

Chapter Endnotes

Part One

1. Source: Fordham University, Modern History Sourcebook: Adolf Hitler: *The Obersalzberg Speech*. August 22, 1939.
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/hitler-obersalzberg.asp>.

Prelude

2. Author Note: Joe said whenever the workers saw Dolp coming, someone would whisper, “Here comes the Swinehund, someone’s gonna get hurt.” Thus, the description of the man next to him is a compilation of those men. Joe described watching as Dolp rode to where they were digging trenches, removed his gun, and shooting those who lifted their heads. Some of the men that were shot were in other trenches near where Joe was working. Joe described the sound of Dolp’s gun: click, click, click, and how he simply then turned his horse and rode away. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

3. Author Note: We believe the labor camp was near Cieszanów, Poland, in the fall of 1940. Source: Joe Rubinstein. (See Additional Research Notes for more information about the camp and SS Dolp.)

4. Author Note: August 1940, around 2,000 Jews were deported to work camps in the Lublin district to construct anti-tank ditches and fortifications between Germany and Soviet occupied Poland. Hundreds of Jews from Radom were sent to forced labor camps near the border with the Soviet Union, including Cieszanów. Jewish laborers at Cieszanów were reported to sing bitterly in Yiddish: Work, brothers, work fast. If you don’t, they’ll lash your hide. Not many of us will manage to last—before long we’ll all have died. Source: Holocaust Education and Research Archive Team. “Radom.” Holocaust Research Project.
<http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ghettos/radom.htm>.

The Taking

5. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. The physical descriptions of the soldiers have been enhanced. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

6. Author Note: In February, 1942 and April 28, 1942, raids were carried out in the Radom ghetto in an attempt to eliminate the individuals the Nazis feared would organize opposition to the imminent deportation of Radom's Jews to the extermination camps. SS men came to the ghetto with a list of names and took the feared agitators. Some of those on the list were murdered at the entrances of their homes; others were transported to a local prison and many were taken to Auschwitz. Source: Jewish Gen. Copyright ©1999-2014 by JewishGen, Inc. Updated 1 Aug 2009 by LA. "Radom," Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities in Poland, Volume VII (Poland), pp. 530-543. Translation of "Radom" by Pinkas Hakehillot Polin, Published by Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol7_00530.html.

7. Author Note: It is unclear if Joe's name, or that of any of his older siblings who were not at the house, were on the Nazi lists. It is not known why Joe might have been targeted; he was not an activist. Joe believed it was because he was the oldest male in his home. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Eye of the Storm

8. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

The White Shroud

9. Author Note: The physical description of the Rabbi and minor details of the burial have been enhanced, including Joe tossing dirt into the grave and the actions of his grandparents. The events of his father's last hours are as Joe described. Joe's mother used to light kerosene

lanterns on the graves of Joe's father and his brother Solomon.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Strength Through Family and Faith

10. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

From Generation to Generation

11. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Promises Kept

12. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

The Girl in the Corner

13. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Finding a Path

14. Author Note: The details of Joe working with Mr. Nagel are as Joe described. The neighbor calling them names as they played soccer was a representation of the growing anti-Semitism in Radom.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Neighbor Turns on Neighbor

15. Author Note: Joe described Mr. Nagel as a politically astute and brilliant man. He openly shared his opinions with Joe while they worked. Specific details of their conversations have been enhanced.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Nowhere to Hide

16. Author Note: Joe huddled with his family under the kitchen table during the assault of Poland. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

The Dark Surge

17. Author Note: Details of where Joe was when the Germans invaded have been enhanced. Joe said it happened so fast that suddenly the Nazi were everywhere in his town. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Part Two:

18. Gitta Sereny, *Into That Darkness: An Examination of Conscience*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1983).

19. Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. "Ohrdruf," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*. Last updated: June 20, 2014. Last accessed September 7, 2014. <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10006131>. * Selected excerpts were used and does not include the entire article.

The Truck

20. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described, including his conversation with the teenager threatening to get off the truck. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

21. Author Note: Joe said they spent the first day on the truck collecting more and more men. He believes the truck left Radom, because they eventually stopped outside unfamiliar buildings where they were left on the truck all night. Since the exact date Joe was taken remains unknown, there is confusion about how long it took for him to arrive at Auschwitz. Joe's best recollection is that he was on the truck for two days and one night, then at several smaller camps for a few months and finally he was taken being taken to Auschwitz.

