

(Free download) Defiance

Defiance

Nechama Tec

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Nechama Tec : Defiance before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Defiance:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating account of a heroic survivalBy Gregory BlockNechama Tec's "Defiance" is a fascinating account of the survival of 1200 Jews during the second world war. Three brothers - Tuvia, Asael and Zus Bielski, created a sanctuary in the forest for Jews fleeing from Nazi persecution and extermination in the ghettos. According to Tec, the Bielskis accepted all Jews, including those who were unarmed and

those who were not able to fight, such as children and the elderly. Despite several attacks from Germans, and continual friction from nearby Russian partisans, the Bielskis formed a "tribal society" that lasted until the Red Army liberated the group in 1944. It is hard to look back on the heroic efforts of the Bielskis without feeling a sense of awe. While the Germans slaughtered their families in the ghettos, a few escaped to join the Bielskis in the forest, suffering hunger, mistreatment, disease, and the fear of German raids. While the history is incredible, the narrative is uneven and apologist. Nechama Tec seems to be building a case for Tuvia Bielski. The author describes his infidelities, suspected favoritism, the peremptory execution of a tanner who refused to follow orders, and offers commentary, either in her own words or by using the thoughts of eyewitnesses, to rationalize Tuvia's behavior. In my mind, Tuvia needs no explanation or apologies. What he, his family, and the Jews who joined him in the forest achieved defies belief. Ed Zwick directed a movie, presumably based on this book. The movie makes several gratuitous and unnecessary departures from the book, presumably for dramatic effect. In addition, the movie focuses on the main characters at the expense of everyone else in the film. It seems as if the Jews spend the entire movie standing in line, waiting for food and complaining about the servings. This seems like an insult to the men and women who risked their lives and suffered so many deprivations.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I recommend this book. By G. Ryan I saw the movie *Defiance* in the theaters and wanted to read the book after seeing the movie. The book is even better than the movie with much more details about the Bielski brothers. The book by Nechama Tec is well written. It tells an interesting story about the war that how the brothers fought and how they went about saving many people. If you enjoyed *Schindler List*, you will enjoy this true story. I recommend this book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Epic Tale of Survival Against the Odds that Needs to be Proclaimed. By Thomas J. Novak This book is the clear-cut, unembellished, source of the material that was incorporated into the dramatic movie bearing the same name. Contained within its chapters are the sobering details of the heroic and courageous fight for survival of a band of Jews during World War II. Under the leadership of the Bielski brothers these Jews stood against the contempt and hatred of both Nazis and Soviets alike, and survived destruction despite the odds stacked against them. This is an historic account, and it provides significant details of the personalities involved, their challenges, their hopes and disappointments, and their commitment and sacrifices for each other in the midst of this epic struggle for survival. The maps and photographs contained within help bring this tale to life. A must-read to discover the hidden treasure of this little known story!

Nechama Tec tells the story of the largest armed rescue operation of Jews by Jews in World War II. Arguing that the success of the Bielski partisans, as the rescue organization came to be known, would have been unthinkable without the vision of one man, Tec offers penetrating insight into the group's commander, Tuvia Bielski. Tec brings to light the untold story of Bielski's struggle as a partisan who lost his parents, wife, and two brothers to the Nazis, yet never wavered in his conviction that it was more important to save one Jew than to kill twenty Germans. She shows how, under Bielski's guidance, the partisans smuggled Jews out of heavily guarded ghettos, scouted the roads for fugitives, and led retaliatory raids against Belorussian peasants who collaborated with the Nazis. Herself a Holocaust survivor, Nechama Tec here draws on wide-ranging research and never before published interviews with surviving partisans--including Tuvia Bielski himself--to reconstruct here the poignant and unforgettable story of those who chose to fight.

.com The prevailing image of European Jews during the Holocaust is one of helpless victims, but in fact many Jews struggled against the terrors of the Third Reich. In *Defiance*, Nechama Tec offers a riveting history of one such group, a forest community in western Belorussia that would number more than 1,200 Jews by 1944--the largest armed rescue operation of Jews by Jews in World War II. Tec reveals that this extraordinary community included both men and women, some with weapons, but mostly unarmed, ranging from infants to the elderly. She reconstructs for the first time the amazing details of how these partisans and their families--hungry, exposed to the harsh winter weather--managed not only to survive, but to offer protection to all Jewish fugitives who could find their way to them. Read the Foreword

