

*Your Memory*  
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I stood where you once stood.  
But unlike you,  
Before ever setting foot in Auschwitz,  
I never experienced five years' worth of  
Severe starvation, extreme exertion, and acute anguish  
In a place that was once home.

I never saw the bustling train station that was packed with  
Thousands of malnourished Jews,  
All who were waiting, wondering, worrying about their fate.

I never saw the mothers and wives and daughters who died  
In that moving metal prison made for the beasts of the field,  
Simply because of the yellow star they were forced to wear.

When I finally stood in that infamous Nazi concentration camp -  
The place that murdered  
Your beloved father who believed in your education,  
Your compassionate mother who refused to leave her child to die alone,  
Your little sister who only ever tasted the merciless craving of hunger -  
I wept for how much I obsessed over trivial matters.

And though the despair that I felt  
On the plain where no beam of sunlight will ever be seen again  
Will never leave me,  
I now am equally amazed with  
The strength you revealed when you walked in the bitter cold for days despite your illness,  
The courage you demonstrated when you fled from your jailers as the Russian bombs fell,  
The hope you possessed for a brighter future even when your sister developed gangrene.

How then could I ever truly preserve your memory?

My efforts to record those six years of your life will be  
As inadequate as the food you were given in the ghettos,  
As insufficient as the Polish and German perspectives towards your hardships,  
As inaccurate as the wrought iron sign that declared "Work Makes You Free."

But that does not mean I cannot try.  
From this day on I will share this treasured message,  
In the hope that my words will ensure that your memory will never be silenced.