Joe said he was taken from his home about two weeks after the ghetto gates were closed, which occurred on April 7, 1941. Ten months later, two Nazi raids on the ghetto took place, in February 1942 and on April 28, 1942. We know by Joe's tattoo number that he arrived with a group of about 606 other men from Radom on April 30, 1942, which I believe was likely the result of the April 28th raid. If Joe was taken shortly after the ghetto gates closed in 1941, it is unclear how he would have arrived with the others from Radom to Auschwitz on April 30, 1942. Had Joe been housed at smaller camps and eventually brought to Auschwitz the same day as the others from Radom?

My suspicion is that Joe may be confusing the time he says he went from "camp to camp" (which he believes happened before he went to Auschwitz) with the time several years later, after he left Auschwitz, when we know he was taken to many smaller camps by truck. But this is speculation on my part. Several times, throughout the course of researching this story, when I thought Joe must be confused, his accounts have later proved accurate in every instance.

The recorded temperature on April 28, 1942, in Poland was a low of 33 degrees F. (1.1 Celsius).

The Cold Unknown

22. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.
Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Toward the Dark

23. Author Note: Joe described the train as being so crowded that there was barely room to stand and that people cried out for their loved ones, cried out in prayer, and cried out in agony. The people surrounding Joe in line and those on the train are a compilation of Joe's broader description of his ordeal on the train to Auschwitz. They were never given any food, and only once during their ordeal were they given any water.
Source: Joe Rubinstein.

The Arrival

24. Author Note: Joe said he had never heard of Auschwitz until the day he arrived there. He believes they arrived by train late in the afternoon. Inmates and soldiers are compilations of Joe's broader descriptions. Source Joe Rubinstein.

25. Source: Yad Vashem, "The Auschwitz Album," *The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority*.
http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/album_auschwitz/auschwitz.asp.

Marked for Life

26. Author Note: Details of how Joe was shaved, sprayed with disinfectant, tattooed and given ill-fitting clothes are as Joe described. Individual inmates and guards are representative of his broader descriptions of those around him upon his arrival at Auschwitz. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Source: Excerpts: "Tattoos and Numbers: The System of Identifying Prisoners at Auschwitz," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. Last accessed: September 5, 2014. <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007056>.

28. Source: Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle 1939-1945: From the Archives of the Auschwitz Memorial and the German Federal Archives*, p. 161. An Owl Book. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989/1990).

29. Source: Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle 1939-1945: From the Archives of the Auschwitz Memorial and the German Federal Archives*, p. 161. An Owl Book. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989/1990).

Sustenance of the Starved

30. Author Note: Individual inmates and guards are representative of Joe's broader descriptions of those around him in his early days at

Auschwitz. The one day here is representative of the many Joe spent at Auschwitz. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

31. Author Note: Joe was housed at Birkenau, one of the three camps of the Auschwitz complex. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

32. Source: Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle 1939-1945: From the Archives of the Auschwitz Memorial and the German Federal Archives*, p. 161. An Owl Book. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989/1990).

Day 2

33. Author Note: Individual inmates and guards are representative of Joe's broader descriptions of those around him at Auschwitz. The one day portrayed here is representative of his many days at Auschwitz. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

34. Source: Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle 1939-1945: From the Archives of the Auschwitz Memorial and the German Federal Archives*, p. 162. An Owl Book. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989/1990).

And Still They Come

35. Author Note: People surrounding Joe in line are representative of Joe's broader description of his ordeal at Auschwitz. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

36. Author Note: Children were often separated from the parents and that the outwardly religious Jewish men were the ones most despised by the SS and often the ones first to be brutalized and/or killed. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

A Day in the Life

37. Author Note: The one day portrayed here is representative of his many days at Auschwitz, as were the inmates eating with Joe. Joe said he saw people commit suicide by "touching the wire" nearly every day.

Joe talked extensively about the vast number of different languages spoken by the inmates at Auschwitz. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

38. Source: Excerpt: Walter Laqueur, “Foreword,” Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle 1939-1945: From the Archives of the Auschwitz Memorial and the German Federal Archives*, p. xvi. An Owl Book. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989/1990).

