

Alone but Together
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Alone but together. Hurt together, hope together, heal together.

Night. Uncertainty concealed in darkness.

A rumor became a mass genocide. Unaware residents underestimated the Nazis, believing they were safe in the ghetto from dangers outside. Awakened in the night, Frances found herself boarding an unknown train to an unknown destination. The doors closed; there was only darkness.

Spring. New life bringing new beginnings.

A rumor became a deadly pandemic. Unaware, I underestimated the virus. Inside the house became safe from dangers outside. Awakened by the engine roaring, I waved goodbye as my dad departed for the hospital. The garage closed and the car drove off. Spring brought sorrow.

Hurt together.

Auschwitz. Few outlasted Death.

Those words, “women to the right, men to the left,” divided families. Separated from everyone and chosen to work, things took a turn for the worse. Supper brought news of her mother sent to the crematorium. She was alone in a dehumanizing nightmare.

COVID-19. War against an invisible enemy.

Those words, “we’ve tested positive,” divided us. Two quarantined upstairs, one in the hospital, things took a turn for the worse. April 2nd brought the hardest news. My father was gone. It all seemed unreal. No possible revenge, for he was taken by a merciless assassin.

Hope together.

Decency. Rarely found during the Holocaust.

Air once filled with lively conversations was replaced with the thick perfume of burning corpses. Fellow inmates brought comfort. She was no longer alone. Frances took it upon herself to help others survive because her parents taught her to be giving. So she, among few, showed decency.

Time. Waits for nobody.

Air once filled with laughter was replaced with infectious coughs. My sister brought hope and comfort. I was not alone. I was motivated to stay strong so she did not have to carry the burden. There was no time to mourn. Life continued on.

Heal together.

Compassion. Strength for today.

Marching aimlessly towards death, despair overwhelmed Frances and her companions. But, compassion from a superior, given in the form of food and rest, gave a renewed hope for the future. A future built on the foundation of compassion.

Community. Hope for tomorrow.

With the coming of my father's death, I had become emotionally unstable and stressed with responsibilities. But friends and family came together to show sympathy and support, encouraging us to remain strong. In a time of despair, community brought hope into our lives.

A seemingly eternal winter has settled over our world. Just as the Nazis infiltrated Jewish communities, now more than ever, our communities perish. Despite these hardships, we must learn to share. Share past stories, for history rhymes. Share strength; there is strength in numbers. Share our stories; we may not be the first to walk this path, but we will certainly not be the last. As loneliness begins to reside in our lives, we must remember to share. For when we share, no matter how alone, we unite together. No season lasts an eternity.

Alone but together.