

In the Lion's Den: The Life of Oswald Rufeisen



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Oxford University Press Inc. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW PRINT ON DEMAND., In the Lion's Den: The Life of Oswald Rufeisen, Nechama Tec, A Jew passing as a Christian in occupied Poland during WWII, Oswald Rufeisen worked as translator and personal secretary to a Nazi commander of the German police, repeatedly risking his life to save hundreds from the Nazis. A relatively unknown Jewish hero and rescuer at the magnitude of Oskar Schindler, Rufeisen's life and role during the Holocaust is perhaps even more riveting and complex than the man memorialized by Stephen Spielberg in Schindler's List. Only seventeen years old when WWII began, Rufeisen joined the exodus of Poles who fled the approaching German army. Bright and talented, Rufeisen used his ability to speak fluent German to pass as half German and half Polish in Mir, where he came to serve the German commander 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 "Aktionen" and to sabotage Nazi plans. Most notably, he thwarted the annihilation of the Mir ghetto by arming hundreds of Jews and organizing their escape, and saved an entire Belorussian village from destruction. Eventually discovered and 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, similar to the Bielski unit of Tec's Defiance. After the war, Father Daniel (as he came to be known) became a priest and a Carmelite monk. Identifying himself as...



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