



Wall Flower: A Life on the German Border (German and European Studies)

Rita Kuczynski

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In August 1961, seventeen-year-old Rita Kuczynski was living with her grandmother and studying piano at a conservatory in West Berlin. Caught in East Berlin by the rise of the Berlin Wall while on a summer visit to her parents, she found herself trapped behind the Iron Curtain for the next twenty-eight years.

Kuczynski's fascinating memoir relates her experiences of life in East Germany as a student, a fledgling academic philosopher, an independent writer, and, above all, as a woman. Though she was never a true believer in Communism, Rita gained entry into the circles of the East German intellectual elite through her husband Thomas Kuczynski. There, in the privileged world that she calls "the gardens of the nomenklatura," she saw first-hand the contradictions at the heart of life for the East German intelligentsia.

Published in English for the very first time twenty-six years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, *Wall Flower* offers a rare – and critical – look at life among the East German elite. Told with wry wit and considerable candor, Kuczynski's story offers a fascinating perspective on the rise and fall of East Germany.

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