A Different Kind of Army

39. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Blisters

40. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

The Icy Blanket

41. Author Note: Occasionally some of the inmates were given shovels to clear the Auschwitz grounds of snow. Those with shovels would scoop the snow into Joe’s and other inmates’ shirts to be transported. On the days they were not given shovels, inmates used their hands to scoop it into their shirts. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Hallways of the Dead

42. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

A Question Repeated

43. Author Note: Joe never found anyone he knew from Radom at Auschwitz. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Swallowing Hell

44. Author Note: Descriptions of individual corpses and the insects around them have been enhanced. The one day here was representative of the many days Joe spent moving the bodies of the dead.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

45. After the poison gas had dissipated, prisoner work units, called sonderkommandos, were sent into the gas chambers, with pliers and scissors in hand and forced to scour the dead to remove their jewelry, yank out any gold teeth, and cut off long hair, all to be sent back to Germany. Sonnderkommandos were housed together away from the other inmates and were routinely killed after a few months on the job. Source: Shields, Jacqueline. "Concentration Camps, The Sonderkommando." *Jewish Virtual Library*. Last accessed: September 3, 2014. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/Sonderkommando.html>.

46. Author Note: I believe Joe moved the bodies to pits outside one of the converted cottages (gas chambers). Joe recalls the corpses in the massive pits being sprayed with chemicals from large trucks, then covered with dirt by large bulldozers, but not burned. Thus, it is likely that Joe was no longer on the labor crews moving the bodies when the burning of the bodies in open pits began in late summer 1942. Joe said his job was confined to moving the bodies and did not involve removing victims' teeth and hair. He was housed with the general population.

47. Source: John C. Zimmerman, "How Reliable Are the Höss Memoirs?" *Holocaust, Holocaust Denial: Demographics, Testimonies and Ideologies*. <http://www.holocaust-history.org/auschwitz/hoess-memoirs/>.

The Green Grass of Radom

48. Author Note: Joe talked extensively about his love of watching his father's horses graze near their barn. Reports of inmates having eaten the grass was described by other inmates at Auschwitz, but never by Joe.

49. Irene Safran. Personal account (May 1978). United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. *At Auschwitz*.

<http://www.ushmm.org/remember/the-holocaust-survivors-and-victims-resource-center/benjamin-and-vladka-meed-registry-of-holocaust-survivors/behind-every-name-a-story/irene-safran/irene-safran-at-auschwitz>, last accessed August 21, 2014.

Trains in the Night

50. Author Note: Joe took food to his neighbor who worked in the Radom rail yard. The details of Joe's thoughts of hearing trains in the night have been enhanced.

For a Crime I Didn't Commit

51. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. The physical descriptions of inmates and guards have been enhanced. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

The Missing Half

52. Author Note: The individual capo is a compilation of Joe's broader description of supervising capos. The specific experiences represented in this chapter of Joe thinking about his twin are representative of his many thoughts about his brother and other siblings.

A Precious Gift of Warmth

53. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Shattered

54. Author Note: Joe believes the man from Radom bearing the terrible news of the fate of his family may have known his mother. The details of what the man witnessed during the raid on Radom has been enhanced. We do not know the exact date that Joe met the man, but

believe it was sometime in the latter part of 1942.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Night

55. Author Note: Joe said that the nights at Auschwitz were the most difficult times for him, when he had time to think back on all the terrible things he had seen. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

An Experienced Prisoner

56. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

For the Sport of It

57. Author Note: Joe described his utter despair and horror at having to witness, on several occasions, children being lined up and clubbed to death with baseball bats. Individual descriptions of the children and soldiers have been enhanced. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Stars of Hope

58. Author Note: The one night described here is a representation of the many nights Joe spent at Auschwitz with the details enhanced. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

One Stroke for Life

59. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Beyond the Gates

60. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

61. “The idea of exterminating them by labor is the best.” Joseph Goebbels, Berlin 1942. *Joseph Goebbels’ Diaries: Excerpts, 1942-42. The Nizkor Project.* <http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/g/goebbels-joseph/goebbels-1948-excerpts-01.html>.

62. Author Note: After a few days of walking several miles to the coal mine and back in the wooden clogs, Joe asked for and received a pair of leather shoes. It is unclear if his designation as “Political Prisoner” had any influence in him being allowed to get different shoes.
Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Crumbling Stone

63. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.
Source: Joe Rubinstein.

