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Independent Study

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The Unexpected Green: The Importance of Primary Sources in Holocaust Education

The grass was surprisingly green that April morning. That isn't to say that grass isn't supposed to be green on bright, sunny mornings in April; but rather, that this grass looked almost fake, appearing to be more like turf on a golf green than grass on a field. I knew I wasn't the only one thinking it, as I caught my friend Brian staring at his feet when I looked over. He was slowly dragging his heel back and forth, as if trying to pry up some of the roots along with the blades. When he looked back up at me, he shook his head, squinted up into the cold sunlight, and muttered, "It's not supposed to be pretty here."

We were standing at the entrance gates of Auschwitz II, more commonly known as Birkenau- part of the largest German concentration camp and extermination facility of the Holocaust. We were traveling with the March of the Living, an international program that educates students on the Holocaust and the importance of educating others on the topic, and it was our third day since we had arrived in Poland. The past 72 hours had been quite a bit of a whirlwind, and this was actually the second concentration camp we had been to since our arrival. However, this was the first camp that we had visited that had remained intact after the war, and nothing could have prepared us for the wide, green field cut in half by a set of steel train tracks. This didn't look like a place where an estimated 1.1 million people were killed at all, didn't look like the grainy black-and-white photos that showed a gloomy, depressing place covered in inches of snow seemingly all year round. This place looked like somewhere kids would play soccer during the summer, stopping only when they heard the distant whistle of the approaching train. Even with the education that we had been receiving in our high schools, in our religious classes, nothing would educate us more than

actually standing in the place where these tragedies took place, hearing the stories straight from the survivor's mouths. The same thoughts kept crossing my mind, over and over. "This can't be the place we've been learning about. It's not supposed to be pretty here. It's not supposed to be this green."

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For as long as I could remember, I had grown up taking some sort of class involving the Holocaust. In elementary school, I would spend my Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in religious school, learning the Hebrew alphabet and stumbling through prayers in order to prepare for my Bat Mitzvah a few years down the line. The classrooms were always too hot and the teachers were always too old, and the novelty of a language that used funny new symbols quickly wore off once we moved onto grammar points we didn't even understand in English. The one thing I looked forward to in class, however, was when our ancient instructor would pull out of her bag a book as dusty and aged as she was, and tell us to do the same. This was the signal to me that we were moving onto a topic that I actually found intriguing-the Holocaust.

Teaching the horrors of the Holocaust was a difficult thing to do, especially when it involved catching and holding the attention of a bunch of antsy third-graders who would rather spend their Thursdays playing baseball or watching Spongebob. Within the Jewish community, however, this was a topic that was fresh in the minds of the previous generation, and it was something that had to be instilled in the minds of youngsters as soon as possible. Of course, the topic had to be handled with caution as well-no one wanted to be responsible for terrifying kids with nightmares of gas chambers and Nazis beating the defenseless individuals in the ghettos. We were given books that were appropriate for our age groups each year, and slowly we would pick apart the themes and discuss the difficult issues together, in our classes. When we read Number The Stars, our discussion started with the discussion of Annmarie and her family being heroes for not only taking her friend Ellen in, but for helping to transport Jews out of war-torn

Copenhagen; eventually the conversation moved away from what we would do if we were in her situation, and to the fact that this was the reality for people our age less than sixty years ago. Slowly, the topics of the Nazi soldiers and their brutal behavior, searching the boats that were hiding the Jews and taking food from a child like Annmarie, seeped into the discussion. Death was carefully approached, and the gory details were avoided-after all, we were still just kids. I can remember the first time that I made the connection that these characters were children just like myself, when *Number the Stars* mentioned that the character Ellen wore a simple Jewish star necklace around her neck that her father had given her. My own necklace that hung around my neck, a Hanukkah gift from my parents that I had never given much thought to, suddenly acted as a conduit to connect me to a time and place sixty years previous-and to this day, I wear the simple Star of David necklace every day. One of the more detailed discussions also involved the fact that Lois Lowry had based the story off of one of her friends, Annelise Pratt, who "was herself a child in Copenhagen during the long years of the German occupation." (Lowry, 133) She then goes on to mention that she had always been "fascinated and moved by Annalise's descriptions…of the personal deprivation that her family and their neighbors suffered during those years, and the sacrifices they made...So I created little Annemarie and her family, set them down in a Copenhagen apartment on a street where I have walked myself." (Lowry, 133) It didn't occur to us at the time that the friend that Ms. Lowry was referring to was a real-life Annemarie, and this was her story, her life, and her soul poured into the pages of the book we were studying.

