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# The Cage: A Holocaust Memoir



## Synopsis

A testament to the enduring strength of the human spirit, family, and, above all, hope, this vivid memoir of a woman who lost her youth and family to the Nazis • (Kirkus Reviews, starred review) is a Holocaust survival story that will be remembered for generations. As long as there is life, there is hope | After Riva's mother was taken away by the Nazis, Riva and her younger brothers were left to cling to their mother's brave words to help them endure life in the Lodz ghetto. Then the family is rounded up, deported to Auschwitz, and separated. Now Riva is alone. At Auschwitz, and later in the work camps at Mittelsteine and Grafenort, Riva vows to live, and to hope "for Mama, for her brothers, for the millions of other victims of the nightmare of the Holocaust. And through determination and courage, and unexpected small acts of kindness, she does live. And this unforgettable memoir of love, strength, and survival is her story.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars • See all reviews (161 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #681,742 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in Books > Teens > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism #66 in Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > Holocaust #90 in Books > Teens > Social Issues > Family

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

The book "The Cage" by Ruth Minsky Sender is an amazing story about the Holocaust. The story starts out with the main character, Riva, waking up in a cold sweat because of a nightmare she had about the Holocaust. While talking to her curious daughter who wants to know why the Holocaust happened she finds herself back in Lodz, Poland in 1939. Riva is the oldest child with three younger brothers. Her father died of a disease but she has a strong, loving Mama. The Jews of Poland during this time are being round up by the Nazis and brought to the ghetto. The ghetto gates are shut tight and Riva and her family like many others are trapped in this cage. Thousands of

Jewish families are herded into the ghetto where there is no work, hunger, and disease. In the ghetto, Riva's younger brother, Laibele, contracts tuberculosis. In September, 1942 the Nazis are inside the ghetto taking away the sick, the old, as well as the children. Riva's mother decides to hide Laibele and surprisingly enough he is not found, however the Nazis take away Mama to a concentration camp. "I hear Mama's voice, filled with hope. A world full of people will not be silent. We will not perish in vain. She was so sure. But she perished, and the world was silent." Riva now has to be strong for her brothers' sake, for Mama, and for herself. She is determined to survive and won't let the Nazis destroy her hope. People around Riva look to her for support and hope. She lost her family to the Nazis, but she won't let them take her either physically or spiritually. I think this book is extremely well written. It keeps the reader wanting to know what will happen next. The writing is a fast paced read. I believe the story shows the truth and essence of the Holocaust. I would recommend this book to middle school students because of the issues described and because of its excellent style.

This was a wonderful book and I couldn't wait to finish it. This book would be enjoyed by any one over twelve, despite its sad theme. Being Jewish myself, it makes me feel very sad when I read about such terrible acts of hatred. Anti-semitism is a disease brought about by a lack of understanding and hatred. People should respect others even if they have differences in cultural and traditional backgrounds. Despite the terrible conditions, it was amazing to me to read the chapters in the book and get a feeling, despite all their suffering, that there was a sense of dignity and hope that they wanted to keep alive. The Jews were truly brave in their fight for life. I was so impressed by how brave Riva was and how hard it must have been for her to be thrown into adulthood with such added responsibilities. I can't imagine dealing with the loss of my mother and having a sick brother. Ruth Sender makes you feel as if you are going through all these experiences with her, She makes you feel her courage and strength. This book made me feel thankful for my family and for every day of my life! In my opinion, this book should be required reading for middle school. Soon, there will be no one alive who are survivors of Nazi brutality. Because of this, it becomes even more important to remember how cruelty, discrimination, and hatred lead to destruction and death. It is so important to confront the most shameful period in human history.

What would you do if you were a Polish-Jewish 13-year old whose life was torn apart by the Nazis? What if you had to spend all of your teenage years in a Jewish ghetto in Lodz, Poland, or three notorious concentration camps? Well, if you were Ruth Minsky Sender (known in this book as Riva

Minska) you would survive and live to tell your story in the form of an autobiography. "The Cage" is a brilliant book. After beginning with a scene where a grown Riva is remembering her childhood and talking with her daughter, we are catapulted into her happy world in Poland in 1939. But Riva, her mother, and her five siblings could never guess what their future would hold. Their good (Polish) friends become ardent Nazis, they are forced to wear the yellow star, and the family is doomed to live in the ghetto. In the ghetto, there is cruel punishment, little fuel and food, and the constant threat of being deported to labor camps. And after her mother is deported, Riva (as the oldest) must keep her siblings together. The ghetto is horrific, but as the courageous family hopes for a saviour, they never guessed the horrors that awaited them at Auschwitz. There is something about this book that makes the Holocaust unbearably real. Sender expertly shows how quickly and suddenly the Holocaust took place, and illustrates simply how friends turned on them. I nearly cried when I read about Riva and her brothers in the ghetto—their love for each other, their constant hope, and their hardships seemed so real to me. The fragility of life was very apparent when Riva talks about the concentration camps, but even then, her mother's saying, "As long as there is life, there is hope" is remembered. "The Cage" will make the horrors of the Holocaust known to you...but it will also inspire you with the story of a life lived courageously.

I read and reviewed the book *The Cage* by Ruth M. Sender. It is about a young girl who spent her childhood hiding and living in Nazi slave labor camps. This book tells how she suffered and struggled to stay alive during the Holocaust. It tells you what it was like for adults and children during this horrible period of time. I really enjoyed reading this book. It was very descriptive and realistic. I always felt like I was in the story instead of just reading it. I always had trouble just reading a few pages because it was so interesting. This book is the kind you never want to put down. It's a real page turner. I gave this book five stars and if you read it you will too. You will like this book if you like books about the Holocaust. A book similar to this is the book *Child of the Holocaust* by Jack Kuper. This boy also hid from the Nazis during the Holocaust. So read this book. I promise you will enjoy it!

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