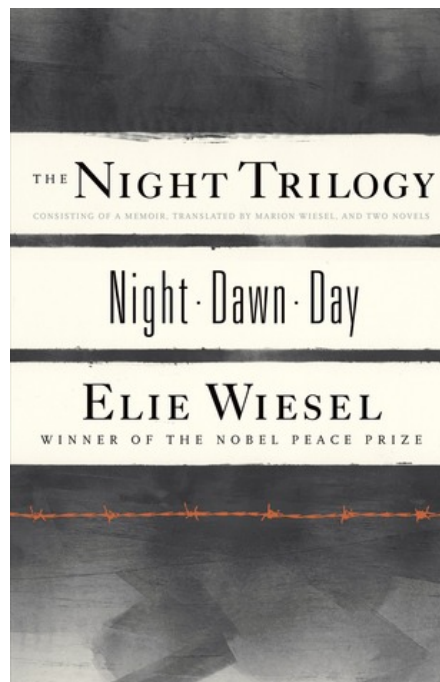




## The Night Trilogy: Night/Dawn/Day

*Elie Wiesel , Marion Wiesel (Translator) , Frances Frenaye (Translator)*

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**The Night Trilogy: Night/Dawn/Day** Elie Wiesel , Marion Wiesel (Translator) , Frances Frenaye (Translator)

**Night** is one of the masterpieces of Holocaust literature. First published in 1958, it is the autobiographical account of an adolescent boy and his father in Auschwitz. Elie Wiesel writes of their battle for survival and of his battle with God for a way to understand the wanton cruelty he witnesses each day. In the short novel **Dawn** (1960), a young man who has survived World War II and settled in Palestine joins a Jewish underground movement and is commanded to execute a British officer who has been taken hostage. In **Day** (previously titled *The Accident*, 1961), Wiesel questions the limits of conscience: Can Holocaust survivors forge a new life despite their memories? Wiesel's trilogy offers insights on mankind's attraction to violence and on the temptation of self-destruction.

## The Night Trilogy: Night/Dawn/Day Details

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Author : Elie Wiesel , Marion Wiesel (Translator) , Frances Frenaye (Translator)

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## From Reader Review The Night Trilogy: Night/Dawn/Day for online ebook

### Karen says

I knew *The Night* was about the Holocaust, but didn't know much about the other two books. I thought about how I would have reacted if put in that situation, as a victim. I'm not sure I would have acted differently. He comments a few times on situations where, looking back, they could have avoided trauma. They could have escaped it. But, instead, because of fear or naivety, or trust in human decency, they continued to be herded and killed. I think I would have continued to hope for the best in others as well, which would have led to my demise, unfortunately. There was not an ounce of human decency or morality in those events.

The other books describe post-Holocaust emotions, the first as the survivor is required to execute a man, and the second as he tries to love and be loved.

One would never be the same after seeing such evil, but I was struck by his inner narrative. So bleak and honest. So empty and hopeless. It's ironic that he spent so much energy avoiding death in the moment, but when removed from the danger, wishes for it. To escape from the emptiness that is left behind. It really made the horror of that time in our history and it's after effects on the generation of survivors, real for me. This is a must-read to keep those memories alive.

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### Jessica says

It's difficult to mark a book five stars when your stomach feels like emptying at the end of it.

Anyone who's read *Night* (and everyone should) knows it isn't your typical light reading. Or your typical heavy reading, for that matter. *Night* has a way of slapping you in the face, and what's terrifying isn't the picture it paints of the monstrous Nazis (they're actually pretty sparse), but of the monsters that the Nazis succeed in turning their prisoners into. [spoiler]Images of prisoners trampling each other for a crust of bread, or running down their own family to avoid being shot, remain with you forever after reading the book - you can't even begin to imagine what seeing those things first hand is like. What feeling like *doing* those things must have been like.[/spoiler]

Although they are fiction, *Dawn* and *The Accident* are fitting sequels to *Night*. For many of us, the horror of World War II ends with V-E Day on May 8, 1945. For those who suffered through and survived the concentration camps, *Dawn* & *The Accident* remind us that the horror never ends. Every day they are living with the horror of not only what they witnessed, but also what they participated in.

This trilogy is difficult to stomach, but it is for that exact reason that everyone should read it. Shirking from looking at things that are ugly is what leads to the compliance that allowed WWII to happen in the first place. Understanding what happened will help us to prevent it from happening again.

