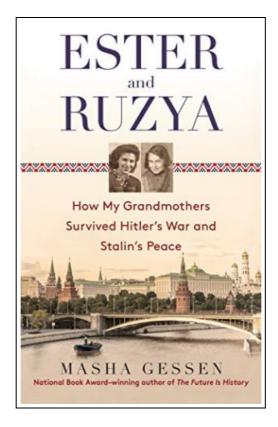
Ester and Ruzya: How My Grandmothers Survived Hitlers War and Stalins Peace



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Reviews

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(Derick Brekke)

ESTER AND RUZYA: HOW MY GRANDMOTHERS SURVIVED HITLERS WAR AND STALINS PEACE



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Dial Press. Paperback. Condition: New. 384 pages. Dimensions: 8.1in. x 5.1in. x 0.6in.In the 1930s, as waves of war and persecution were crashing over Europe, two young Jewish women began separate journeys of survival. One, a Polish-born woman from Bialystok, where virtually the entire Jewish community would soon be sent to the ghetto and from there to Hitlers concentration camps, was determined not only to live but to live with pride and defiance. The other, a Russian-born intellectual and introvert, would eventually become a high-level censor under Stalins regime. At wars end, both women found themselves in Moscow, where informers lurked on every corner and anti-Semitism reigned. It was there that Ester and Ruzya would first cross paths, there that they became the closest of friends and learned to trust each other with their lives. In this deeply moving family memoir, journalist Masha Gessen tells the story of her two beloved grandmothers: Ester, the quicksilver rebel who continually battled the forces of tyranny; Ruzya, a single mother who joined the Communist Party under duress and made the compromises the regime exacted of all its citizens. Both lost their first loves in the war. Both suffered unhappy unions. Both were gifted linguists who made their living as translators. And both had children a boy, and Ruzya a girlwho would grow up, fall in love, and have two children of their own: Masha and her younger brother. With grace, candor, and meticulous research, Gessen peels back the layers of secrecy surrounding her grandmothers lives. As she follows them through this remarkable period in historyfrom the Stalin purges to the Holocaust, from the rise of Zionism to the fall of communismshe describes how each of her grandmothers, and before them her great-grandfather, tried to navigate a dangerous line between conscience and compromise. Ester...



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