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I'm No Hero: Journeys Of A Holocaust Survivor (Samuel And Althea Stroum Books)

I'm No Hero
Journeys of a Holocaust Survivor



HENRY FRIEDMAN

FOREWORD BY MICHAEL BERENBAUM



Synopsis

Henry Friedman was robbed of his adolescence by the monstrous evil that annihilated millions of European Jews and changed forever the lives of those who survived. When the Nazis overran their home town near the Polish-Ukrainian border, the Friedman family was saved by Ukrainian Christians who had worked at their farm. Henry, his mother, his younger brother, and a young schoolteacher who had been hired by his father when Jews were forbidden to attend school were hidden in a loft over the animal stalls at a neighbor's farm; his father hid in another hayloft half a mile away. When the family was liberated by the Russians after eighteen months in hiding, Henry, at age fifteen, was emaciated and too weak to walk. The Friedmans eventually made their way to a displaced persons camp in Austria where Henry learned quickly to wheel and deal, seducing women of various ages and nationalities and mastering the intricacies of dealing in the black market. In *I'm No Hero*, he confronts with unblinking honesty the pain, the shame, and the bizarre comedy of his passage to adulthood. The family came to Seattle in 1949, where Henry Friedman has made his home ever since. In 1988 he returned with his wife to Brody and Suchowola, where he succeeded in finding Julia Symchuk, who, as a young girl, had warned his father that the Gestapo was looking for him, and whose family had hidden the Friedmans in their loft. The following year he was able to bring Julia to Seattle for a triumphal visit, where she was honored in many ways, although, as Friedman writes, in her own country she had never been honored with anything except hard work. Like many other survivors, Henry Friedman has found it difficult to confront his past. Like others, too, he has felt the obligation to bear witness. Now retired, he devotes much of his time to telling his story, which he believes is a message of hope, to thousands of schoolchildren throughout the Pacific Northwest. He has received national recognition for his role in establishing the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC, and as a founder of the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center.

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Customer Reviews

Henry, thank your very much for sharing your story. It was great to have meet you in person at ISD.

This book is an intriguing tale of one man's survival through one of the most atrocious events in history. I feel like I know him as a person very well and having met the man will definitely look at him differently in the future. With graphic detail Mr. Friedman shares his story of coming of age after hiding in a room no bigger than a queen mattress. I highly recommend this book.

It is always eye opening to hear how people survive and come to thrive.

I'm No Hero reminded me of Scheissshaus Luck: irreverant, youthful, and full of hutzpah. Both authors were young men who found the war and their internment to be no reason to stop chasing women, taking advantage of opportunities for self-benefit, or struggling with the adolescent angst of moving from child to man. At times, I didn't like the people they were, but that doesn't make this a less important Holocaust memoir. I think it is important for those of us who come after that victims of the Holocaust were not first and foremost heroes, but people. People who acted with dignity and heroism, people who acted foolishly or with self-interest, people who did the best they could with little to no support or resources. After all, could we truly say that we could have done any differently?

For me this book was truly a Godsend. Because I was never aware of the complete history of my family's experience during the holocaust, I always hungered to know the truth. When I recieved the

book, "I'm no Hero" written by my Uncle, it filled in a part of my heritage that I truly needed to understand. I could not put the book down and to think that my Uncle has now dedicated the last years of his life re living this horrific part of his past to educate students all over the country I can only say, while his book is entitled "I'm no Hero" in my book he is.

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