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### Sheri Milam says

This was my second time to read *Night* and my first experience with *Dawn* and *Day*. Each one was written from the heart of someone who was permanently changed by the awful events of the Holocaust. *Night* is primarily about Wiesel's struggle with his faith throughout his imprisonment in Auschwitz and Buchenwald.

A struggle that I would consider inevitable in such a situation. That anyone who experienced such loss and torture maintained faith in anything is incomprehensible, yet somehow many did.

Dawn was a fictional story about a young man who is liberated from the camps but, unable to escape the overwhelming personal loss, he joins a resistance group and turns to violence in what I think was an attempt to silence the demons wrought by hate and immeasurable personal loss.

Day was another work of fiction that I felt was a depiction of how difficult some survivors found the task of assimilating back into a “normal” life having experienced hell. Survivor’s guilt I’m sure, was experienced by many. Based on all that I’ve read about this terrible time, I’m amazed that any person came out of it with their sanity intact.

Most of all, it’s profoundly sad and terrifying that anyone considered “normal” at one time could do these things to other humans. They say all is fair in love and war. I can’t think of a bigger lie. That anyone can be swayed to believe in annihilation of any race simply based on race is beyond me. The depth of depravity it took to believe in the concepts behind the Holocaust! How can that many people be coerced into that thought process? And how can anyone deny that it did indeed happen?

These were hard to write, as Wiesel states from the beginning. I have no doubt. At times it was hard to read. I do however, believe that accounts of the Holocaust must be read. We should remain diligent in acknowledging the dead and the living, that their lives meant so much more than a number.

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## Ana says

Dawn and Day I find much better than Night - but that is just my personal opinion. The short stories are an exercise in imagination on the part of Wiesel, who envisions situations in which he places a character very much like himself. Because his character is always his age and a Holocaust survivor, he seems real, human, tangible, never fake or drawn out. I read this the day I visited his Memorial House in Sighetul Marmatiei, a town in my country of Romania. He was born and lived here before being deported to Auschwitz. His story and house were fascinating. Tomorrow I'm also visiting Auschwitz - I'm writing this here so I can remember over years - and I hope his books will come in good use whilst witnessing said place.

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## Aizat Nazli says

Never have I read a piece of writing that has simply moved me to tears. 'Night' was eloquently and vividly written that it moved me in many ways that I thought were not possible. If there's one thing that I would like people from the coming generations to be aware of, it's this amazing piece of writing that is called 'Night'.

'Dawn' and 'Day' depicts -in fictional terms- the author's struggle in forming a new life after going through such atrocities that has casted a permanent shadow onto him wherever he goes or whatever he does. Is he able to lead a normal life after seeing such dramatic events? This is some of the questions that he tries to answer in both of these follow up novels.

Read these three amazing works of literature and be prepared to find emotions in you that you never thought were there.

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## Chaitra says

An odd little trilogy, comprising of one seminal work of non-fiction, and two fictional follow ups. I really have no idea how to review this book, honestly. All I know is that *Night* should be required reading. That humans are capable of so much depravity shouldn't really surprise me, as it isn't the first time I've read about the Holocaust, nor have I not heard of other similar atrocities, but it does. *Night* is very simply written, it is shocking in its starkness. It is also a very devout boy's understanding and acceptance of the fact that if there is a God, he's not kind or merciful nor is he a particularly vigilant one.

The other two books *Dawn*, and the *Accident* are follow ups to *Night*. They're fictional post-holocaust books, catching the protagonist at odd moments of his life after the war. *Dawn* deals with Elisha contemplating the murder of an army captain for political purposes in Palestine, and the *Accident* has him pondering the idea of suicide as the past is too much to bear. I did not like these to the extent of *Night*, but they are great books in their own right. The writing in these two books is simple as well and its emotions honest. Great stuff.

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## Quo says

Oddly enough, in reading *Night* I thought of it as a coming of age story, a *Bildungsroman* set in a concentration camp. At times the horrors of what Elie Wiesel was forced to endure seemed almost Dickensian, admittedly a curious reaction to a Holocaust story but I quickly got the feeling that Wiesel had put off relating the barbarity of what he experienced until time had at least marginally softened his memories & provided some minimal distance from his experiences. By this, I sense that what Wiesel must have had to tolerate in order to survive was much more horrible than anyone can manage to frame in words. For this reason, he held off telling his story for many years. The tale begins with some interesting boyish memories of life in Sighet in Transylvania, including a struggle to understand God's role in his life, countering what Elie has been told with curiosity about the mystical realm of Judaism. The young Wiesel is told by an itinerant rabbi:

Man raises himself toward God by the questions he asks Him. That is the true dialogue. Man questions God and God answers. But we can't understand His answers. We can't understand them because they come from the depths of the soul, and they stay there until death. You will find the true answers Eliezer, only within yourself.