As we grew older and moved on from elementary school to middle school, the choices that we were given for novels moved from subtle messages to a stronger, more blatant view of how the Holocaust affected children. We were each handed a copy of *The Diary of Anne Frank* our first Sunday class of fifth grade, and told that we would not be discussing the book in class weekly, as we had done in years past. Instead, we were expected to finish the novel on our own, and at the end of the book we would be given a

special treat. As my classmates speculated over what kind of candy would be part of our special surprise, it became clear to me by the way that the teacher grimly smiled at us that this was a different type of treat-one that might satisfy something other than our taste buds, for once. I had heard that the book was a classic, and I knew that it was a staple in the curriculum not only in my religious school, but I didn't quite understand why until I reached the end of the novel, after Anne's story had finished and I had reached the lengthy afterword. My heart dropped and I reread the same pages over and over, trying to comprehend what I had just read. I didn't understand it-how could someone so juvenile, someone I found myself relating to page after page-how could she not have survived? How could she have died alongside her sister in a concentration camp after all of that suffering and frustration she and her family endured? When my class finally reconvened to discuss the book, instead of our normal teacher sitting at the desk in front of our class we found a tiny older woman who smiled at us with her eyes and welcomed us to sit on the floor in front of her in a halting, accented voice.

"Some of you may already know me, but for those of you who don't, my name is Alice Goldstein," she told us. "When I was your age, I lived in Germany during World War Two." The two boys in the back of the room who had been fighting over a pack of gum stopped and turned to face Ms. Goldstein, their wide eyes unblinking as they looked at the example of history in front of them. Ms. Goldstein then spent the entire two-hour class discussing her experiences in Germany; from the implementation of the Nuremburg Laws, to moving into a one-bedroom home in the city's ghetto, to the years she spent with her family attempting to flee the war-torn country. She was lucky enough to have escaped without ever stepping foot inside a work camp, but the message had already been imprinted in our brain-this was someone that we knew who was just like Anne Frank, who had to put up with unfair laws and painful embarrassment, and ultimately had to change her identity to escape safely from the terrors that awaited her. Ms. Goldstein even was writing a book on her experiences, and I couldn't help but think about Anne Frank's dreams to be a

writer as well. For the first time, it hit us that the people we were learning about weren't just elderly foreigners that lived an ocean away-Ms. Goldstein was a member of our temple, someone who we prayed with every Saturday morning and schmoozed with afterwards as we waited in line for bagels and brunch. She liked strawberry cream cheese and always asked us about how excited we were for our Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. It clicked in my mind that Ms. Goldstein was going to be able to do exactly what Anne couldn't by writing her book-but then I realized that Anne also had the power to teach us with her words, simply by reading the diary she had kept before her death, and it made me wonder which was really more meaningful after all. In late December of 1943, Anne entered in her diary that "Thinking about the suffering of those you hold dear can reduce you to tears; in fact, you could spend the whole day crying. The most you can do is pray for God to perform a miracle and save at least some of them. And I hope I'm doing enough of that!" (Frank, 157) Anne's words rang true, and Ms. Goldstein reiterated that at the end of the class. We had to remember what had happened to those six million who perished, but we should also be thankful for those who, by a miracle, survived.

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The silence that had fallen over our March of the Living group as we stood by the train tracks was eventually broken by a shuffling noise from behind us. Carefully stepping across the gravel that lined the entrance to the camp, Phil Ravski was slowly moving towards us in an attempt to catch up with the rest of the group. Phil, affectionately referred to as "Uncle Phil" within our group, was our resident Holocaust survivor and had periodically taken the time during our days in Poland to share some of his own memories of his life as a young boy. When we had stopped to explore what once was the Warsaw Ghetto, he had pointed out the block where the seamstress lived that he delivered spools of thread to every week. He spoke in a slow and quiet voice, with a thick accent, so we all had to lean in as he pointed spot where his house in the ghetto stood, the house that he shared with his family of shared with three other Jewish

families. At an old train station called Radegast, we huddled around him in the dusk as he recalled waiting in that very spot for his brother and himself to be called onto the next train to Auschwitz.

