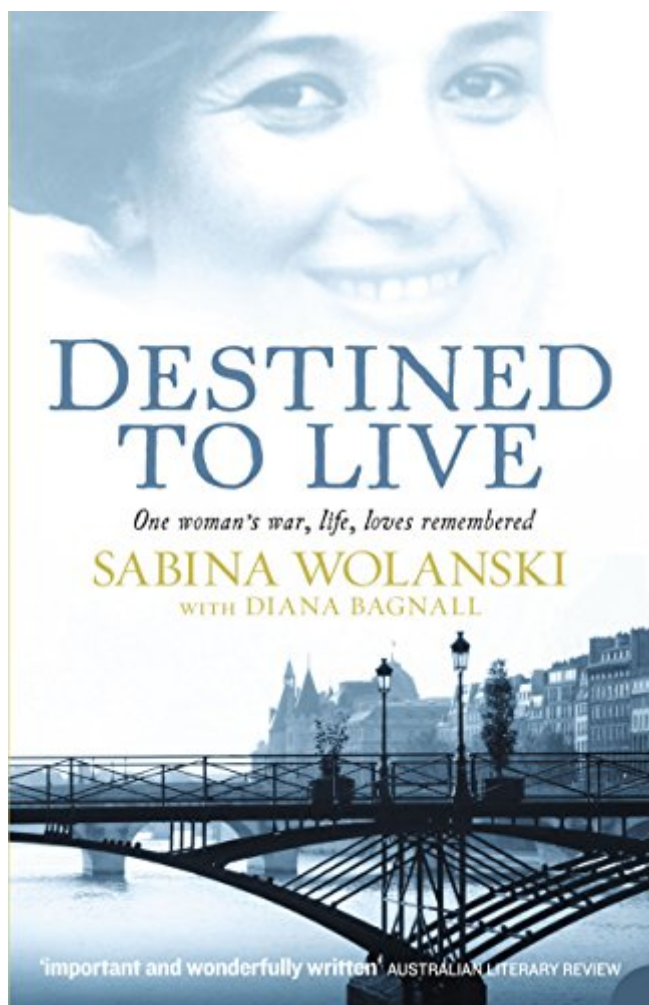


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Destined To Live: One Woman's War, Life, Loves Remembered



Synopsis

An extraordinary story of courage, forgiveness and reconciliation. Sabina Wolanski was just 12 years old when her home town in Poland was invaded by Nazis. In her diary, along with innocent adolescent longings, she recorded what happened next: the humiliations and terrors, the murder of her beloved family and the startling story of her own survival. Leaving Europe after the war, Sabina forged a new life in Australia, juggling a thriving design business, her family, and an unorthodox love life. But as time wore on, she began asking herself why had she survived when so many died? And what kind of justice fitted such crimes? In May 2005, when Germany opened its controversial Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, in Berlin, Sabina was chosen to speak as the voice of the six million dead. In her speech she noted that although the Holocaust had taken everything she valued, it had also taught her that hatred and discrimination are doomed to fail. Her ability to survive, to love, and to live well, has been her greatest triumph. 'I couldn't put down this engaging, honest story of love, loss and survival.' Diane Armstrong, bestselling author of *THE VOYAGER OF THEIR LIFE* 'important and wonderfully written' Australian Literary Review

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Customer Reviews

At first, I thought the author was selfish and self centered. However, she was protecting herself and hiding her emotions. This book talks about racism and is much more than a memoir.

Excellent story. I spent most of the day reading it from start to finish. I just couldn't put it down! Sabina's story will stay with me for a very long time.

Interesting read..lots of history!!!

A very moving story.

Highly recommend this story.

very moving story

If you follow my blog then you'll already know that I don't read or review much non fiction, especially not memoirs, but we read about some of Sabina Wolanski's story at the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin and when we found out they had an English copy of her memoir for sale we immediately bought a copy. Sabina actually gave a speech at the opening of the memorial and we heard a recording of part of that speech while touring the museum and I found her words were both poignant and deeply meaningful considering the rise of prejudice and hatred that just seems to be building in the west over the last few years.QUOTE: "What have I learned from my bitter experience? I have learned that hatred begets hatred. I have learned that we must not remain silent and that each of us as an individual must fight the evil of racism, discrimination, prejudice, inhumanity."This book isn't an easy read, it took me a long time to read because I kept getting so emotional and had to take a break and walk away. I cried buckets of tears while reading and I'm welling up again now as I write this review, but don't let that put you off picking up a copy because it's such an important story.Sabina was just 12 years old when Nazis invaded her hometown of Boryslaw (at the time part of Poland but now within Ukraine borders) and her world was turned upside down. She talks unflinchingly about the aktions she witnessed, the way people were rounded up and sent to death camps to be gassed like her mother or just shot in the head like her father and brother. She talks about her fears and how as a child she just couldn't understand the way she was suddenly no longer able to attend school or play with her non Jewish friends, she goes into detail about life in the ghettos created to house Jewish people and about her time spent hiding in

underground shelters or people's basements trying to avoid detection. Out of all the countries in Europe Poland suffered the largest losses of Jewish life under Hitler's regime, out of 3.5 million Jews before the war 3 million people were murdered. From a Jewish population of 15,000 in and around Boryslaw Sabina was one of an estimated 800 survivors. Those kind of numbers are just so hard to comprehend, it's a tragedy on a scale that I can't wrap my head around it but that's why books like this one are so incredibly important. Sabina puts a human face to just one of those stories while so many more have been forgotten and will never be told. This book should be required reading for everyone and if you ever go to Berlin then the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe is also a must visit. This isn't only about Sabina's life during the war though, it's also about her life after she escapes Europe and emigrates to Australia. You can see the way the events she witnessed shaped her whole life but she fought against all odds to survive and even travelled back to Germany to be a witness at the trial of the man who ordered the murders of her father and brother. Sabina's story is one of survival against the darkest odds, it's about the people who were willing to risk their lives to help her along the way and it's about good triumphing over evil. The most important message is that we must never forget this tragedy and we must never allow it to happen again. QUOTE: "I understood that while anti-Semitism had been my particular burden to bear, prejudice and hatred in any form, whether it be against blacks, or Asians, or Muslims, or women, demeaned humanity and contained within it the seeds of evil. I understood, and wanted future generations to understand, that those who remained silent in the face of prejudice and hatred gave prejudice and hatred permission not only to exist but to flourish."

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