Life within Auschwitz involved a daily struggle to survive but also & perhaps more importantly to retain hope and to continue a belief in God's mercy for a young Jewish boy raised within a strong religious framework. Elie Wiesel was forced to constantly say *Kaddish* for fellow inmates of the concentration camp who were detained with him but also for his family and eventually for his own lost faith in God. As with any Holocaust story I am challenged to comprehend how anyone, especially a young boy had the reservoir of mental, emotional & physical strength to brave such horrors.

On a particular day in Auschwitz, Elie Wiesel heard a fellow inmate declaring, "Blessed be the name of the Eternal" and reflected:

Why should I bless Him? In every fiber I rebelled. How could I say "Blessed are Thou, Eternal, Master of the Universe", because he had thousands of children burned & kept six crematories working night & day, He who chose us from among the races to be tortured day & night, to see our fathers, our mothers, our brothers end in a crematory? This day I had ceased to plead. I was no longer capable of lamentation. On the contrary, I felt very strong. I was the accuser, God was the accused. My eyes were open & I was alone--terribly alone in a world without God &

without man. Without love or mercy. I had ceased to be anything but ashes, yet I felt stronger than the Almighty, to whom my life had been tied for so long. I stood amidst those praying, observing it like a stranger.

Among the more memorable scenarios within *Night* is the image of a friend named Juliek, a boy who struggles on with Elie Wiesel, Elie's father & countless others on yet another involuntary pilgrimage when the camp administrators envision fast-approaching Russian troops & are forced to flee with their surviving captives. Juliek has somehow retained the strength to keep his violin in tow during the brutal march, eventually countering his & the group's fading energy with some strains from the Beethoven Violin Concerto in the midst of a temporary encampment. Come morning, Juliek is dead & the violin smashed.

Elie Wiesel's *Night* conveys the horrors of a boy's loss of innocence & more than that, the dehumanization of life as he is taken from his home in Sighet to Auschwitz-Birkenau & then on to Buchenwald before eventually regaining his freedom while losing most of his family. We continue to ask how such things were possible. Simon Wiesenthal suggested that "God must have been on leave during the Holocaust." However, when asked where God was at Auschwitz & similar places, Rabbi Heschel said not to ask where God was at the time of the Holocaust but rather to ask where man was. The same question has been posed to many since the Holocaust but Rabbi Heschel's response seems the most satisfactory.

I have read *Night* as part one of a trilogy published by Hill & Wang, with Elie Wiesel's *Dawn* and *The Accident* the other two segments. This is to distinguish this edition from the version that has *Day* as the 3rd book of the trilogy. Apparently, Wiesel felt that these the first three books he authored constituted in some way a unified tale. It would be cumbersome to report on all 3 volumes within this review & so I've decided to review the other books separately. That said, I have enjoyed reading each of the segments in my version of the trilogy, while continuing to strive toward some understanding of how one man managed not just to endure & to survive Auschwitz but ultimately to prevail, and in so doing to bring at least a limited form of clarity to so many others.

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## Staren says

I gave three stars to the trilogy only because I would give 4-5 stars to the first book and 2-3 to the second and third ones. It's difficult to talk about the trilogy as a whole, because the three books are very different. For me, it was a mistake to read them all, because I appreciated the first one and struggled over the second and third books.

The thing is that *Night* is pure memoirs, and these are must-read memoirs about the Holocaust.

However, *Dawn* and *Day* (*Accident* in some editions) are fiction books. They are based on some real events and, especially, real and important reflections of the author, which are undoubtedly very relevant for any Holocaust-survivor, but the writing is strikingly different. It's overwhelmingly depressing (although we are talking here about a post-Holocaust life, in contrast to horrifying *Night*, but *Night* does not do it to you, nevertheless), repetitive, devastating. The reading is tedious, and overall created "a Dementor effect." Probably, this was the key purpose of the author, but I regretted reading them. It might be only my personal idiosyncrasy or something, I don't know. Anyway, what I want to say is that if you read *Night* (which is recommended anyway) and then decide to stop here, it would be ok, because *Dawn* and *Day* are NOT a continuation of the memoirs.