And yet, we found that Uncle Phil always had a positive, bright outlook on life. He sat with us during our meals and poked fun at the way none of us knew how to properly approach the food on our plates. He thought that the way that we New Englanders pronounced words like “coffee,” and “weird,” and “horror,” was hilarious, and would get us to repeat them over and over as he smiled and chuckled to himself. He even surprised us sometimes by sneaking in a sly comment, usually unrepeatable, after someone had said something thought-provoking; this almost always led to those in his immediate vicinity laughing hysterically and not being able to repeat exactly what was so funny, as Uncle Phil merely shrugged his shoulders and winked at those who had missed the joke. He quickly became like a grandfather to the group, and we all took turns helping him navigate around the areas we stopped at, as walking was becoming more of an obstacle for the elderly man nearing his eighties.

With the assistance of two of the adult participants on the trip, Uncle Phil finally approached our group and looked around at our faces, which he was so used to seeing full of happiness, not solemnity. He slowly turned his gaze towards the barracks on the left, past the barbed-wire fence that separated the tracks we were standing on from the rest of the camp. He turned, haltingly, to look back at the tracks behind him and the brick entrance with the iron gates removed, and shook his head. As he turned back to us, he said in the strongest voice that we had ever heard him muster, “I’ve come back here over ten times since the war. Nothing has changed. It does not get any easier.” In the silence, I could hear my heartbeat pounding in my head and the tears welling in my eyes. Just like I did as a child, I asked myself how someone could do such terrible things to a child, and how someone could do something so horrible to someone I had grown to love and respect so greatly? Uncle Phil looked away once again, back to the barracks that he had once lived in, and quietly spoke once more. “It’s cold here today. Usually it’s warmer.”

His voice cracked with the last word, and he began to walk away from the group, unaided, towards the barbed wire fence. With that, I closed my eyes to hold tears back, and I felt Brian's hand slip into mine and squeeze it. Nothing had prepared us for this, for the empathy and the hurt that was flowing through us at that moment. Uncle Phil had connected us to his own past, his own memories, and there was no longer a way for us to separate the two.

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As my middle school education and religious school education drew to a close at around the same time, I began to notice that the two were seemingly converging on one another. Just as we started reading *Night* out loud, every Thursday afternoon in a quiet room in the basement of my synagogue, we began the chapter on the Second World War in our history textbooks in the inner-city school that I attended. I was excited to be able to talk about the things I had learned in my religious classes in "real school," so one day I decided to bring both *Night* and my religious school textbook, *The Holocaust: The World and the Jews,* to class. As we turned to the chapter on the Holocaust in our big blue books of American History, I was surprised to see that there were only a handful of pages on the topic before jumping right into the bombing of Hiroshima. I was even more surprised, and hurt, to find that whoever had owned the book before me had attempted to draw their own swastikas in the margins of the old, ratty book. The marks were shoddily erased, but the symbols were still visible on the pages and I quickly closed the book and pushed it to the side. I figured that I would know what the teacher was talking about, anyway, so I didn't worry too much about following along.

Unfortunately, class went from bad to worse in a matter of minutes. My teacher spent the majority of the class period talking about America's lack of involvement in the plight of the Jews and its relationship with England. Several times I tried to raise my hand to point out things that I had learned in religious school,

like how reports had been smuggled out of the Warsaw ghetto as early as 1942 and sent to London, or that when the world finally was given proof that same year that the Germans were exterminating Jews that newspapers in Palestine were bordered in black to represent mourning. However, it was clear that my teacher was already crunched for time within a public school syllabus, and was under pressure to not only talk about the Holocaust, but to do so as quickly as possible.

When class ended, I approached my teacher at his desk while everyone else gathered up their books and headed off to lunch. I put my religious textbook down on his desk and waited for him to realize that I was standing there, as he himself packed up his leather briefcase and shrugged on his tweed coat. When he finally noticed me standing there, a look of pure defiance in my eyes, he sighed and sat back down, picking up my book and flipping through it halfheartedly. “This looks like a perfectly acceptable book,” I remember him saying. “See? You’re getting the education that you should. Isn’t that good enough?” I wanted to tell him about the faded swastikas in my other book, erased from the pages but not from my memories. I wanted to tell him about how the kids in class weren’t interested in hearing about the diplomatic relations that prevented the U.S. from entering the war. I wanted him to show us how important it was to learn about this tragedy in the ways it had been presented to me, through firsthand accounts and through books that helped young learners relate. When I opened my mouth to tell him these things, however, he stopped me once more. “You should go to lunch now-it’s a beautiful day, I bet everyone will be eating outside.”With that, he stood back up and sidestepped me on his way out the door.

