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Mrs. Graning

English

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When They were Sent to Die

The novel *Night* is a firsthand account about Elie surviving five concentration camps, and how he did it. He experienced very brutal and traumatizing things, when he was only fifteen. He was very brave, and surviving through what he went through was a miracle, especially when so many others didn't, and couldn't survive. Only the strongest and persistent could survive, the weak and old died. Many times, even the best and greatest people couldn't make it through, because the conditions and labor were so terrible. When Elie gets taken all he can think of is him and his father surviving, even with his animal instincts attempting to take over, and when his father dies, he succumbs to numbness, only thinking of himself.

Throughout their time in the concentration camps, Elie can only think of him and his father surviving. Elie cared so much about his father, he gave his father his ration of soup when he was sick, even though Elie knew he probably wasn't going to make it. This shows how much Elie cared for his father, even though they were never close in his childhood. He took care of his father, even in times of great desperation. Even when they are struggling, and just want to die, Elie perseveres and keeps trying to keep his father alive. "I could have wept with rage. Having lived through so much, suffered so much, could I leave my father to die now?" (Wiesel 92).

The conditions in the concentration camps and the need to survive was so brutal, it turned many of the prisoners into animals. Sons would turn on fathers, brothers would abandon each other. The fact that Elie saw all of this cruelty when he was only fifteen is just horrible. No one should ever experience anything like that, not at any age, especially not his age. “I did not move. What had happened to me? My father had just been struck, before my very eyes, and I had not flickered an eyelid. I had looked on and said nothing.” (Wiesel 34). Even Elie was turned into an animal, though he was disgusted with himself. He didn’t want to be hit too, so he didn’t help his father. Everyone was so focused on self-preservation, they became heartless. “It’s too late to save your own father, I said to myself. You ought to be having two rations of bread, two rations of soup. . .” (Wiesel 96).

“I spent my days in total idleness. And I had but one desire—to eat. I no longer thought of my father or my mother.” (Wiesel 99). Once Elie’s father died of dysentery, he became numb. He no longer felt anything, thought anything. He only could think of trying to survive and keep going. “After my father’s death, nothing could touch me anymore.” (Wiesel 98). All Elie was focused on was getting through this, and surviving until the next day. Elie succeeded in surviving, hence, writing his novel *Night*.

Elie Wiesel has shown his bravery and survival skills throughout *Night* by doing many things, some good, some bad. Elie has been through five concentration camps, showing his great strength. He has also shown bravery through revisiting this time by writing about it, so no one could ever forget how awful these people were to others, and so no one could ever do something like this again. To sum it up, during this time, Elie can only think of his and his father's survival,

while battling his animal instincts trying to take over, though when Elie's father dies, he all but gave up. He was just trying to survive.

Works Cited

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. EMC Paradigm, 1956.