

THE HOLOCAUST PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

Elie Wiesel, *Night* (New York: Bantam, 1982), p. 32

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky. Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever. Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

1. Describe how Elie Wiesel's experiences shaped his outlook on life after the holocaust.
2. Why does Wiesel repeat the expression "never" so many times? What effect does it have on the reader?

Abraham Bomba, *United State Holocaust Memorial Museum*
https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_oi.php?ModuleId=0&MediaId=1078

People went in through the gate. Now we know what the gate was, it was the way to the gas chamber and we have never see them again. That was the first hour we came in. After that, we had a order to clean up the place. Clean up the place--is not something you can take and clean. It was horrible. But in five, ten minutes this place had to look spotless. And it looked spotless. Like there was never nobody on the place, so the next transport when it comes in, they shouldn't see what's going on. We were cleaning up in the outside. Tell you what mean cleaning up: taking away all the clothes, to those places where the clothes were. Now, not only the clothes, all the papers, all the money, all the, the...whatever somebody had with him. And they had a lot of things with them. Pots and pans they had with them. Other things they had with them. We cleaned that up.

3. What reason does Abraham Bomba insinuate for why they had to "clean up the place" so quickly and efficiently?

Boleslaw Brodecki, *United States Holocaust Museum*

https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_oi.php?ModuleId=0&MediaId=1092

When we would go back from work we had to watch hangings before supper. They had two or three sets of wires, electric wires and, and the people to be hanged, they put them between the wires. And they might stay there for three days with no food, urinating on themselves. And they bring them up when, when we come from work. And they put a table and a chair and they hang them and they read some funny sentence and they kick the chair out.... One was shot before he were hanged, but he started crying, "You murderers. You're going to lose the war. Hitler going to die," and all that. And the guy just went [makes the sound of gun shots] and they hanged him on the top of that. And we just got so cold that it didn't bother anybody anymore. Looking at dead people, looking at people getting hanged, you know, just like watching a movie. For some reason you get back to normal.

3. Why do you think the German officers would hang dissenters in the common area around the time when most people were coming back from working in the camps?

4. What was Boleslaw Brodecki's reaction when he saw someone get hanged in the labor camp? In your opinion, why was it not more remorseful?

Felix Horn, *United States Holocaust Museum*

They grabbed me, one of my good friends, Ukrainian, grabbed me, beating the hell out of me, forced me to scrub the floor of a pub that he opened up for German officers. From then, I was taken to a labor camp on Janowska Street in Lvov. Was not a concentration camp, it was a labor camp, but the way they treated us was just like concentration camp. We're lying on wooden boxes really, not in beds, boxes, there was nothing to eat, and we had to be on Appell [roll call] at 5 a.m. wintertime. We didn't stand straight, they beat you, they'd kick you from the front, from the back, from the side. You couldn't go down 'cause they would shoot you. So the, the, the awareness of not to go down, all the bleeding, always kept me aware of it, to stand up, and I was numb for after a while I didn't feel the beating, even. And then maybe 7 a.m. or so we're marching to the city to work.

4. Describe the actions of the Ukrainian that Felix Horn considered his friend. Why would his former "friend" treat him so poorly?

Ruth Meyerowitz, *United States Holocaust Museum*

https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_oj.php?ModuleId=0&MediaId=1200

The crematorium was just a few minutes away. We could see the chimneys from wherever we were and of course we could smell the gas when it was let out from the gas chambers, and, and then we could smell the burning of the bodies, the human flesh burning. And then they cleared the grates and we could hear the grates being cleaned, and it's similar to what your own oven would be like when you move the grates around except in a much, it was much noisier that we could hear it all the way in the barracks. And, uh, to this day when I clean my own oven, I am reminded of that noise of the cleaning of the grates in the crematorium.

5. Describe what Ruth Meyerowitz' remembers hearing and smelling. How has that experience effected her life after WWII?