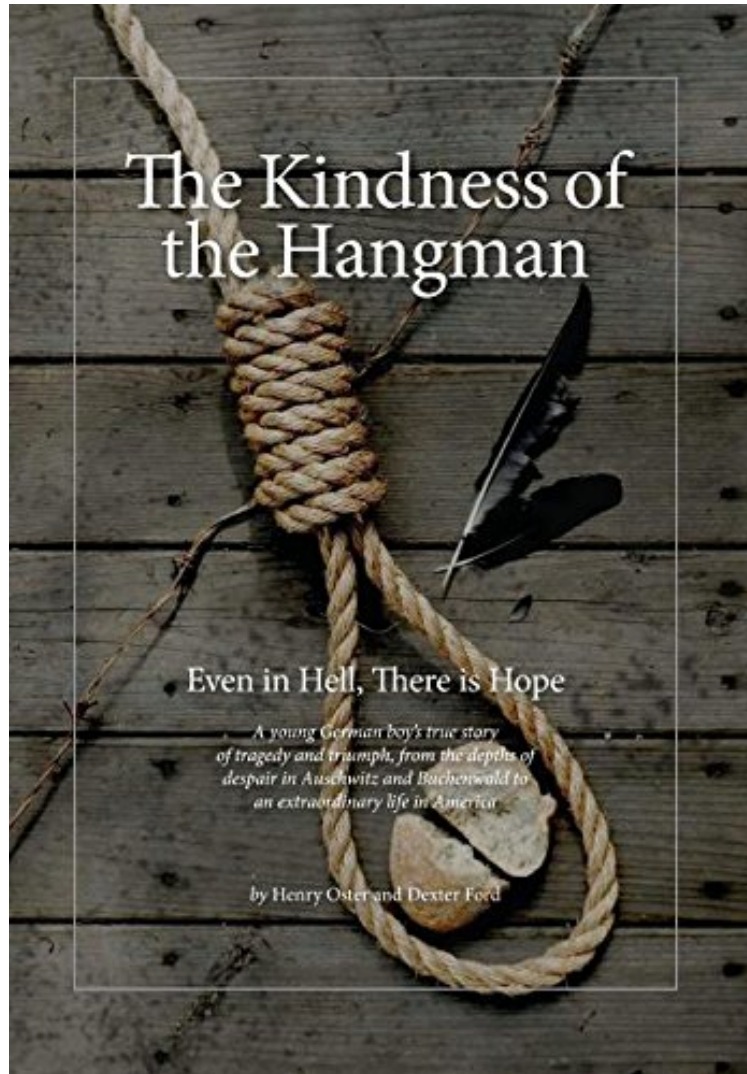


[Library ebook] The Kindness of the Hangman: Even in Hell, There is Hope

The Kindness of the Hangman: Even in Hell, There is Hope

Henry Oster, Dexter Tiffany Ford
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Henry Oster, Dexter Tiffany Ford : The Kindness of the Hangman: Even in Hell, There is Hope before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Kindness of the Hangman: Even in Hell, There is Hope:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Best survivor story I have ever readBy Morgan CroninBest survivor story I have ever read. This was a great addition to my collection of holocaust books. I would recommend everyone to read this book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. did not have a dull moment. HoweverBy CustomerInspiring story, did not have a dull moment. However, the author did not explain how he escaped the counting of the Germans when he was transferred from one place to another and shot at then he went back again to his

former barrack. Did not the capos and Germans missed him in their daily counts? 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Helpful explanations By Maria Aguilar In his book, Mr. Oster provides background information that explains the origin of certain events that I had not previously heard. His writing is easy to follow and helps the reader easily envision his experience.