So, I do not want to talk about *Dawn* and *Day* much. Let's return to *Night*.

Remember this famous picture from Buchenwald?

One of the men is Elie Wiesel:

Yes, he is only 16 years old here, but he looks like an elderly. He lied about his age being in concentration camps, and this saved his life eventually, because children were killed immediately after arriving to death camps, while young strong adult men sometimes had a chance to survive for some time. However, due to this, he had seen and lived through so many terrors being only a child, an adolescent. Moreover, he was one of those few who survived BOTH Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps, not to mention some minor camps in addition to this and harrowing "evacuation" procedures at the end of the war, which themselves killed so many people.

*Night* tells about the events associated with life in a Jewish ghetto, and then in a series of death camps, where Jews were killed by thousands, and Elie Wiesel was among a minor part of survivors who were temporarily used for hard work. His whole family was killed there, and the death of his father was especially painful and heart-breaking.

The most awful aspect of the book is that everything that happened there was near the end of the war, in the last waves of the terror, and you are constantly tormented by the thoughts that "Nazis would be defeated very-very soon, and all these sufferings and deaths are so, so unfair...", "all this could just not happen if it were some smallest impediments or some luck." Once, Elie Wiesel described a situation when Nazis were already fleeing from advancing allies troops and evacuated the death camps, and Elie with his father had an opportunity to stay on the place, but they were afraid of unknown (they suspected that the camp would be mined, and those who would stay, would be blown up) and decided to move with the evacuating camp... Their sufferings during this evacuation is among the most frightful readings of my whole life, and then you read this: *"AFTER THE WAR, I learned the fate of those who had remained at the infirmary. They were, quite simply, liberated by the Russians, two days after the evacuation."*

See? It's totally heart-breaking.

So, the whole narration is basically a race on the verge between life and death, and sometimes it looks like life was so, so close, but it could not be reached anyway. It is nerve-racking.

Besides this, I was surprised to read about the following two things:

1) We often say that German people did not know about Nazi concentration camps -- or, at least, were not especially interested in learning about them, because the German government hid the camps from simple people. This might be true for many, of course, but Elie Wiesel describes several situations that show the opposite:

*"THERE FOLLOWED days and nights of traveling. Occasionally, we would pass through German towns. Usually, very early in the morning. German laborers were going to work. They would stop and look at us without surprise.*

*One day when we had come to a stop, a worker took a piece of bread out of his bag and threw it into a wagon. There was a stampede. Dozens of starving men fought desperately over a few crumbs. The worker watched the spectacle with great interest."*

*"A crowd of workmen and curious passersby had formed all along the train. They had undoubtedly never seen a train with this kind of cargo. Soon, pieces of bread were falling into the wagons from all sides. And the spectators observed these emaciated creatures ready to kill for a crust of bread."*

*"We were walking slowly. The guards were in no hurry. We were glad of it. As we were passing through*

some of the villages, many Germans watched us, showing no surprise. No doubt they had seen quite a few of these processions...

On the way, we saw some young German girls. The guards began to tease them. The girls giggled. They allowed themselves to be kissed and tickled, bursting with laughter. They all were laughing, joking, and passing love notes to one another. At least, during all that time, we endured neither shouting nor blows."

2) I feel that I am only starting to understand the whole problem of acknowledging the Holocaust by the post-war world, and I still have to learn a lot. At least, I was bewildered by this attitude of publishers described by Elie Wiesel regarding his attempts to publish his books about the concentration camp experience and then the whole reception of the books by the public:

*"Is that why my manuscript — written in Yiddish as "And the World Remained Silent" and translated first into French, then into English — **was rejected by every major publisher, French and American, despite the tireless efforts of the great Catholic French writer and Nobel laureate Francois Mauriac?** After months and months of personal visits, letters, and telephone calls, he finally succeeded in getting it into print."*

*"Earlier, I described the difficulties encountered by Night before its publication in French, forty-seven years ago. **Despite overwhelmingly favorable reviews, the book sold poorly. The subject was considered morbid and interested no one. If a rabbi happened to mention the book in his sermon, there were always people ready to complain that it was senseless to "burden our children with the tragedies of the Jewish past."** Since then, much has changed. Night has been received in ways that I never expected. Today, students in high schools and colleges in the United States and elsewhere read it as part of their curriculum. How to explain this phenomenon? First of all, there has been a powerful change in the public's attitude. **In the fifties and sixties, adults born before or during World War II showed a careless and patronizing indifference toward what is so inadequately called the Holocaust. That is no longer true.** Back then, few publishers had the courage to publish books on that subject."*

I should also say that I've never heard about Elie Wiesel before his death last year. For this, of course, I should be "thankful" to Soviet and post-Soviet Holocaust deniers and the whole indifference to the problem in our society. Elie Wiesel was one of the most famous Holocaust survivors and one of the most respected and influential people in the world, and he was a Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1986), and yet we never especially hear this name here, right?