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In high school we were required to take an elective course opposite gym, and I had been assigned a calligraphy and visual art class for my elective. I had originally signed up for a college writing course offered through the local community college, but it didn’t fit in my schedule. This left me spending my

Tuesday and Thursday afternoons tracing letters and trying to gain perspective on a bowl of fruit, much to my chagrin. About halfway through the quarter, our teacher told us that our next assignment was going to involve reading a graphic novel and then doing a presentation on it, focusing on the content and the relationship that it had with the art style used in the book. I got really excited at the prospect of this, because I had just learned of a book by Art Spiegelman, called *Maus*, which chronicled his father's life in the concentration camps and his struggles to regain normalcy afterwards. It sounded like the perfect book for my project, and so I dove right in.

The day of my presentation I came into class wearing a pair of Mickey Mouse ears, as an example of how a Jew is portrayed within the novel. I carefully explained the relationship between the author and his father, how the representation of the Jews as mice and the Nazis as cats explained the relationship between the two, and how the art changed between the scenes that took place within the present day and within the past. I explained that the entire story wasn't just a metaphor for the whole war; I also talked about how it dealt with the difficulties that our generation runs into by trying to retell the past so that others can learn from it. I even spoke about the medium of the book, how within the story Spiegelman has his father say in one of the panels that "it's an important book. People who don't usually read such stories will be interested." (Spiegelman, 133) To me, the story allowed people from a newer generation to connect to the stories of the survivors, through a different type of education that wasn't just words on a page. I finished my presentation feeling confident about what I had just explained to the class, and turned to the teacher for approval.

The art teacher had a blank stare on her face that mirrored the stares of every kid in the classroom. She rose from her desk, brushed her smock off as if to wipe away the paint that was stained on it, and cleared her throat. "Well, that was certainly…informative. And I like that you incorporated the way that the more gloomy and depressing artwork dealt with the more gloomy parts of the story. But don't you think that

the way that he adds jokes and little funny stories within the book is inappropriate?" As I went to answer her, I heard a muttering from the back of the room. I couldn't quite hear what was said, but it sounded a lot like "….and I thought it was just a book about a bunch of stupid mice."

As I sat back down, disheartened, I placed my mouse ears on the table and pushed my chair back, disinterested in what the next presenter was discussing. I felt my phone vibrate in my pocket and I pulled it out to read the text message I had received. It was from my best friend, Brian, who I attended religious school with. Like myself, he devoured any sort of book or movie about the Holocaust that was thrown at us, and he had been urging me to look into schools that offered Holocaust Studies as a minor. "New program signups at the temple," the text read. "It's called March of the Living. Brings us to Poland for a week to learn about the Holocaust-scholarships are available. Sounds like something right up your alley. Interested?" It took me less than thirty seconds to reply with "Absolutely. You coming with me?" Brian's response made up for the ignorance that I had dealt with not minutes beforehand. "I had already put both of our names down before I texted you. I'll call you after class with the details."

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While the rest of us watched Uncle Phil totter over to the fence, transfixed, one of the girls in our group had retreated to the back of the group and wandered off to our left, towards one of the wooden watchtowers nearly 50 yards away where the Nazis used to keep an eye on their prisoners. To this day, I'm not sure what prompted her to head towards the structure, but Sophie suddenly cried out and knelt to the ground by one of the splintered posts. Our silence broken, we rushed over to her as quickly as we could. I was concerned that she had hurt herself, as the tower was old and falling apart, and it looked very plausible that a plank may have fallen from the platform and struck her. As we approached her, we could see that she was rocking back and forth as tears streamed down her face.

When we reached Sophie, however, we realized that she hadn't been injured at all. Instead, she was clawing at a patch of grass where a group of small white daisies were growing, a triumphant display of beauty within this terrible place. She was trying to uproot the flowers as she grabbed at the ground, but she couldn't quite see where they were through her tears, so she ended up just pulling up clumps of dirt and dust. Gently, two of the adults knelt next to her and she eventually stopped her manic attempt. As she attempted to regain her composure and got to her feet, she brushed herself off, smearing dirt across her jacket and jean skirt. Her mouth was moving as she went through the motions, but no sound was coming out. It wasn't until Uncle Phil approached us, in his infinite wisdom, that we realized what she was saying.