64. Author Note: Joe does not know the full name of his abuser, but believes his first name was Bill. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

65. Author Note: Joe lived at the Jawischowitz (Sub-Camp Auschwitz) while working at the Brzeszcze Coal Mine. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

A Good Shine

66. Author Note: The physical description of the German officer has been enhanced as were the details of how Joe first met the man. The officer's words were as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

A Chance at Freedom

67. Author Note: The physical description of the miner has been enhanced. His offer of freedom was as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Pierre

68. Author Note: Joe said when they saw Allied planes, he would say to himself, “Drop the bombs! Drop the bombs.” It is unclear if Pierre ever

discussed seeing the Allied planes with Joe. Joe said once, when he had a bad headache, Pierre put a cold cloth over his head and that they did on occasion play checkers and cards with discarded materials. Joe woke one day, feeling fine, but everyone around him exclaimed that his skin was very yellow. He was sent to the camp hospital.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Sickness and Salvation

69. Author Note: The events in this chapter of Joe's illness, the Polish doctor telling him that he would never have to go back to the mines and his staying on as the doctor's assistant are as Joe described. The man with the injured leg is a compilation of patients that the doctor would try to help despite the order not to do so. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

On the Move

70. Author Note: The description of the soldiers has been enhanced. The "taking" of Joe described in this chapter is representative of the many times after Joe left Auschwitz that he was taken by truck to various concentration camps and sub camps. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Laja's Tears

71. Author Note: Joe said that when he thinks about his sister what he mostly remembers is her tears. His thoughts about seeing the tears of other children are representative of the many children Joe saw while at Auschwitz. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

An Inattentive Teacher

72. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Far from Home

73. Author Note: The description of the guards and the stopping of the truck is representative of the many times Joe traveled by truck. The details have been enhanced. The descriptions of the underground camp and his recollections of his father lifting him on his draft horse are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

74. Author Note: We are uncertain in which underground bunker complex Joe was held. It is possible it was Mittelbau-Dora, where a group from Buchenwald Concentration Camp were taken. We believe the timing fits, but we have no confirmation of the location, only that he worked at such a site. See Additional Research Notes.

And Then It Was Over

75. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. After leaving the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp he walked with his two friends for “a while.” They eventually crossed a bridge and entered a nearby town. The exact location is unknown. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

76. Author Note: While still at Theresienstadt, Joe was told that the camp’s SS commandant, Karl Rahm, had been given the order to kill all the inmates as the war grew to an end, but that he ignored the order. In researching this story, the author could find no specific validation of that report. However, similar orders were reported to have been given to other concentration camp commandants, including Buchenwald’s Hermann Pister.

From Ashes to Alive

77. Author Note: We believe the clothing shop was in Litoměřice, but it may have been another village near the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp. The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Part Three

Which Way?

78. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Picking Up the Pieces

79. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Beyond Words

80. Author Note: In his post-war search for his family, Joe was told repeatedly told by the authorities that his family was believed to have been killed at Treblinka following the liquidation of the Radom ghetto.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

81. Source: “Treblinka Death Camp History,” Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team, *Holocaust Research Project*.

<http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/ar/treblinka.html>.

Dance It Away

82. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described.

Source: Joe Rubinstein.

A Night That Changed a Life

83. Author Note: The people and events in this chapter are as Joe described. His conversation with Irene’s family, during their first dinner together, is a combination of many such meals. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

From Despair to Love

84. Author Note: The people and events in this chapter are as Joe

described. His thoughts as he regarded his reflection in the mirror have been enhanced. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

85. Author Note: Before he wed, Joe was able to locate and visit his father's sister, Geitel, and her husband, Bernard Ackerman, who resided in Stuttgart, Germany, to secure their blessing for his marriage. It is unclear how his aunt and uncle survived the war. They had no remaining photos of Joe's family. After meeting Irene, Geitel and Bernard gave their blessing to the marriage.

Touché

86. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Anywhere But Germany

87. Joe and Irene's wait at the camp for "displaced persons," their son spilling out of his crib with the motion of the ship, and Joe's reunion with the doctor from the hospital were as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Changing Tides

88. Author Note: Joe and Irene's wait at the camp for "displaced persons," their son spilling out of his crib with the motion of the ship, and Joe's reunion with the doctor from the hospital were as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

89. Author Note: Documentation of the ship manifest show Joe, Irene, and their son departed Wentorf, Germany, on September 29, 1950, for the USA via "Grohn Embarkation Staging Centre." Joe and Irene thought that it was closer to November. The September date may have been when they were processed at Grohn. See Additional Research Notes.

Out of Darkness

90. Author Note: Their kissing the American soil and their walk to see Times Square the first day they arrived was as Joe and Irene described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

For Just One Picture

91. Author Note: Joe does not have even one photo of his childhood family. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Nightmares and Dreams

92. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

The First Light of Dawn

93. Author Note: Joe has never been back to Radom since the day he was taken by the Nazis. He is torn between being eager to do so and unwilling to consider it. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

Epilogue – Threads of Gold

94. Author Note: The events in this chapter are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.

95. Author Note: The details regarding Joe's employment experiences and history are as Joe described. Source: Joe Rubinstein.