

I WILL BEAR WITNESS Victor Klemperer (*Random House, \$29.95*) This diary of a Jewish professor gives a reckoning of life in Nazi Germany from 1933 through the middle of World War II. It's been a best-seller in Germany and was even turned into a 13-part mini-series there. And no wonder: Klemperer's keenly observed journal presents day-to-day life in heartrending detail. His travails in learning to drive and building a home appear alongside casual references to spotting a children's ball marked with a swastika and countless swirling rumors (Hitler won't last the year; Hitler is unstoppable). Klemperer's whole world shrinks while his rights disappear until he regards someone who speaks to him on the street

as brave, while chiding himself for accepting simple decency as a notable act. He gives us an insider's look at the ordinary people of the Third Reich, and that makes their complicity, their failings, and their all too rare kindnesses painfully human. **A-** —*Michael Giltz*