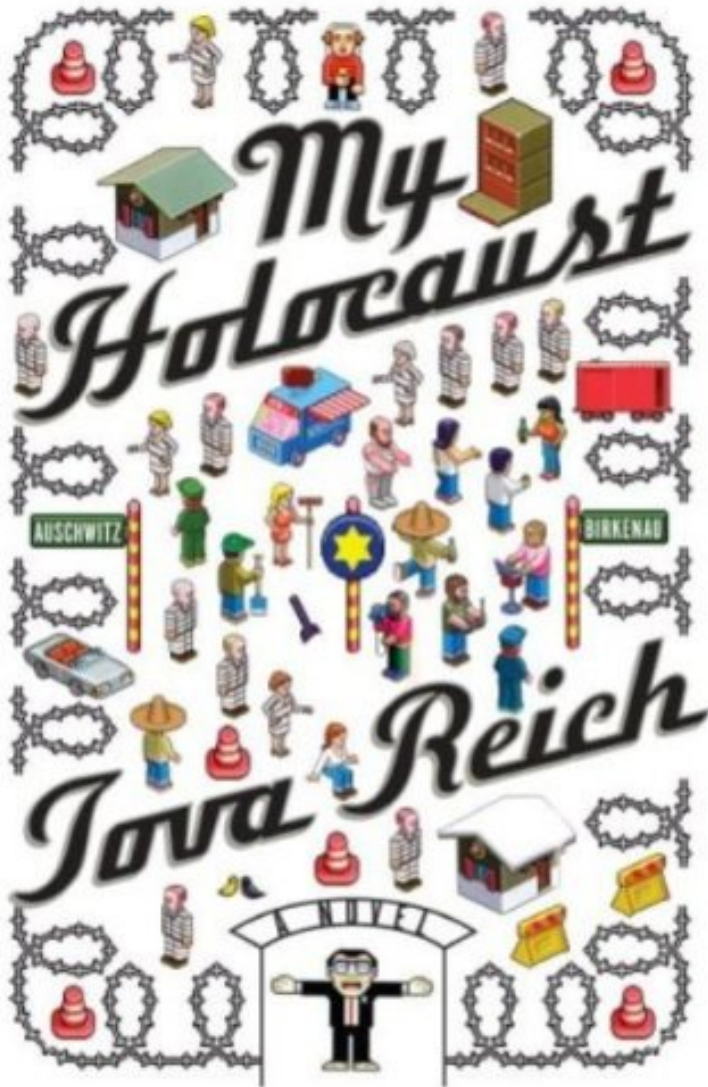


(Download free ebook) File size: 41.Mb

My Holocaust: A Novel



Par Tova Reich

*audiobook | *ebooks | Download PDF
| ePub | DOC*

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #193163 dans eBooksPubli le: 2009-10-13Sorti le: 2009-10-13Format: Ebook Kindle

(Download free ebook) My Holocaust: A Novel

Par Tova Reich : My Holocaust: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Holocaust: A Novel:

Download

Read Online

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurMaurice and Norman Messer, father-and-son business partners, know a good product when they see it. That product is the Holocaust, and Maurice, a Holocaust survivor with an inflated personal history, and Norman, enjoying vicarious victimhood as a participant in the second-generation movement, proceed to market it enthusiastically. Not even the disappearance of Nechama, Norman's daughter and Maurice's granddaughter, into the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz, where she is transformed into a nun, Sister Consolatia of the Cross, deters them from pushing their agenda. Father and son embark on a tour of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, which Mauricenow the driving force behind the most powerful Holocaust memorialization institution in Americaorganizes to soften up a potential major donor, and which Norman takes advantage of to embark on a surrealistic search for his daughter. At the death camp they run

into assorted groups and individuals all clamoring for a piece of the Holocaust, including Buddhist New Agers on a retreat, Israeli schoolchildren on a required heritage pilgrimage, a Holocaust artifact hustler, filmmakers, and an astonishing collection of others. All hell breaks loose when Maurice's museum is taken over by a coalition of self-styled victims seeking Holocaust status, bringing together a vivid cast of all-too-human characters, from Holocaust professionals to Holocaust wannabees of every persuasion, in the fevered competition to win the grand prize of owning the Holocaust. An inspiringly courageous and shockingly original tour-de-force, *My Holocaust* dares to penetrate territory until now considered sacrosanct in its brilliantly provocative and darkly comic exploration of the uses and abuses of memory and the meaning of human suffering. From Publishers Weekly

In this savage satire of Holocaust commemoration's misuses, Reich paints and pillories a culture of victimhood that, with its accompanying commemorative kitsch, all but eclipses the actual victims. Novelist Reich (*The Jewish War*) sketches a gallery of "Holocaust hangers-on," grotesques eager to hijack the Shoah for tawdry commercial and ideological purposes. Presiding over the strategic exploitation is Maurice Messer, a retired ladies' undergarment maker who has parlayed inflated claims of being an anti-Nazi partisan into the chairmanship of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; his feckless son, Norman, president of Holocaust Connections Inc., a brand consultancy with the motto "Make Your Cause a Holocaust" (of which Maurice is board chairman); Norman's daughter, Nechama, who has embarrassingly run off to join the convent across the street from Auschwitz; and Maurice's right-hand man, Monty Pincus, who expertly deploys melancholy over the six million to seduce women. Once the idea of the "Chinese Holocaust" (the "rape" of Nanking) or the "Native American Holocaust" gain traction, however, Maurice and Norman may not be able to control the results. Whether Maurice and Norman are rebranding "mountains of shorn hair" from Auschwitz for "an anti-fur organization eager to firm up its Holocaust status" or schmoozing ecumenically with a Holocaust-denying Arab terrorist, Reich's satire is broad, scabrous, cynical, over-the-top, often hilarious and likely to cause a scandal. (Apr.)

Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *The Washington Post's Book World*/washingtonpost.com ed by Melvin Jules Bukiet

Your mom's a drunk; your dad's a slut. Big deal! Your little sister has cancer. You have cancer. Your whole family has cancer. So what? They drove you off your land, enslaved your people; your shoes are too small. Cut that whining and consider the Holocaust. According to Tova Reich's passionately parodic new book, "There's no contest. We Jews win this one hands down!" In fact, everyone in *My Holocaust* does little but consider the slaughter of 6 million Jews during the 1930s and '40s. Well, that and the benefits they derive from keeping lit the eternal flame of remembrance. For Maurice Messer and his nebbishy son Norman, genocide is the gift that keeps giving. Maurice is chair of the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, and Norman runs a company called Holocaust Connections that will grant the coveted H-word seal to any catastrophe, ranging from the Native American Holocaust to the Middle Passage Holocaust to the Fur Holocaust to whatever private Holocaust its customers prefer. The only problem that Maurice and Norman have is that Nechama, the sole Messer of the so-called third generation, has just changed her name to Sister Consolatia of the Cross and entered the Carmelite monastery at Auschwitz as a nun. Then we get to page 2. An innocent eye -- if such a thing exists anymore -- might assume that this is shock for shock's sake, yet Reich is not trivializing. Precisely the opposite; she's writing about trivializing. Turns out that Norman's got a law degree and is quite willing to stipulate with breathtaking self-righteousness, "The simple fact is, we're more human than other people because of what our parents went through," while Maurice "never met a microphone he did not want to make love to." No less than divine justice makes it "the obligation of the world to listen to him now, an old survivor with a chopped-liver accent and gefilte-fish grammar" who proudly waves his (dubious) partisan credentials to prove that Jews did not "go like sheep to the slaughter." Serious and hilarious and utterly scathing -- no, lacerating; no, disemboweling -- *My Holocaust* takes no prisoners in its two short, bookended chapters and its two lengthy set pieces, one inside the museum's hallowed walls and another on a special donors' tour of Auschwitz. Reich knows this territory intimately; her husband, Walter, used to be the head of the D.C. institution she now pillories. As for plot, Maurice wants money from Gloria Bacon Lieb, a serial wedder of wealthy men, while Gloria wants a job for her moronic, P.C. daughter Bunny, who says, "I really really appreciate it that Auschwitz is wheelchair-accessible. . . . Was it always that way -- I mean, even at the time of the Holocaust?" Unfortunately, it's high season at "this miserable tourist town with mass murder as its main and sole attraction," so we meet characters ranging from camp hustler Tommy Messiah, who sells fake cans of Zyklon B, to Palestinian sexpot Leyla Salmani, who's there to film "The Triumph of the Traumatized." There's also a Buddhist -- read: formerly Jewish -- contingent led by Mickey Fisher-roshi

omming, "Oneness to all of our Holocausts, oneness in honoring our Holocaust diversity. So deep. So deep!" There's something in My Holocaust to offend everyone, not merely the old folks of Zion, who, post-Goebbels and Roth, should know how to take a joke by now, but also Catholics, Mormons, Muslims, seekers and strivers of all persuasions. But note that although I've used words like "character" and "plot" to describe elements of Reich's book, I've avoided the word "novel." My Holocaust is not a traditional narrative aiming for either 19th-century verisimilitude or 20th-century inner consciousness. It's a more ancient form: satire. In satire's extremity, there's no need for the characters to grow and change, interact in any human way, or for the author to justify, for example, the reappearance of virtually everyone we met at Auschwitz at the book's climax during an attempted takeover of the museum. Never mind. They're all welcome to the circus. These include the Elie Wiesel-like "High Priest" of the Holocaust as well as Abu Shahid, "minister of jihad of the extremist Palestinian organization From the River to the Sea," who's there as part of the "Teach a Terrorist program." And we're willing to accept -- if not precisely believe -- that poor Abu Shahid's son was "on track to become the world's greatest jihad martyr for Allah, a hero of Islam. But then the rabbis got hold of him when he was on holiday in Ukraine." Now the schmuck sports earlocks and a gaberdine. "Chabad, Hamas -- what's the difference?" Throughout the book, Reich goes too far, a clear strategy to spark attention after reams of authentic or sanctimonious tears have drowned many people's capacity to feel genuine grief. Reich accomplishes this by turning tragedy into a farce of greed and phony redemption and cheap moralism in which "everyone wants a piece of the Holocaust pie." Still, Reich reserves her most brutal commentary for the so-called "universalists" who use empathy and spuriously heartfelt identification to exterminate the particular, historical tragedy of the Jewish people. As usual, unknowing Maurice says it best. The purpose of the Holocaust is "to make lessons, of course, to make memorials mit morals." Yet there's almost -- dare I say it? -- faith at work in Reich's willful outrage. Faith that evil is at large in the world. Also faith that we're too stupid to see it for more than a blink in time. "Who," she cries, "would ever have imagined that this . . . would metastasize into a fatal plague of persecutees, an epidemic of victims, a pestilence of freelance and copycat Holocausts?" Beneath the humor lies the pure fury that once animated thoughts about the original atrocity. Tova Reich is the master of fury's return. Copyright 2007, The Washington Post. All Rights Reserved.