

Sandy Ressler

HERSHEL'S BUNKER

How one family survived the
Holocaust.



INTRODUCTION

This is the story of how some members of the Ressler family survived the Holocaust. Hershel, the eldest son, convinced a gentile Polish farmer to hide some of the family for a few days. This turned into 2 years.



1. Scene

LIFE BEFORE THE WAR

- Shabbat, singing
- Going to school
- Store
- Farm

Born and grew up in village Rozanka. Until the war I went to public school and Hebrew school in Strzyzow all week; I lived at Uncle David's and Aunt Zelda's house since it was too far to walk everyday to school. Jewish education was very important in our lives so all boys stayed with one relative or the other in Strzyzow; and the girls got private tutors at home to learn Hebrew, to public school they went in the village.

In spite of all we lived a happy life, the family was extremely close, it came Saturday we had a real day of rest, all boys came home and we had a real Shabbat day. Singing zmirot boys and girls together after dinner many times the Gentiles stopped and listened in. Years went by, my brother Hersh learned a trade he became a tailor; Izak moved to Krakow also Sally moved to Krakow got jobs; my sister Faiga got engaged so things began to look better and dreams



2. Scene

WAR BEGINS

- Forced labor
 - Murray & Issac tar road
- Turn in valuables
- Chaim cuts off beard



3. Scene

LIQUIDATION

- July 3, 1942 Frystak Juden Frie
- All Jews go to town center
- 850 men, women, children, put on trucks, taken to forest in Wazyce and shot, buried in mass grave including mother
- Young men loaded on other trucks, asked if can work
 - Hersh doesn't go
- Chiam cuts off beard

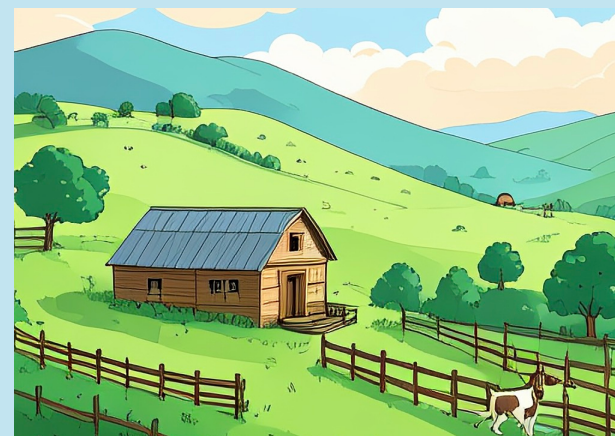


4. Scene

HIDING

- Murray and Issac escape Plaszow join family at Swietons
- Attic deemed insufficient, build the bunker
- 4ft deep, 5x6.
- Sleep lying across each other, not enough room for all to lie down on ground

Hersh was well liked by the gentiles and traveled all around as a tailor. They gave him food. Eventually upon hearing about the Germans possibly liquidating Krakow he starting asking for help initially hiding his 3 sisters.



5. Scene

HAPPENINGS

- Neighbor
- Cow
- Subush
- Leave the house



6. Scene

LIBERATION

- Russians are coming
- Still dangerous
- America



POSTSCRIPT

This story comes from the written testimony of Murray Ressler.

This work is based on the written life story of Murray Ressler as well as his testimony recorded in 1996 by the USC Shoah Foundation.

In addition the testimony of Murray's sister recorded in 1996 by the USC Shoah Foundation

In 2020 the Swieton's (Father, daughter and son) were recognized by Yad Vashem as "Righteous Among the Nations".



Michael Swieton (Bronia's son)

LEARN MORE

To learn more about the Holocaust visit:

US Holocaust Memorial Museum: ushmm.org

USC Shoah Foundation: <https://sfi.usc.edu/>