

Bird

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You were eleven.

You were eleven when the officer grabbed the head of your bird
And twisted it all the way around until the neck snapped.
As you gasped, the officer leaned into you and said,
“Like the bird died, you will die too.”

You didn't know what to do.

You felt trapped with no way out, like your bird in its cage.
You were being shipped away with no explanation
To some foul, godforsaken camp where you would meet your end
Just as violently as your bird.

Over five years, you lived in seven camps.

You migrated from camp to camp like a bird flying south to escape the cold winter.
But you could never escape Death's cold winter.
In Auschwitz, when you were doomed to die, you didn't feel anything.
You felt so light, like a bird, and you thought about nothing.

Suddenly, you were lifted by the wings of your memories

The thoughts of your family and friends carried you
And you realized you had to live and recount the tragedy
That you experienced, in order to prevent it from ever happening again.

So, you hid. You built a nest of bodies around you, like a bird, to mask your breathing.

You were lost, not roosting in the place you were supposed to be.
Naked and alone, you thought all hope was lost until the girls swooped in and saved you.
By taking you under their wings, like a bird does her nestling, they helped you survive.

They helped you push on, reminding you that one day everyone will be freed,

You could fly far away from this hellish cage and clean your mind,
Pluck out the bad memories and forget all the pain.

But you will never forget.

You will sing your song of sorrow, like a bird, spreading the message.
Your story is preventing that pain, that tragedy
From ever happening again.