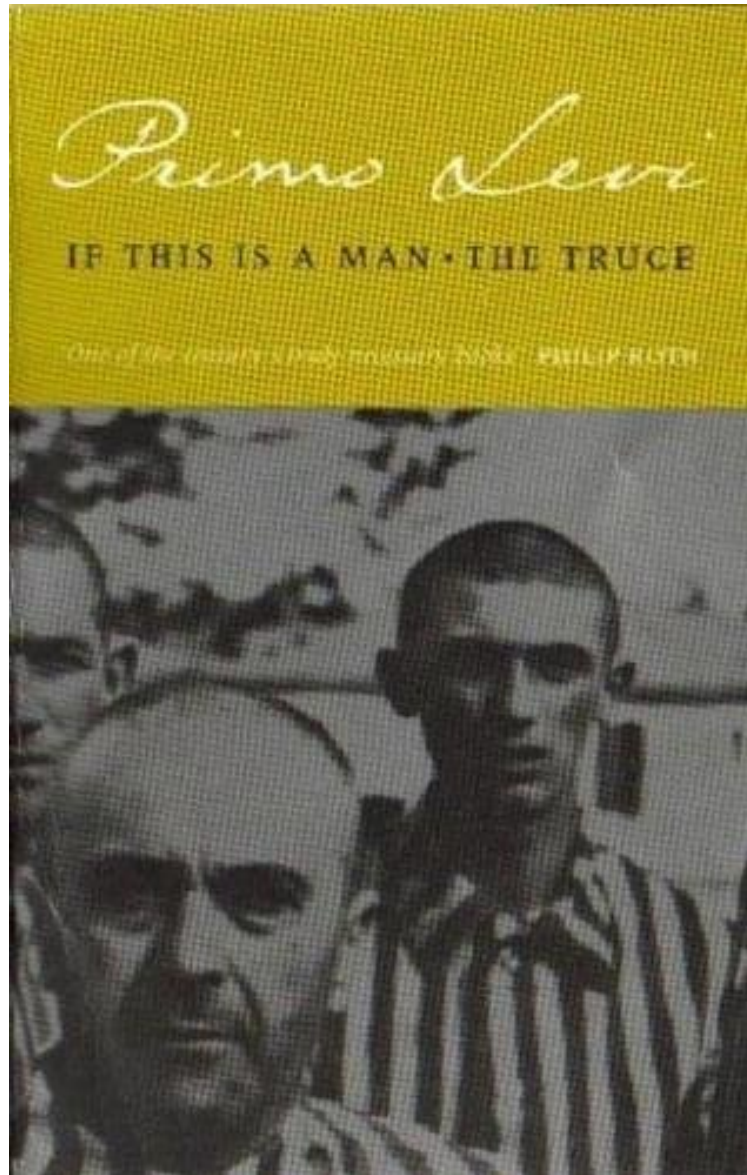


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## If This Is a Man and The Truce

*Primo Levi*

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**Primo Levi : If This Is a Man and The Truce** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised If This Is a Man and The Truce:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Monica A. Castelli-DellExcellent!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent booksBy Olimpia NowickaThese are excellent accounts by Primo Levi of his survival in Auschwitz and the return home after being freed by the Soviet Army. The first one is heartbeaking, but the

Truce is like a modern man Odyssey. It also gives a good account of life immediately after the war, a topic which is probably mostly overlooked. 11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. 174517By R. M. PetersonThat was the number tattooed on Primo Levi's left arm when he was processed into Auschwitz in February 1944. The numbers were assigned in sequence, so by the time Levi arrived in Auschwitz there were few with tattoos of only five digits. In that sense - the sense of being a relatively late arrival - Levi was fortunate. And because Levi, through chance and no doubt through a certain spunk, was able to survive the next year (one of only three who eventually returned home out of 650 in his consignment of Italian Jews), the world is fortunate. Because his memoir of his year at Auschwitz is probably the most significant first-person account of that vile episode of human history. As many have noted, what distinguishes Levi's account is his restraint, his near superhuman effort to confine his memoir to the perspective of a witness. Although he lapses occasionally, Levi tried to avoid "the lamenting tones of the victim [as well as] the irate voice of someone who seeks revenge." Thus, his memoir has a documentary objectivity that makes it even more chilling. This particular edition actually contains two of Levi's memoirs. The first, *IF THIS IS A MAN*, is the memoir described above - the account of his year at Auschwitz, the most harrowing period (ironically) being the post-apocalyptic ten days between the flight of the Nazis and the arrival of the Red Army. (The only prisoners the Nazis left in the camp were those too sick to be marched westwards, towards Germany. Levi, suffering from an attack of scarlet fever, was among the ill left behind. During those ten days, the percentage of corpses on the bunks inside some of the huts rose to fifty percent. Outside the huts, "the number of ravens had increased considerably and everybody knew why.") The second memoir, *THE TRUCE*, is Levi's account of the nine months between liberation by the Red Army and his arrival home, at last, in Turin, Italy. It is a fascinating and instructive kaleidoscopic picture of the displaced peoples throughout Eastern Europe in the months immediately following the collapse of Nazi Germany. Although not quite the essential document that *IF THIS IS A MAN* is, it too is well worth reading. This edition also contains, as an afterword, fifteen pages in which Levi addresses some of the questions frequently asked him, such as "Have you forgiven them [the Germans?]" and "How can the Nazis' fanatical hatred of the Jews be explained?". For those who don't know, the title of the first memoir, the classic one, comes from a poem Levi wrote, also entitled "If This Is a Man". It includes these lines: Consider if this is a man  
Who works in the mud  
Who does not know peace  
Who fights for  
a scrap of bread  
Who dies because of a yes or no.  
Those five lines sum up this remarkable book, one that should be read by everyone who considers himself civilized.

With the moral stamina and intellectual pose of a twentieth-century Titan, this slightly built, duitful, unassuming chemist set out systematically to remember the German hell on earth, steadfastly to think it through, and then to render it comprehensible in lucid, unpretentious prose. He was profoundly in touch with the minutest workings of the most endearing human events and with the most contemptible. What has survived in Levi's writing isn't just his memory of the unbearable, but also, in *THE PERIODIC TABLE* and *THE WRENCH*, his delight in what made the world exquisite to him. He was himself a "magically endearing man, the most delicately forceful enchanter I've ever known" - PHILIP ROTH

A life-changing book. Daily Express  
The death of Primo Levi robs Italy of one of its finest writers... One of the few survivors of the Holocaust to speak of his experiences with a gentle voice? GUARDIAN  
*THE TRUCE*: 'One of the century's truly necessary books.' Philip Roth  
'One of the greatest human testaments of the era.' About the Author  
Primo Levi was born in Turin in 1919 and trained as chemist. Arrested a member of the anti-fascist resistance during the war, he was deported to Auschwitz. His experiences there are described in his two classic autobiographical works, *IF THIS IS A MAN* and *THE TRUCE*.