

"All We Can Do Is Hope"
726 Words

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by Troy Dittrich
Copley-Fairlawn Middle School, Grade 7
Mrs. Jennifer Adair, Instructor
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Paul Irmscher, Neuengamme Concentration Camp

I talk to myself every day. I wonder what will happen next. If I die here, who will mourn? Who will remember? My family won't know. Writing letters out of Neuengamme couldn't be called easy, or difficult. It always depends. But I want to tell them that I am okay and still alive. If I can work with the guards, and make good relations with them, I will be able to get my letter out.

Dear, Family

I send this letter to inform you that I'm okay and still alive. I think about you every day. During work, and my dreams. But I will survive here, and return to you. No information on a death sentence, which means good news. I believe I'm only being held, not killed. If you can, send me a letter back, please do so.

Sincerely, Paul,

I hope this works.

Jakow Abramski, Outside Neuengamme Camp

"Stay in the tree line," I said. I was commanding a group of about ten partisans, from all over. We had Russians, Germans, Slovaks, Polish, and Serbs. Our plan was simple, we would cause a distraction to alert the Germans we were here. Doesn't sound that great but that's just

step one. Step two is to send half of my team to run from them and the others will run with me to figure out how to open this place and get the prisoners out.

I tell them my plan. At least half have to agree, which I got, but electing people to just run from the Germans with no plan would be difficult. I trained these men and made great friendships with them, But I have to do what I have to do.

"Alright. Everybody ready?"

"3,2,1,"

"Crack, Boom, ppt."

"Hold up!" I said.

Where are these noises coming from?

David Deshon, Lieutenant, Royal Artillery

"Fire"

"Phoot, Bam"

The sound of artillery scared me at first, but now, it's as normal as sipping tea on a Sunday morning. We're bombing a field near the battleground for an easier way to flank the enemy.

"Deshon, get down there with the others," Major said.

So suddenly I have to run with the others and take the enemy's fort. Couldn't be easier.

After Taking the Point

"Great job boys!" Major said.

I got exhausted from that. It was one of the only times I was a part of that run-and-gun team. I'd say I'm lucky to be alive.

But as I turn to my team, I see a guard tower in the distance. I decided to return and explain what I saw to the Major. He told me I could take a group of eight to scope it out. I also decided to document what I saw in my journal.

Coming closer to the tower, I noticed it wasn't just a tower, but a camp full of starving prisoners.

"Look at this place," one soldier says.

"This is a war crime," says another.

February 1945

Neuengamme Concentration Camp

I went from thinking I saw a guard tower to a concentration camp. This was a big place with many barracks with about fifteen prisoners each. I stared in horror at the faces of those prisoners, their body conditions, and their living conditions. Most things needed to survive there were as poor as a starving homeless person in London. Never again do I want to stumble upon another.

A prisoner walked up to me and said, "Are you British?"

I said yes, and he hugged and kissed me as if his brother came back from the dead and confronted him.

I gave him a bag of crisps and a bottle of water. I asked for his name so I could remember. His name was Paul Irmscher. I wrote his name in my journal.

Suddenly, a group of about ten men walked over, led by another man. I once again asked for his name and it was Jakow Abramski. I wrote his name in my journal

I took Jakow and his group followed by Paul and got help. I will never forget this moment, and hopefully, they won't either. I will preserve my journal, and keep writing. Maybe there are more camps we will liberate. Every soldier from every army should preserve these records of the Holocaust. But all we can do is hope.

Work Cited

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