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Mrs. Graining

English

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The Father Son Relationship

The father-son relationship portrayed in Elie Wiesel's *Night* begins when their family had to leave Sighet, Hungary. Elie was 15 years old when the Jews placed them in concentration camps and split up the family. The mom and sister were taken to the crematory, and Elie and his dad, Chlomo were together at the concentration camp. Elie and his father were put to work in the electrical warehouse. They endured a lot together.

Elie's father was respected in their Jewish community. "He was more concerned with others than with his own family", (Wiesel, 1956, p.2). Elie admired his father and they had a close relationship. The harsh circumstances they experienced took a toll on them both, however his father still tried to be there for others. His dad always tried to keep him calm, no matter how exhausted he was. Throughout the concentration camps Elie and his father were one another's caretaker.

Elie and his father ran with the other prisoners from Buna through a snow storm trying to get to Gleiwitz. They marched through the snow for 42 miles, and to survive they had to stop and rest. Elie got frostbite on his foot while trying to run from Buna. He had to go to a hospital and this is when he thought how death might be better. He kept

repeating to himself, “ Don’t think. Don’t stop. Run.” (Wiesel, 1956, p. 77). Elie's father ran by his side while exhausted and out of breath and this gave him the courage to continue to live. He did not think that his father would survive without him and his support. Elie’s father continued to push him to keep going even though they were both miserable, Elie continued to obey his father. Elie noticed for the first time the extreme exhaustion in his father and he saw the fear in his fathers eyes. Elie wanted to sleep but his father said to him, “ Don’t let yourself be overcome by sleep, Eliezer. It’s dangerous to fall asleep in the snow. You might sleep for good. Come on, come on. Get up.” (Wiesel, 1956, p. 79).

When Elie and his dad arrived at the gate of the camp he knew his dad was weak and he continued to hold his fathers hand. They both were looking forward to a hot bath but the lines were long and his father needed rest. “ I can’t go on.... This is the end.... I’m going to die here....”, (Wiesel, 1956, p. 92). This is what Elie’s father said to him right before he drugged him to a pile of snow. Elie had to take him by his arm and remind him that he cannot sleep in the snow. He showed his father all of the many corpses that were all around them because they fell asleep in the snow. The guards drove them toward the blocks where they had beds and soup that tasted like corpses. Elie awoke the next day and realized he did not know where his father was. He was worried but also felt ashamed for thinking maybe he could get rid of the dead wait for his father. Elie began to walk and searched for his father and found him by the lines for coffee. His dad was noticeably sick

and had a high fever. Elie could not stay with his dad because the sick were the only ones allowed to stay. Elie's dad was not fed because he was sick and he grew weaker day by day. His dad asked for water and the officer yelled at him, and hit him in the head. Elie was scared so he didn't move, because he didn't want to get hit. His father said his name and Elie stared at him for over an hour but could not do anything. The next morning discovers his dad had been taken to the crematory because he was so sick that he was already about to die. "Free at last" (Wiesel, 1956, p. 97)

In conclusion, through all of the difficulty's, harsh conditions and torture the bond between Elie and his dad helped get them through it all. Elie and his dad pushed one another through the harsh conditions. Elie felt shamed, exhausted, angry, yet his love for his dad overcame. His dad always cared more for others and that was seen through their times at the concentration camps. Through all of the adversity they both remained true to themselves and pushed through together. Their father-son bond was strengthened through the most difficult time of their lives.

works cited page

Wiesel, Elie, night, EMC paradigm, 1956