



Tomorrow to Be Brave: A Memoir of the Only Woman Ever to Serve in the French Foreign Legion

Susan Travers, Wendy Holden

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Susan Travers dreamed of an adventurous life, but had little chance of it until the Second World War destroyed her cafe society world and freed her from the bonds of her privileged but stifling upbringing. Leaving her peripatetic, party-girl lifestyle behind her, she drank a last cocktail at her friend Gladys's chateau, locked the door behind her and walked into history. Here for the first time, the life story of the only woman to fight for the French Legion is one that few dare to even imagine. Born to a life of privilege, Susan spends her childhood longing for excitement. After being expelled from finishing school for being too interested in men, she signed up with the Free French in 1940 and sailed to Africa where she traveled the country fighting the war and taking on lovers, eventually becoming a driver to General Koenig of the Foreign Legion. He was to become her lover and the man for whom she would risk everything. A military leader of Olympian detach, he was in private a sensitive soul, sharing poetry with Susan, including the piece from which the title of the book is taken, Tomorrow To Be Brave. He was also the man who helped change the face of Rommel's North African campaign. At the great siege of Bir Hakeim , the general's troops were surrounded for fifteen days by Rommel's Panzer division. Susan refused to leave the General's side and eventually, at the wheel of his car, led the convoy of vehicles and men across the minefields as part of a daring mass breakout. Hailed as the heroine of the night, Susan was rewarded with the love and loyalty of the legion with whom she served as its only official female member ever. In 1997 in a simple ceremony attended by the few remaining survivors of the corps with which she fought, the Legion presented Susan Travers, now a frail 88 year old, with the Legion d'Honneur--their highest award for bravery. She lives quietly to this day in a modest nursing home outside Paris where only a very few know what circuitous and fantastic a path led her there--until now.

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