

An Hour Between Life and Death

Some heroes wear capes, while others carry weapons. A certain hero named Adolfo Kaminsky, on the other hand, did neither. Rather, he altered documents that saved lives. As dictator Hitler gained power, he strived to eliminate Jewish people from Germany and its neighboring countries. Most people stood to the side, either too intimidated, or too lazy to protest Hitler's horrifying actions. In the end, that was exactly what separated liberators from the crowd.

Out of the tens of millions of people in Germany during the Holocaust, well under 3% resisted. Out of this 3% of resisters, over 80% are unknown. People sacrificed their lives just for their stories to be untold. Adolfo Kaminsky is part of that 80%.

In 1944, Kaminsky noticed that hundreds of people died each hour. Being an apprentice dryer prior to the war, he discovered that he could erase official ink. He worked alone, pushing through the pain and difficulty of wiping ink with chemicals. It took Kaminsky about two minutes for each document, so he told himself, "If I sleep for 1 hour, 30 people will die" (Museum of the Jewish People; Kigel par. 6). Kaminsky stopped sleeping and worked for days without a break. His perseverance and drive saved lives.

By the time the Holocaust ended, Kaminsky saved over 14,000 people. He told almost no one about his actions. With great courage, Kaminsky repaired the world. He proved that heroes were not always flashy or loud; sometimes they worked in silence.

Works Cited

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