The Kindness of the Hangman is the inspiring true story of a young German boy, Henry Oster, and his struggle for survival against Nazi persecution, slave labor, starvation and the threat of extermination. Henry Oster was just five years old, a wide-eyed boy from the beautiful ancient city of Cologne, Germany, when Adolf Hitler took power in 1933. Even though Henry's father was a wounded, decorated German soldier in World War I, the Nazis' cruel obsession with Jews turned the Oster's lives into a spiral of persecution and desperation. Henry and his family were ostracized, vilified and brutalized. They were torn from their home and deported to the infamous Lodz, Poland Ghetto, where desperate Jews were imprisoned on their way to the Nazi death camps. Henry struggled to keep himself and his family alive and together in a world where the slightest misstep would earn them a date with the Ghetto hangman. He worked crippling hours, scrounged and stole food, and hid his mother in a secret attic to avoid being captured in Nazi raids and shipped off to the killing camps in the Polish countryside. A Gestapo deception finally pushed them onto a stifling, filth-ridden cattle car, on a ride to a place whose name has come to symbolize the worst of humanity: Auschwitz. As others around him succumbed to the gas chambers, beatings, starvation and disease, Henry Oster somehow found the strength to stay alive. He and 130 other boys were assigned to work in the Auschwitz stables, breeding horses for the Russian invasion of the German war effort. He was put in charge of Barbarossa, a magnificent stallion, and was forced to help in the violent process of breeding Barbarossa with the mares. He survived selections for the gas chambers, a firing squad, a death march through the killing Polish winter, a strafing attack by Allied fighter-bombers and the last murderous throes of the Nazi Reich. As the Allied armies closed in on Berlin Henry was finally liberated, on the razor's edge of starvation, from the Buchenwald concentration camp by General George Patton's 3rd Army, among them sobbing African-American soldiers who understood the prejudice and injustice he had suffered for so many years. He was liberated alongside fellow teenager Elie Wiesel, author of the compelling, best-selling novel, *Night*, and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. Of the 2,011 Jews who were rounded up by the Gestapo and deported from Cologne, Henry Oster is the only person still alive to tell their story. He was one of only 19 German-speaking Jewish boys to emerge alive from the concentration camps after the war. Oster's struggles did not stop with his escape from the Nazis' persecution. After coming of age as a free young man in Paris he made his way to Los Angeles, arriving with no money, no English and no education. By pumping gas and fixing cars after school he worked his way through high school and UCLA, and became an influential and respected Professor of Optometry. At the age of 85 he was still seeing patients, helping the world to see. In 2011 Henry made a moving and triumphant return to Cologne, where he spoke before the Mayor, city officials, diplomats and Holocaust historians, and visited the Gunter Demnig art project of sidewalk plaques—"stumbling stones"—that memorialize his mother and father. Now, at the age of 87, Henry Oster is just as vibrant and determined as ever to tell the story of one of the last few survivors of the Nazi death camps, and to caution students and audiences all over the world about the racism, fascism and politics of fear that gave rise to the Nazi nightmarre, and which are still alive and well in otherwise civilized societies today.

"A raw memoir beyond imagination: one man's account of a child's bewildering, unbelievable true story. Is there a message? I do not know. Is there a time for contemplation, for silent reflection? Undoubtedly. Is there a time for confronting those fools who deny the Holocaust? Now, always. And forever." Stuart Kuttner Managing Editor News International "Henry Oster is more than a survivor. His recounting of coming back from feeling as if he "had died in many ways" is inspiring in its tone of rebirth, fealty to a loving family, honor to his heritage, and a victorious path in regaining control over his life in order to provide hope for a just world in the future." Linda Rader Overman, PhD Professor of English; author of *Letters Between Us* "It's not possible to imagine the horror of a Nazi death camp unless you were there, seeing it, breathing it, smelling it, shivering in the cold, making oneself invisible when the hand of death reaches out. But 16-year-old Jewish Henry Oster was there; condemned to four years of hell in Lodz, Birkenau, Auschwitz and Buchenwald. With author Dexter Ford he gives chilling firsthand descriptions, of the systematic slaughter of inmates when they could no longer perform useful work, and how he, with determination, brains and luck somehow survived. "The Kindness of The Hangman" had a particularly strong impact on me. I visited the Auschwitz Museum in 1962. I took the tour through the primitive barracks and the showers with the coat hangers on the walls. I saw the tubes down which they dropped the Zyklon B gas, the huge steel door upon which corpses got stacked high while the dying tried to escape. I saw the carts outside on which Sonderkommandos (prison workers) piled corpses, pulled out gold teeth and shoved remains into the ovens. I saw the bins of clothing, prostheses, and human hair saved for the Nazi war effort. "The Kindness of The Hangman" brought it all back. I got goose bumps. But it also inspired me, knowing that a skinny Jewish kid could escape this hell to become a highly respected professor in my home town of Los Angeles. This is not just another Holocaust book. This is the real item that can change your life". Stan Mott, Author, *The Absolute Alliance* About the Author In 1933 Henry Oster was just 5 years old, a carefree kindergartner in

Cologne, Germany, when Adolf Hitler and the Nazis seized power. For the next 12 years Henry struggled to keep on breathing while his family, his friends and the Jews of Europe were overwhelmed by the Holocaust. Henry hid his mother from the SS in an attic in the Lodz, Poland Ghetto. He escaped a firing squad in Auschwitz. Endured a death march through the Polish winter. Formed a life-long friendship in the nightmare barracks of the Buchenwald concentration camp. Saw his friends killed by a British fighter-bomber. And came within hours of starving to death before his liberation by General Patton's 3rd Army. Henry rebuilt his life from nothing, coming of age as a free young man in Paris. He arrived in the U.S. with no English, no money and no education. And from the ashes of a ruined past built a life full of love, joy and compassion. Now, complete with chilling documents liberated from the Nazi concentration camps themselves, his heartbreaking, triumphant story can finally be told.