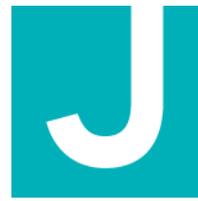




Savannah  
Jewish



Jewish  
Educational

## 2021 Holocaust Remembrance Writing & Art Contest

1st Place:

**“Flower Prince”**

*Hannah Park,*

Savannah Arts Academy

Theme- Persecution, Intolerance, and Injustice

Abram had stopped counting the days he'd been in the camp. Role call would be soon, but he did not want to get up. He had no reason to, since the first day he'd arrived. He could still remember that day vividly.

He felt like he'd been in the cattle car for an eternity. His younger sister and brother had been sleepily leaning against their mother, who was looking up at Abram.

"We'll be okay," she'd whispered, though neither were sure of it. They hadn't known what to expect. The most Abram could expect was to see Father again. Abram's father had been transported six months before the rest of the family. He'd gone off to work, but had never returned. He'd been taken off the streets, Abram had heard.

Finally, they'd arrived. Abram and his mother shook Edith and Josef awake. Abram took his sister's hand, Mother took Josef's. They followed the people out. Abram noticed a few people laying on the floor, unable to get up. He turned to awake them, but Mother shook her head. They were hopeless, her eyes seemed to say.

They passed a sign that read *Dachau*. Abram felt Edith squeeze his hand tighter. She was eleven years old; they'd been planning for her bat mitzvah in two months. The whole way, they were silent. Guards were standing on either sides of them. Finally, they

reached an SS officer, who was dividing up the men and women to different sides, a gun in one hand.

His mother took Edith's hand, and Josef quickly ran to Abram. "Don't lose him," Mother said to Abram, tears running down her face.

"I won't. I won't." Abram tried to hug her and Edith, but they were already being whisked away.

Josef started to cry too, but Abram quickly hushed him. "We will see them soon, Josef," he said.

Josef began to cough, and Abram cringed. Josef was seven, very premature, and got easily ill. Yet he had been the light of the family, the only one able to make Father laugh during hard times. Abram couldn't lose him.

The two of them continued to walk with the other boys and men, when they reached another crossroads, where the sick were being separated from the healthy.

"No," Abram said under his breath. Not so soon! He looked at Josef, who glanced at him back fearfully.

"What is going on?" Josef asked.

"Don't fear, Josef," Abram said quickly. "Just stay silent. It will all go well."

"Abram," Josef began to moan, "my head hurts."

"Just hold on for a few minutes," Abram pleaded. "Don't you want to see Mother and Father again?"

"Father?" Josef perked up. And he stayed silent.

They finally reached the front of the line, where another SS officer stood. He looked at Abram and nodded. "Strong," he muttered, and motioned towards the right. But one look at Josef, and he was pointed to the left.

"No!" Abram screamed, grabbing Josef's arm. "Please, have mercy!"

"Let go of him!" said the SS officer, raising his club. "He is too weak. Too sick."

Abram still held on, and received a blow to his shoulder. He collapsed. For a while he lay there, until he got up to his knees and said, "Then send me with him."

By now Josef was crying hysterically, hiccuping too. The SS officer looked at him in disgust, then turned back to Abram. "We will drag you if we must," he said, grabbing Josef and pushing him towards the left.

"Josef!" Abram called, and his brother turned briefly. His eyes had been full of fear, and he was shaking.

Josef's haunted eyes still filled Abram's nightmares. *I could've saved him... but I failed.*

"Get up," said a young man named Shmuel, who slept across from Abram. "Role call."

Abram could also hear the SS outside. He groaned, but he got up. For Mother and Father. For Edith. And for Josef.

He stood between near the front and looked straight ahead. Once his name was called, he let his mind wander. Nowadays, he tried to imagine life after he was freed. Josef wasn't here anymore, but Mother and Edith could still be alive. Father too, hopefully.

He recalled the days before his bar mitzvah, before the war, before the Nazis. His family were on a picnic together. Mother and Father held hands. Edith wove a crown made of flowers, and put it on Josef's head. She made one for herself, too, and said she was the flower princess. Josef was the flower prince. And Abram was their servant.

"You there, in the second row!" A voice suddenly shouted, interrupting Abram's thoughts. He snapped back into reality and looked up, hoping that the SS man wasn't speaking to him. Unfortunately, he was.

"You think this is funny? You think this is a joke?" he said.

"N-n-no," stammered Abram.

"I saw that smile. Are you lying to me? Come to the front!"

Abram did, shaking with each step.

Immediately he was clubbed again, like on his first day at Dachau. He collapsed to the ground, but the beating did not stop this time. It hurt so much Abram could barely breathe.

There was a small pause, and Abram exhaled.

"I ask you again," sneered the SS officer, "were you lying to me?"

"No," Abram wheezed, and the beating resumed.

Abram shut his eyes tight, until he was numb to the pain. When he opened his eyes, he saw Josef! His younger brother was dressed all in white, a flower crown on his head. He held out his hand.

Abram began to cry. "I failed you..." he said.

Josef just shook his head. He looked like an angel, bathed in light. He gave Abram a warm smile, his hand still extended.

Finally, Abram took his hand. And all his pain was gone.