

“Dear Tzadok”

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Letter to my future self,

May you live to read this letter, for I write it during times of horrid struggle and constant danger. First and foremost, congratulations, if you are to still consider life something worth congratulating. The date is October 1st, 1943. I am 15 years old; Hitler has kept his promises. I do not know what evils await me from the time I write this letter, but I know that there will be many more to come. I pray that you never feel such evils again.

As I sit here, the familiar scent of flesh fills the air. I have become accustomed to it since my arrival. The flames of the crematorium never cease. It feels as if I have been in this hellish nightmare my entire life. I am the last survivor of my beloved family, all thanks to the grace of God. What a kind and most compassionate deed. The memories of them drift away like souls in the gas chambers. Their bodies remain. Survival has become my only concern, yet my will to live is half hearted. What is the point of survival in such a world of hell? Death has become routine; it creeps in every corner, haunting the souls of the weak while decaying the souls of the strong.

No one dares to rebel with the sentence of death hovering over their lives, waiting to crash down on those who still have an ounce of dignity left. We have been lowered down to animals. We are no longer human. No purpose, no meaning remains in this oblivion. Mysticism no longer exists. Everything I have ever dreamed of becoming is now a distant thought, drifting away in a sea of blood. My young and sanguine nature is no more. I am but an old man trapped in a child's body. My eyes cannot unsee what I have seen.

My former friend dominates my thoughts. A simple act of noncompliance, in return. . . death. The memories of us playing in the market, enjoying life as children are supposed to, rot away like the corpses that make up my surroundings. Now only his pale blue face remains, accompanied by his dangling, lifeless body.

My life is a noose gradually tightening around my neck. My faith is depleting. My childhood has been cut short. I find it hard to be optimistic any more when the only positivity in my life is bread and soup.

We once believed in the rumors of the Red Army, that all was going to blow over. Now we laugh at the blinded thoughts of the fellow prisoners who still have a drop of innocence left in their minds. The younger children still have hope. . . oh their immaculate hope. Induced by naivety. I wish I could envision more memories of my past, so I could escape to a happier place for even a moment, but the darkness consumes my light. Emptiness is all I feel.

I write this letter in the hopes that you will one day find it. That you will one day read the death ridden words of this paper and be compelled to do what I cannot do at this time. That you will regain the hope and purpose that I have lost. So I ask you my strong survivor, as you relive this brutal past and recount the feelings felt at such horrid times, to not give in. If you are reading this then you have already won. Hitler has failed, the Jews live on. But your journey is not over. You must move forward from these horrid events and spread a message to the world. Break through the walls of anguish and let optimism shine in. Do not let the devil himself prevail over our strength. I ask you to reignite those dreams you once experienced as a child. To remember your past, but not let it define your future. To resurrect from the living corpse you see in the mirror and be reincarnated by the spirit of hope. I ask you to make a difference in the

world and overcome the evils that once condemned your life. You must prevail Tzadok. You must!

Most compassionately,

Tzadok

Works Cited

1. "Boys' Names." *Aishcom*, 31 Dec. 2006, www.aish.com/jl/1/b/48967016.html.