"I can read her lips," Phil said, as we all turned to face him. He must have hustled over to our group as soon as he heard Sophie cry out, because no one had even noticed him rejoining the group. "She's reciting the Mourner's *Kaddish,* The Mourner's Prayer." He walked towards the crying girl on unsteady feet, parting the group of people nearly in two. When he reached her, he turned around so he was standing next to her and facing the group, and slowly joined her in the prayer. One by one, the rest of us joined in the recitation of the prayer, and when it was over, Uncle Phil bent down and picked up one of the small white flowers. Sticking it behind his ear, underneath the brim of his floppy white hat, he smiled, not saying a word. With that, our group silently turned and walked across the grassy field together, finally ready to see what we had spent so much time learning about.

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For my senior English class, we were required to read three books by one specific author and discuss their themes, style of writing, and what their books meant to you. The project was worth almost half of our grade for the second quarter, and a lot of people chose books that they could write on easily, like Harry Potter or the Lord of the Rings series. For my project, I had decided to read *Night, Dawn,* and *Day*

(previously titled *The Accident*), by Elie Weisel. I had already read Night multiple times, once for religious school and once in preparation for the March of the Living, so I thought it was natural to read the related novels that Weisel had created in order to see if there was an underlying theme within them. I was surprised to find that all three books did reference the Holocaust, but focused on different aspects of the tragedy. Where *Night* functioned primarily as Weisel's memoirs, *Dawn* dealt more with a flashback-type style of writing that intertwined with the creation of the State of Israel, and explained to the reader the connection between the two; and *Day* focused more on the aftermath of the war, and how it affected those who were trying to move on from the tragedy.

During the time that we were writing these term papers, several of the other English classes were reading Night as one of their required readings. Somehow, the word got out that I was writing my paper on the book they were going to be tested on, and I found myself to be the center of attention, all of the sudden. One day, one of my close friends pulled me aside and asked me if I really was "the expert on that Night book." I gave him a funny look, and he continued. "Apparently you've already read this Night book, and you know all about it. I only read the first forty pages and the test is tomorrow. Can you tell me what happens?"

It was at that moment that I realized this book wasn't nearly as powerful to those who hadn't devoured it like I did, who didn't see how important it was to take Weisel's testimony and let it impact the way the world was viewed. One of the strongest, most powerful lines in *Night* comes at the end of the book, when Mr. Weisel is finally able to get up and take care of himself after the liberation of Buchenwald, and decides to take a look at himself in the mirror. "I had not seen myself since the ghetto. From the depths of the mirror, a corpse gazed back at me. The look in his eyes, as they stared into mine, has never left me." (Weisel, 109) Weisel also mentions the same type of haunting moment in his novel, *Dawn*, when Elisha, a Holocaust survivor, is waiting to receive orders to kill. "I looked out the window, where a shadowy face was taking shape out of the deep of the night….I could not take my eyes off of the face. It was my own."

(Weisel, 6) These simple statements were enough to move me every time I had read these books, to urge me to read further and to make sure that I was doing my part to see this never happened again-and it struck me that not everyone felt that same urge as I did.

I realized, after being lost in thought about this for several seconds, that my friend was still waiting for me to reply to his question. “No,” I said to him, in a firm voice that surprised even myself. “This is one of those books you have to read on your own. It’s less than a hundred pages, and it’s an intense enough read that you can finish it in one sitting. I can’t let you miss out on reading this book because you need to understand why it was written in the first place, why it’s so important for people to learn about the Holocaust on their own and not just what they picked up in a high school history course.” With that, I walked away, went into the ladies’ room, sat down on the floor, and cried. It had been less than a year since I had returned from March of the Living, and yet here I was, confronted with the one problem that I had struggled with since day one. Education through literature simply isn’t enough, but how do you get the message out to a generation of children who didn’t have to live through the tragedies the books teach us?

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The summer after I returned from my freshman year of college, I was woken by my mother shouting at me to turn the television in my room on. Sleepily, I fumbled for the remote and waited for the fuzzy picture to come into focus. As I finally flipped to the channel she had told me to put on, all I caught were the words “-vandalism and possible anti-Semitism at Temple Am David. “ Those words made me sit straight up in bed. That was my synagogue, where I had spent so many days learning and studying and praying. I turned the volume up just as a sickening image flashed across the screen. A swastika, along with several unrelated racial slurs, had been spray-painted directly over the entrance of the synagogue, so

everyone who was to walk in would see it. I was devastated beyond anything I had ever felt before, to see such hatred in a place that had taught me about how to prevent things like this from occurring again.