Do you know who Elie Wiesel was? Heard about him? Seen his books in bookstores?

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## Greta says

I don't understand why this is called a trilogy.

'Night' is a holocaust memoir ; 'Dawn' and 'Day' are fiction novels about holocaust survivors.

'Night' was a good read but to be honest I expected it to be much better than it was. His memoir is mainly about the struggle with his faith, which I can understand, but that didn't appeal to me as much as other holocaust memoirs.

'Dawn' was a real drag to read. It's about a young holocaust-survivor who joins a Jewish underground movement in Palestine and is commanded to execute a British officer who has been taken hostage. Sounds promising, but it really wasn't.

It was all about the inner struggle to fulfill the command to execute the officer. Too much philosophizing and

mystic rhetoric, in the most pejorative sense possible. In fact, he was whining about it so much that I wished he would put a bullet through his own head.

Because let's not forget, all his whining doesn't change the fact he's a terrorist.

No Stockholm Syndrome for me, thank you very much.

It has put me off reading 'Day', for sure.

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### **Kate says**

For my masters degree, I set myself the challenge to read all of Elie's books in order of publication--starting with Night. The journey through his works, one after the other, revealed an increasingly nuanced understanding of one man's struggle to come to terms with human evil, suffering, forgiveness and memory. Elie is a man of remarkable compassion. We are the richer for having his works in our libraries.

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### **Rebecca Williams says**

Bought this copy at a concentration camp in Germany, and the images Wiesel paints have a hauntingly concrete setting in my mind.

The narrator in the novellas calls himself a storyteller, and the author certainly is a gifted one: this work sets out to and succeeds in putting a nightmare in a narrative that honors the victims without forgetting to acknowledge the legitimacy and humanity of their terror. Somehow, Wiesel's writing seems to create a shared memory between the ones who suffered and we who can hardly imagine what transpired, which creates a hazy style with a few poignantly lucid scenes taking control of the plot. This is undoubtedly an important work that shows the rawness of humanity at its worst, but also glimmers of its best.

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### **Pamela says**

One of the frightening things about the Holocaust was the fact that in spite of what we wish to believe it was predominantly perpetrated by ordinary people. We like to think that only monsters do monstrous things. I think it is a comfort to us and a way of assuring ourselves that we could never do anything so heinous. The truth of human nature is a lot more complicated, however. I first read Night a while ago and what struck me was Wiesel's guilt over wishing at one point that his father would just die. The survival instinct can take over us all, no one is immune and no one can truly know what they would do if confronted with the horrors Wiesel and others who have experienced such deprivation would face.

This is the first time I have read Dawn and Day(The Accident) and the truly remarkable aspect of Wiesel's writing is how simple, in a way, he is able to present the dilemma that survivors face. Throughout Dawn I really began to think that Elisha would not be able to execute the British officer. The fact that he went through with this horrible act and yet I felt for him as much as the soldier is chilling in what it says. Not about bad people, but about the bad acts that good people can end up committing. And in Day(The Accident), the question of whether one can truly leave behind a past that is made up of such tremendous tragedy to go on and live a normal life is a difficult one. After all, the past is responsible in so many ways of making us who we are in the present that fully discarding it is impossible.

Wiesel should be required reading.

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### **Caitlin says**

Night: The language used here is so haunting and beautiful that I often felt myself on the verge of tears. It's hard to say anything other than how chilling and important EW's memoir is to all generations.

Dawn: I really found this piece quite interesting and I quite enjoyed it. This almost felt like an episode of The Twilight Zone due to the combination of the mystical/spiritual conflicts and real-life actions.

Day (The Accident): I wasn't as keen on this story, but perhaps it takes a few readings and a more in-depth analyzation to appreciate some of the layers. I did like the way the story was presented non-chronologically, it really fits for the character and the story. The writing itself was still excellent, but I think I had a little trouble engaging with the character. Granted, I think that's the point.