Writer and director Edward Zwick reveals the challenges and personal significance of making a film adaptation of Nechama Tec's *Defiance*. Among his extensive film credits, Zwick is best known for his direction of *Blood Diamond* and *The Last Samurai*. An inevitable rite of passage in any Jewish child's informal initiation to adulthood is to study, with grim fascination, the grainy, out-of-focus images of hollow-eyed survivors in striped pajamas, the amateur photos of corpses piled high in freshly dug pits, or possibly the 16 mm handheld GI footage of living skeletons clinging to barbed wire during the liberation of the camps. Such grisly iconography of passivity and victimization was, during my childhood, and probably is still today, not only an article of faith, but also a source of secret shame. As an assimilated suburban kid growing up in the Midwest, I had thrilled to World War II stories about John Kennedy and PT 109 (Cliff Robertson in the movie version), the leatherneck marines at Guadalcanal (John Wayne), the flying fortresses over Germany (Gregory Peck), and so many more. In feeble contrast, Jewish heroes were the ancient biblical warriors evoked by uninspired Sunday school teachers--Bar Kochba and Judah Macabee wielding spears and jawbones, or young David with his little slingshot. So when my friend and collaborator, Clay Frohman, came to me with a book called *Defiance*, I was skeptical. "Not another Holocaust movie," I said. What was to be

accomplished, I asked myself, in telling yet another story of familiar and unspeakable horror, especially when an entire canon of literature, not to mention films both documentary and fiction, have already dramatized it in the most exacting and harrowing detail? What's more, the greatest historians and philosophers of our time have devoted entire careers to plumbing the roots and magnitude of its evil. What could I possibly add? But Clay was insistent. Here, he said, was something fresh and utterly provocative. And so, somewhat grudgingly, I plunged into Nechamas Tec's remarkable book and found myself deeply moved. That was ten years ago. And the feelings I had upon that first reading have only grown stronger with time. To read of the Bielski brothers and their fight to create a safe haven in the midst of a hell-on-earth evokes in me something utterly primitive and deeply personal, a roiling wave of fear, awe, humility, and admiration. And outrage, too--that such a story was not better known. Here, clutching captured Schmeisser submachine guns and "potatomasher" grenades, were Jewish fighters whose deeds were as stirring and brave as any I had ever encountered. And what's more, it was all true. In an age when the term "hero" has been so overused as to become meaningless, the Bielskis remind us that real heroism is not the stuff of comic books. Rather, it is a set of decisions, sometimes impulsive, often made by simple men of whom nothing of the sort could ever have been expected. Their story is not simply one of courage or fortitude in the face of adversity; it includes any number of daunting moral decisions--whether to seek vengeance or to rescue, how to re-create a sense of community among those who have lost everything, how to maintain hope when all seems forsaken. Read more Edward Zwick Santa Monica, Calif., 2008 From Publishers Weekly Tec (When Light Pierced the Darkness) relates the suspenseful and inspiring story of Jewish partisans who fought the Germans from their base in the Nalibocka Forest in Belorussia. Their leader, Tuvia Bielski, was an uneducated man who--though he had lost his parents, brothers and wife to the Germans--put efforts to preserve the lives of Jews above revenge. The partisans worked to rescue Jews in hiding and to smuggle Jews out of nearby ghettos, but also to punish Jewish collaborators. By the end of the war, Bielski had gathered more than 1200 Jews of all ages into the forest. That they suffered a loss of "only" 5% is remarkable, given that their refuge was virtually surrounded by Germans. Bielski died in 1987 and was buried in Jerusalem in a ceremony reserved for Israel's national heroes. Photos. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s Powerful account by Holocaust survivor Tec (Sociology/Univ. of Connecticut; In the Lion's Den, 1989, etc.) of the operations of a Jewish partisan group in WW II Belorussia. Seeking to counteract the widespread conception of European Jews as victims who went meekly to their deaths, Tec researched the extraordinary story of the three Bielski brothers and their partisan group, using interviews with group survivors in Israel, the US, and elsewhere. Led by the oldest brother, Tuvia, the partisan group had grown to more than 1,200 Jews by the time Russian forces liberated them in 1944. The Bielski brothers, Tec explains, determined early on to save not only themselves and their families but every Jew who would join them. Resisting efforts to limit their group only to fighters, Tuvia accepted any Jew until more than 70% of the group was comprised of women, children, and middle-aged and elderly men. A charismatic leader of limited education but great intelligence and diplomatic ability, Tuvia maintained good relations with a variety of other partisan groups, some initially hostile. Putting his emphasis on saving lives rather than on killing Germans, he nonetheless acted ruthlessly against those collaborating with the Nazis, and in so doing saved many Jewish lives. At the end of the war, with Stalin's control of Belorussia becoming more oppressive, Tuvia and his brothers escaped to Romania, traveling on to Palestine and then the US--although Tuvia never again gained the recognition or prominence that his leadership qualities might have justified. A remarkable story of a great leader, as well as of a neglected aspect of WW II. (Eleven halftones, two line drawings-- not seen) -- Copyright 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.