



# The Luck of the Weissensteiners (The Three Nations Trilogy) (Volume 1)

*Christoph Fischer*

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In the sleepy town of Bratislava in 1933 a romantic girl falls for a bookseller from Berlin. Greta Weissensteiner, daughter of a Jewish weaver, slowly settles in with the Winkelmeier clan just as the developments in Germany start to make waves in Europe. The political climate in the multifaceted cultural jigsaw puzzle of disintegrating Czechoslovakia becomes more complex and affects relations between the couple and the families. The story follows their lot through the war with its predictable and also its unexpected turns and events and the equally hard times after. From the moment that Greta Weissensteiner enters the bookstore where Wilhelm Winkelmeier works, and entrances him with her good looks and serious ways, I was hooked. But this is no ordinary romance; in fact it is not a romance at all, but a powerful, often sad, Holocaust story. What makes *The Luck of the Weissensteiners* so extraordinary is the chance Christoph Fischer gives his readers to consider the many different people who were never in concentration camps, never in the military, yet who nonetheless had their own indelible Holocaust experiences. Set in the fascinating area of Bratislava, this is a wide-ranging, historically accurate exploration of the connections between social location, personal integrity and, as the title says, luck. I cared about every one of this novel's characters and continued to think about them long after I'd finished reading. -- Andrea Steiner, University of California Santa Cruz

*The Luck of the Weissensteiners* is an epic saga set in wartime Eastern Europe. It follows the lives of two families - one Jewish, one Catholic - and their entwined survival amidst the backdrop of the second world war; first the fascist then the communist invasion and occupation of Slovakia, and the horror of the consequences of war. The reader is transported to a world of deception, fear, distrust and betrayal, alongside enduring love and family drama. The characters are vividly painted in the mind of the reader as we follow their journey across Europe at a time of unimaginable challenge and trauma. *Weissensteiners* is a magnificent tale of human survival. I wish I hadn't read it already so that I may repeat the pleasure of discovering and becoming lost in the story once again.(less)

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