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## Rena's Promise: A Story of Sisters in Auschwitz

Von Rena Kornreich Gelissen, Heather Dune Macadam  
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Von Rena Kornreich Gelissen, Heather Dune Macadam : Rena's Promise: A Story of Sisters in Auschwitz  
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rena's Promise: A  
Story of Sisters in Auschwitz:

Kurzbeschreibung An expanded edition of the powerful memoir about two sisters' determination to survive during the Holocaust featuring new and never before revealed information about the first transport of women to Auschwitz. Sent to Auschwitz on the first Jewish transport, Rena Kornreich survived the Nazi death camps for over three years. While there she was reunited with her sister Danka. Each day became a struggle to fulfill the promise Rena made to her mother when the family was forced to split apart--a promise to take care of her sister. One of the few Holocaust memoirs about the lives of women in the camps, *Rena's Promise* is a compelling story of the fleeting human connections that fostered determination and made survival a possibility. From the bonds between mothers, daughters, and sisters, to the links between prisoners, and even prisoners and guards, *Rena's Promise* reminds us of the humanity and hope that survives inordinate inhumanity.

From Publishers Weekly: Imagining that, by volunteering for a work camp, she would somehow be protecting her family from the Nazis, Rena, at age 17, put on her best clothes, left her fiancé and the Polish village of Tylicz in the Carpathian Mountains and was sent off to Auschwitz. Presently, her sister Danka arrived, as did cousins, schoolmates and neighbors. As a child, she had promised her mother to look after her baby sister, and that promise obsessed her throughout her incarceration in the camp. It gave her reason to survive, so that one day she could bring Danka safely home. How they escaped starvation, beatings, the crematorium, the medical experiments of the notorious Josef Mengele and survived the end of the war is all recounted here in this spirited survivor's testament, written with freelancer Macadam. After the war, Rena married a Red Cross worker and emigrated to the U.S., following her sister.

From Library Journal: Gelissen, who was on the first Jewish transport to Auschwitz, describes in this account the constant struggle for survival in the camp. She soon learns there were no guarantees. Rena's motivation came strongly from a promise to her parents to keep her younger sister, Danka, safe. Her account describes the relentless specter of death while at the same time showing how prisoners would risk their lives to smuggle medicine, clothes, and food to other prisoners. Because Rena was an early prisoner in Auschwitz, she describes some of the confusion at the beginning and the realization of what was really happening to the Jewish people. Helpful features of the book include historical notes and a section describing the fate of the people the sisters knew. This memoir captures the horror of Auschwitz in a clear way that helps the reader understand the atrocities perpetrated there. Recommended for Holocaust collections.

Mary Salony, West Virginia Northern Community Coll. Lib., Wheeling Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.