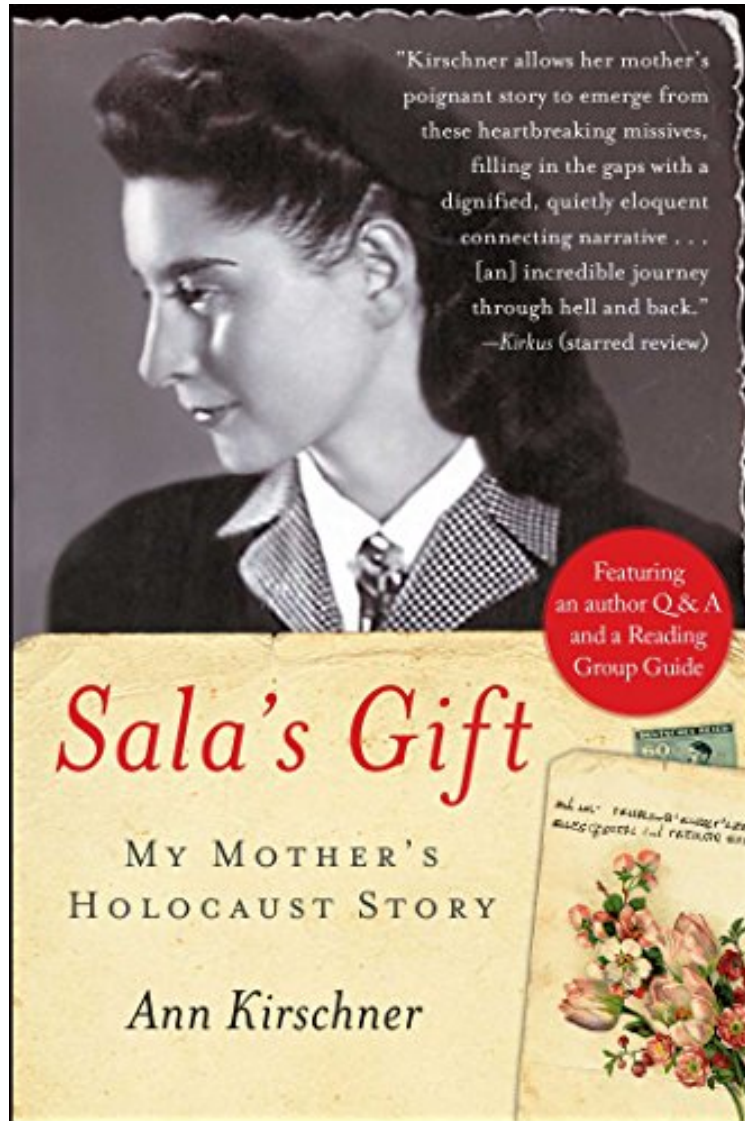


(Free download) Sala's Gift: My Mother's Holocaust Story

## Sala's Gift: My Mother's Holocaust Story

Ann Kirschner

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#747525 in Books Ann Kirschner 2007-06-12 2007-06-12Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.44 x .80 x 5.50l, .70 #File Name: 1416541705320 pagesSala s Gift My Mother s Holocaust Story | File size: 15.Mb

**Ann Kirschner : Sala's Gift: My Mother's Holocaust Story** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sala's Gift: My Mother's Holocaust Story:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A major contributionBy Trudie BarrerasBecause I was so intrigued by Kirschner's research ability and writing style in her biography of Josephine Earp, and because I am convinced that the stories of the Holocaust MUST be told before all the eye-witnesses and primary sources are gone, I was delighted to be able to obtain this book. I have not been disappointed.It is of course quite different to write about one's own mother from direct interview, and to draw a biography from secondary sources. And yet, in many ways, Kirschner

