



Accident of Fate: A Personal Account, 1938-1945 (Life Writing)

Imre Rochlitz, Joseph Rochlitz

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Accident of Fate is a first-hand account of persecution, rescue, and resistance in the Axis-occupied former Yugoslavia. At the age of thirteen, Imre Rochlitz fled to Yugoslavia from his childhood home in Vienna following the Nazi Anschluss, leaving his family behind. In January 1942 the Ustashe (Croatian Fascists) arrested and interned him in the Jasenovac death camp, where he dug mass graves. On the verge of death, Rochlitz was released due to the extraordinary intervention of a Nazi general. He escaped to the Adriatic coast, where he and several thousand other Jewish refugees were protected by the army of Fascist Italy. After Italy's surrender, he joined Tito's Partisans, becoming an officer and army veterinarian, and rescued dozens of downed Allied airmen. In 1945, he fled Yugoslavia's Communist regime and reached liberated southern Italy. In 1947, at the age of twenty-two, he emigrated to the United States.

With unique personal photographs and documents supporting the text, this eyewitness narrative covers little-known topics and provides a revealing historical account of the period. The book helps clarify and render accessible the complexities and contradictions of conflict and genocide in wartime Yugoslavia.



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