priceless document of rare value and importance, which allows the reader and the historian of the period to comprehend more clearly the psychological plight of the people locked in the ghetto, through the personal experience and thorough self-analysis of a young girl." Gideon Hausner, chief prosecutor, Eichman trial, and author of *Justice in Jerusalem* "Nelken's diary is one of the most important to survive from the Second World War. Written by a young girl from a protected and privileged background, it gives a unique and moving account of the Nazi occupation and of the experience of the camps of Plaszow and Auschwitz. . . . There are many memoirs and diaries of the Holocaust, but few with such immediacy and with such a genuine voice." Antony Polonsky, Brandeis University "As a teenager, Nelken, who is Jewish, kept a diary of the permanent destruction of her comfortable life when the Nazis overran her homeland. Unlike Anne Frank, this girl survived the Holocaust to tell the full story. Now an art historian, she was born to a prosperous, assimilated Polish family. And she recalls, with bittersweet verisimilitude, her idyllic early days in Krakow the people and the pastry, the kitchens and the streets. Moved from home to the ghetto and to ever more confined quarters and constricted living conditions, Nelken goes on to describe the travails of her parents and brother, her friends at gimnazium (when she was allowed to attend school), her work (including enforced street cleaning), and, with special grace, her youthful yearnings and romances. Despite lack of rest and food, she notes the music, poetry, and aspirations she found in the ghetto. Somehow," she wrote in her diary, "I hope that something will happen and my life will change for the better." Then the ghetto was closed, and Nelken, her mother, and sister-in-law were sent to the Plaszow, Auschwitz, and Ravensbrck concentration camps, where the likes of Amon Gth, Franz Hoessler, and Dr. Mengele were her keepers. By the closing days of the war, some prisoners were able to escape and, save for her father, the author and her immediate family endured. Her story of purgatory is a lifetime ago and a world away from her present life in academic Cambridge, Mass. But she fulfills a moral obligation to remember the past, while urging us not to heed the professional Holocaustniks" who weren't even there. If only," she wishes for those who were, I could protect all of us from forgetfulness, individually, as we were, we living people!" In moving testimony, her legacy is another story snatched from six million. An intelligent and writerly memoir. "Kirkus sLanguage NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: Polish