Overall this is an excellent and important collection.

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### **Jennifer says**

These books are hard to read, as it is a true first-person portrayal of the horrors of concentration camps (Night) and then the permanent mental and emotional after-effects (Dawn and The Accident) in the survivor. Even though it is not happy reading, it is necessary that we all get a graphic and honest portrayal of the atrocities to ensure that it will never happen again.

In my opinion, probably the worst effect for each young man/hero in each story (we could even argue that the three survivors are the same man?) is the loss of faith. Growing up as a studious, faithful, and devoted Jewish scholar, he completely loses his faith in God and becomes angry at Him. His constant question of "why" has no answer and he cannot accept that.

Dawn is a sort of revenge- previously the victim, he now is placed in the role of executioner.

The Accident struggles even more with the post-trauma in a mental capacity- along with the loss of grace, he deals with suicidal tendencies and we see how his inner struggles affect those who love him in the present.

I do recommend reading them all together, as they are so closely related.

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### **Bucket says**

I am glad to have read all three of Wiesel's stories at once. The first, Night, is the one everyone has read (and now me too, finally!) and the others, Dawn and The Accident, are about Elie's subsequent life experiences and how the shadow of being a concentration camp survivor permeates every aspect of his life and being.

The night is an important theme that weaves through the stories. In Night, night refers to the actual first night that Elie is in a concentration camp but it also means what his life has become:

"Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed."

Night also represents his transformation, from a human child with a soul and a future, to an empty shell:

"The night was gone. The morning star was shining in the sky. I too had become a completely different person. The student of the Talmud, the child that I was, had been consumed in flames. There remained only a shape that looked like me. A dark flame had entered into my soul and devoured it."

This destruction of the humanity of the Holocaust survivors also becomes a theme of the three stories. In Night, Elie feels he is nothing more than a body:

"I was a body. Perhaps less than that even: a starved stomach. The stomach alone was aware of the passage of time."

In Dawn, both themes continue. Elie deals with the loss of his humanity in an unusual way as he contemplates what it will mean for him to become a murderer. He struggles, not because of his own morality or human-feeling, but because of the judgment he feels from all those who he lost during the Holocaust (literally, everyone he knew). Throughout Dawn, Elie is surrounded by the familiar dead, and trying to understand what their presence means. Dawn takes place entirely during the night, with its culminating scene occurring at dawn.

Elie recalls a beggar he met (who is now one of the many dead surrounding him) saying:

"Night is purer than day; it is better for thinking and loving and dreaming. At night everything is more intense, more true. The echo of words that have been spoken during the day takes on a new and deeper meaning. The tragedy of man is that he doesn't know how to distinguish between day and night. He says things at night that should only be said by day."

Ilana, a peer of Elie's who feels sorry for him says:

"War is like night...It covers everything."

The final story (The Accident) deals specifically with the ongoing difficulties that Holocaust survivors face. They cannot forget (and do not want to), they feel guilt and shame, both at having experienced what they did and at having survived.

"That's the way it is: shame tortures not the executioners but their victims. The greatest shame is to have been chosen by destiny. Man prefers to blame himself for all possible sins and crimes rather than come to the conclusion that God is capable of the most flagrant injustice. I still blush every time I think of the way God makes fun of human beings, his favorite toys."

"We cannot forget. The images are there in front of our eyes. Even if our eyes were no longer there, the images would remain. I think if I were able to forget I would hate myself. Our stay there planted time bombs within us. From time to time one of them explodes. And then we are nothing but suffering, shame and guilt."

In this story, after a near-death experience, Elie muses on the need to be a better liar in order to live in the world. He has to lie about loving his girlfriend Kathleen and he has to lie about wanting to live. As he sees the suffering his memories put Kathleen through, Elie realizes:

"I knew that our suffering changes us. But I didn't know that it could also destroy others."

The last quotation I'll include strikes me as a very clear and honest statement about the lives that Holocaust survivors (and other survivors of brutal violence and injustice) face:

"Anyone who has seen what they have seen cannot be like the others, cannot laugh, love, pray, bargain, suffer, have fun, or forget... These people have been amputated; they haven't lost their legs or eyes but their will and their taste for life."

Themes: WW2, concentration camp, Jewish, translation, memoir, short story, tragedy, violence, life and death, survival, guilt, shame, memory, fate

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