experienced some of the same challenges. Her mother's long-time reluctance to share her story, broken only when she was facing major surgery and finally decided to allow Ann to read all the correspondence from the time in the labor camps, was in a way the precursor of the difficulty the author later encountered obtaining the carefully hidden stories of the Earps in her subsequent writing. One vitally important insight that this narrative has confirmed for me is the incredible damage that can be inflicted by suppression of information. Obviously, the Nazi atrocities would never have been possible if there had not been a conspiracy of silence in which, sadly, the victims as well as the perpetrators were complicit. As Sala was writing to, and hearing from, her friends and relatives, the tendency from both sides was to gloss over the horrific details, not only to avoid censorship, but also to "spare" loved ones from anguish. Yet the end result was always that the situation simply got worse and worse. Truth at the beginning might well have prevented catastrophe at the end. It is my profound hope that not only the sharing of personal stories like Sala's, but also the wide availability of instantaneous news sharing that was impossible in the 1940's, will allow all of us to confront dangers and challenge tyranny with much greater effect. Kirschner has made a major contribution to this effort.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Letters received in Nazi work camp, revealed almost 50 years after the fact. By Edward Marritz This is a great story, and it's told beautifully by Ann Kirschner. She combines her formidable researching skill with an unsentimental and heartfelt tale about her own mother's Holocaust story. Because Sala, wasn't imprisoned in a death camp, we learn a largely untold story of Nazi work camps and how slave labor fueled the Nazi war machine. We learn about Sala's protector, Ala Gartner, being hung in Auschwitz for her role in the Sonderkommando uprising which resulted in the decimation of a crematorium. Just when the world was ready to write off the Holocaust, we're given valuable insight into actual lives. Sala's gift refers to the 300+ letters Sala managed to retain throughout her imprisonment over a 5 year span. Sala never saw herself as anything special, but the testimony of the letters she preserved and protected mark her as an extraordinary woman.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. "Sala's Gift" By Customer This is a very moving depiction of the life of a very young girl caught up in the holocaust. The book provides an outstanding description of life in the ghetto for a young girl who is somewhat of a cannon ball. I found some of the letters sent to Sala from her sister to be repetitive and didn't seem to "move the story line." Also, I noted a few inconsistencies in the book. On one occasion it was noted a particular German family didn't know any Nazi's and didn't even know what the movement was all about. Two pages after that, the book refutes this. Later on in the book it is revealed that the son of this German family was actually a Nazi officer. Now, if this family had no knowledge of the Nazi movement, and their son was serving as a German military man - something is convoluted. I must however say, that the end of the book was actually the most significant and moving part as Sala revisits her homeland with her family five decades later. It is a very good book and I recommend it, but be expected to get a little bored with some back and forth letter writing. E. A. Slanga

"Ann Kirschner allows her mother's poignant story to emerge from these heartbreaking missives, filling in the gaps with a dignified, quietly eloquent connecting narrative an incredible journey through hell and back" (Kirkus Reviews, starred review). For nearly fifty years, Sala Kirschner kept a secret: She had survived five years as a slave in seven different Nazi work camps. Living in America after the war, she kept hidden from her children any hint of her epic, inhuman odyssey. She held on to more than 350 letters, photographs, and a diary without ever mentioning them. Only in 1991, on the eve of heart surgery, did she suddenly present them to Ann, her daughter, and offer to answer any questions Ann wished to ask. When Sala first reported to a camp in Geppersdorf, Germany, at the age of sixteen, she thought it would be for six weeks. Five years later, she was still at a labor camp and only she and two of her sisters remained alive of an extended family of fifty. Sala's Gift is a heartbreaking, eye-opening story of survival and love amidst history's worst nightmare.

From Publishers Weekly This moving account illuminates a little-known aspect of the Holocaust: Organization Schmelt, in which Jewish leaders supplied slave labor to the Germans for the war effort. In 1940, 16-year-old Sala Gancarz, a young Polish Jew (and the author's mother), went to work in a Schmelt labor camp in place of her frail older sister, Raizel, who had been ordered there for six weeks by the local Jewish Council. But six weeks stretched into five years. Sala worked at seven German, Polish and Czech camps until she was liberated by Russian soldiers. In 1999 Sala shared with the author the box of letters that she had written and received during this period. Sala survived by her wits and the protection of Ala Gertner, an older woman who was later hanged for participating in an uprising at Auschwitz. Sala's correspondence with Ala after the latter left the work camp, and the letters she exchanged with Raizel and other family members and friends are heartrending testimony to the extreme suffering of Polish Jews. After the war, Sala married an American soldier and immigrated to the U.S. Kirschner, president of a management consulting company, has skillfully crafted her mother's documents, interspersed with a powerful and informed narrative. 16 pages of photos. (Nov. 7) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist Kirschner knew that her mother was born in Poland, the youngest of 11 children, and that she had survived a Nazi camp and came to the U.S. as a war bride. In 1991, when Sala Kirschner was 67, she learned that she needed triple-bypass surgery and then showed her daughter a collection of more than 350 letters,

postcards, and scraps of paper, some written in barely legible, tiny, cramped handwriting, others in beautiful italic script, and some dashed off in blunt pencil scrawls. They were from her years in seven labor camps from 1940 to 1945. The letters were written by more than 80 people and they told the story of a family, a city, and an elaborate system of slavery. There are hand-drawn birthday cards, some with poems, and love letters that had been smuggled to Kirschner's mother by a suitor named Harry. Kirschner posits that these private papers "create an emotional history of the war, a complex figure of fear, loneliness, and despair, always returning to the dominant theme of hope for tomorrow." George Cohen Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Kirschner allows her mother's poignant story to emerge from these heartbreaking missives, filling in the gaps with a dignified, quietly eloquent connecting narrative...[an] incredible journey through hell and back." -- Kirkus (starred review)"Sala Kirschner spent five years as a slave in Nazi camps as a teen. Now her daughter has gathered Sala's vintage snapshots and the letters that reached her in the camps into a moving volume." -- People"Evidence of humanity in the face of terrible conditions and of the religious faith and ritual that persisted despite the Nazi campaign to eliminate the Jews." -- The New York Times Book "Sala's unique, stirring end-of-life gift are the letters and photos she received from her sister Raizel when Sala was a slave laborer.... A touching, interesting, and valuable history, one in which the personalities of the principals shine through the wretchedness." -- Jewish Book World