

## FIRST PLACE HIGH SCHOOL POETRY

### *Unbreakable Bonds*

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Survivor Testimony: Engelina Billauer

Like the glass of the Jewish store windows, her bleak reality was  
Fragile, shattered by the Nazis' attack on her whole existence.  
Suddenly, the world became her enemy, saying it was her fault,  
Lines were crossed because she dared to live.  
She, along with her sister, was left to pick up the pieces.

Three girlfriends from Frankfurt, two sisters from Berlin  
Found family in each other, bonds stronger than blood.  
Stronger than the winter winds that tore through their tattered clothes  
But couldn't freeze their hearts.  
Stronger than the forces pushing them toward Death's door;  
They lived to see another day.  
The Germans expected them to break into pieces, but  
The five of them stayed whole.

The five of them, together, forced to perform  
Grueling labor, their elongated nightmare  
Where food and rest were as limited as freedom.  
And yet--

*Every little piece of bread we found or we got, we cut in 5 pieces.*

How could these young girls struggling to sustain themselves  
Even think about parting with any food they obtained?

The answer is quite simple, a fundamental truth  
That spans across time, helped our race to survive.  
It's the ability to love and be loved, to put someone else before yourself.  
A symbol of humanity in the darkest of times,  
Where acts of compassion  
Were infused in the tiniest of morsels.

Engelina Billauer's testimony serves as an inspiration  
To live a life full of love and care for others.  
Because as long as I can love and be loved,  
Just like Engelina, I will not break.