

My name is Amil, which means hope and right now, I need a lot of it because I live in a concentration camp for Jews. I have a sister named Tamera and she is three years older than me and I used to depend on her for almost everything I do. Just recently, she had to switch camps to one in Bulgaria for better sewing supplies. I am still in the same camp since I was five. The biggest camp there is in Ukraine. Now I am around seven years of age and I already got used to the ways of the Nazi and our camp leader, Officer Fredrich Lacombe. He is very horrible and rich now because of all the forced labor we do. Oh, what I wouldn't give to see my family again and let the suffering end.

My job is to produce blood for the Nazi soldiers which means once every week, I go to the camp first-aid booth and get a needle punctured in me so that the nurses can get the 2 pints of blood they need, and I only have 9.6. Since they are taking so much blood from me, I have to have a whole day of rest to restore the monstrous amount.

The question I ask myself often: "Why am I the luckiest at this camp?". I never walk around the camp because I hate to see that other people at this camp getting whipped mercilessly while all I have to do is work out for healthy blood, lose blood, then sleep. I hate to think of their pain, their longing to just see their loved ones once more. It's like being the only person that is alive in this horrible, horrible camp. I am not allowed to get beaten so that I don't lose my perfect blood, but I am allowed to starve for two days.

Of course, I am not the only minor working for blood. There was also June, Albrecht, and Lance. They have to do this routine with me since we are the only minors in this huge camp. We all have different blood days, so we don't see each other often, but when we do, it is at the gym. We all sleep in the big building that all of the officers sleep in because that is the cleanest place to sleep. We have to be kept healthy so our blood will stay good for as long as possible for better luck with the Nazi soldiers.

One day, we saw another truck load of people entering the camp. Whenever this happened, June, Albrecht, Lance, and I like to sit on the edge of the stone boarder which is only about waist-high. We like to see what jobs they get and we look for any minors to make friends with. But we only did once, with Lance. This time, we see two minors and we all look at each other, the hope in our eyes. As we run towards them, an officer stopped us. I smelled a hint of eucalyptus on him and thought about the last time I smelled it. I was four and was touring the American museum where our tour guide, Kataline, showed us something called gum, which she let us try some. Mine was mint flavored, and I swallowed it.

"Halt! Go back to your dorms.", the officer shouted. Lance, who is the youngest and only four year, started to cry. The officer raised his hand as to take a blow to Lance's little head.

"Nooooo!", The rest of us yelled.

“What?”, the officer barked. We showed him our patches sewn on by someone with Tamera’s job. They mean that we are not allowed to be touched by anyone other than the nurse. That is when he sent us to our dorms. We stayed up late talking about what we think the new minors will be like.

Today, when only one showed up, we were curious what happened to the other minor and she explained through large sobs that the other was sent to the same camp that Tamara is at. Then she introduced herself as Sabel. She was around eight. June was still the oldest at around eleven.

We showed Sabel our routine and asked one of the nurses when her blood day will be and it was two days after mine. I went back to our dorms and showed Sabel her bed and asked about her history. She told me she went to a camp in Poland. I remembered that that is where I last saw my parents who were taken by the Nazis to supervise bomb makers. I asked if she knew anyone by the names Gary and Tanya and she said that she did. She also told me that they were desperate to see me. She also told me that my dad has been in a bomb accident but he survived. I felt so privileged to be able to know information about my parents.

At dinner, all the minors sat at the same table and ate the stale bread with some weird-smelling soup. We talked about what happened and we talked sadly how one of the Jews got shot by an officer while protesting about having to work in the toxic fumes. These things do happen often, but we still deeply mourn every death.

After two more years, we lost only 57 Jews, but we gained 32 more and four of them are minors. We haven’t lost one single minor since I got here. After the war, we were all released to our families. Mom looked much older, Tamera was covered in bruises and gaps in her thumbs, and dad made it home from the hospital a week later. He has fully recovered. All of the minors except for Albrecht, whom we adopted. Out of all this experience, I am proud to say that I survived and will live to see the sunrise.