

From the Ashes
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I have been told lies.
By the man on the railroad who told me
You will see your parents again.
Who gave me false hope that perhaps
I will embrace them another time.
In my mind, I have sensed despair.

I have been shown hardship.
When I had to leave my school
That day I walked there and saw
All the Jewish shops and synagogues closed.
Though I did not know it, it was the beginning of our persecution.
In my eyes, I have seen hurt beyond measure.

I have been dealt cruelty.
By the ones who tried to seize
Wedding bands from faithful wives
Whose devotion was too strong to give in.
In the end, they were taken and never came back.
In my mouth, I have tasted the bitter flavor of anger.

I have been buried in guilt.
When my mother and I just wanted to watch movies,
But we had to cover our yellow stars to get in.
The yellow stars that told the world who we were
And it seemed that we were ashamed of being a Jew.
In my soul, I have felt fear that I cannot be who I am.

Yet I have been immersed in wonder.
When I went to a synagogue, and the rabbi signed and spoke.
When a man gave us extra food, in a Polish camp, even with the risk. Because my sister came
with me to the concentration camp.
Even though she was safe where she was before.
In my heart, I have witnessed light that overcomes darkness.

However, the wonder that I have seen
Doesn't excuse the lies, hardship, cruelty, and guilt
That I have experienced.
And by carrying the ashes of the fiery pain that I have been through We can use them to prevent
another blaze of hate.