Nearly six months later, a meeting was held at the synagogue for members of the congregation and students within the religious school. Two boys had been caught and charged with the vandalism of the temple shortly after the incident took place, and they had gathered the small group there in order to apologize and explain what they had learned over the past half-year. Instead of going to court for their crimes, a special arrangement had been made where the two individuals would spend their time learning at the local Holocaust center and speaking with survivors, like none other than Alice Goldstein, my very own Anne Frank. When one of the boys, Ryan Johnson, stated that he "didn't understand the Holocaust until I studied it; I didn't mean to bring back memories for survivors. Schools don't go into detail."

As I sat in the audience and listened to this young man say exactly what I had feared for years, I flashed back to the time when my history teacher asked me, "isn't that good enough?" It was clear to me that the only way to prevent hatred and a horror such as the Holocaust is to make sure that all students are educated equally about the Holocaust, not just the Jewish students who learned about it after school. It wasn't just the lack of detail that made these boys ignorant of the pain they caused-it was the lack of literature and first-hand accounts that prevented them from realizing the magnitude of their actions. The Rhode Island State Laws (Section 16-22-22) states that "The department of elementary and secondary education shall…develop curricular material on genocide and human rights issues and guidelines for the teaching of that material." It was clear from my own personal experience, and the testimony of these boys, that this was not being properly implemented in the schools around us, and this was becoming a large-scale issue. Thus, the answer I should have given my teacher so many years beforehand was, "No, it's not good enough."

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Just a few months ago, my roommate was required to go to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum for one of her classes to see an exhibit on Nazi propaganda. She asked me if I could come along with her, because she wanted to walk the rest of the museum as well and didn't want to go alone. I reluctantly agreed, not because I didn't want to let someone else get the education that they should rightfully have-but was hard to explain to her that certain stories, certain part of testimonies from real survivors, would cause me to become very upset. When I was reading *Day*, by Elie Weisel, as a teenager, he tells a story of a character who watches another prisoner in the concentration camp devour a piece of meat. "The next day he was hanged by those who shared his barracks: he had been eating human flesh. To defend himself he had screamed, 'I didn't do any harm: he was already dead…'" (Weisel, 6) Just the image of a prisoner hanging, or eating one of their rare meals, would be enough to trigger that story within me.

It wasn't until we reached one of the last rooms on the third floor, the one that contained a replica of a crematorium next to a photo of a snow-covered Auschwitz that I lost my nerve and had to leave the room. I quickly pulled out my cell phone and called Brian on the verge of tears. "Brian, Brian," I babbled into the phone. "Even the photos at the museum don't show Auschwitz as being green. It's all gloomy and scary like in every book we've read. People need to know that it's green there, Brian. People need to know how green it is and how there is so much more that they don't know; and ignorance is going to stem from people not knowing and we have to make sure people learn! We have to tell people about what we saw and what Uncle Phil taught us, right Brian?"

At this point I had run out of breath, and as I took an opportunity to pause Brian spoke up, calmly and quietly. "Right. We have to help the world receive the education it deserves about the Holocaust, about

what we saw and what we experienced, and especially what we heard from those who lived through it. It's our job to do this, and it is the only way that the world can heal." Relieved, I went back out to find my roommate. I found her standing in front of the picture of Auschwitz, where men and women huddled together for warmth as snow fell on top of the train tracks. I took a deep breath and exhaled slowly. "You know, this might sound a little bit strange, but it's actually quite pretty there this time of year…"

The Holocaust: The World and the Jews devotes an entire chapter to studying the Holocaust, talking about how the topic should be approached and who should be educated, and how. "But who will explain what happened? Survivors-those who remember first-hand what happened-are few in number today, and most were children when the Holocaust took place. Listening to their experiences fills in pieces of the history. But as time passes, we turn more and more to historians to describe the Holocaust for us." (Rossel, 12) There are few people around who are still able to tell their stories and make the impact on Holocaust education that is so greatly needed, and that is why it is so important for those firsthand accounts and the experiences of those who have seen the camps and the train stations to be preserved and shared with everyone. "It is our obligation to remember the people who died not as six million but as one, and one, and one. It is the obligation of those who survive, and those who remember, to speak out and preserve the memory of the victims of the Holocaust. We must do so because the victims demand it, those still living and those who left written words which survived their death." (Rossel, 179)

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