

Life After the Holocaust

I just moved back to France. I hope to see my family, but I realize that the possibility of that is low. After living in the camps, I don't know what to do with my life. I learned that the year is 1945, so that means I was in the camps for three years. I have no friends, no family, no income, and no home. I thought I would be happier when I finally left that place, but I just feel empty.

I wish for my old life back. I don't want to be grown anymore; I want to be a little kid. In the fifteen years I have been alive, I have seen more than anyone should in their whole life. I have seen those who want to give up, those who were too brave, and those who just wanted to stay alive. I feel selfish that I was someone who lived. I know others who would already be doing wonders for the world, but I also know that nobody should be put in those situations. I wish I was someone brave. I wish I left the country before they came for me. I wish I had a different life.

I can barely sleep. Everytime I close my eyes, I see death. I want to move on and live the rest of my life in freedom, but everything reminds me of those death camps. I hear the cattle cars coming for me even though it's just a normal car on the street. I am scared of strangers on the street, thinking they might beat me. I remember those awful mile long marches when I hear my own steps. I remember digging holes that were probably someone else's grave. I remember the feeling of hypothermia in those thin clothes in January. I remember the soldiers yelling orders at me. I don't want to remember.

I heard a church bell for the first time in years yesterday. I forgot about God. I don't believe in Him anymore. How could He allow the amount of deaths, the amount of rape, the

amount of abuse, and the amount of evilness to happen? I know some who still pray, but I stopped it years ago when it was Hannakuh and nothing had changed in months.

I read the newspaper today and found that several of the Nazi soldiers are not being arrested. My only emotion is anger. How could someone who committed such awful deeds to innocent people be allowed to have freedom when he didn't allow others to be free! And as much as I want them to die, I know I would be filled with guilt and in return feel just as evil as them.

I want people to know the struggles of those in the camps even after they leave. I don't want anybody to feel the way I, and so many others, felt. Not just the physical pain and hunger, but the loneliness and real sadness I have felt. Before I entered the camp, I thought breaking a bone was the most painful thing in my life, but I now know that living without my family and not even knowing where they are is far more painful. I also don't want the courage of so many to be neglected. Those who risked their lives for just a piece of bread for their loved one. Those who were safe from the Germans but decided to hide Jews. Those who spoke against the Nazis despite the consequences. I don't want it to be forgotten, and I don't want it to be repeated.