

In The Place Between - Conclusion

by Sheila Luecht

Holocaust Days of Remembrance begin April 7 - 14, 2013. Yom Hashoah

This is the window inside the creative mind, how history, dreams and life converge in my world.

Sometime ago I had a dream. Here is what I first wrote about it...

I have been putting off starting this today. I awoke last night with one of those vivid dreams, where I can see things and I am crafting the story to go with it. Well here goes, I am not sure this is a children's book, but it is about children. Children of the Holocaust.

The train arrived and we were all ordered out. It was hard to be here because I was alone. I didn't know anyone. I was supposed to be somewhere else, but someone had done something terribly wrong to my parents and me and I was here. My name is Anna Horazy. I am a Hungarian Jew. In our country we didn't get rounded up and treated badly because of the Nazis for a very long time. It was only close to what would be the end of the war that things began to change for us and it got so terrible. Then we were being rounded up and sent away, just like every other Jew in Europe. My parents bribed someone to send me out of the country. They went into hiding and sent me away. I was going to go on the Hungarian — Swedish version of the kinder transport. Those had long ended in the rest of Europe, which should have raised a warning flag to my parents. The man was dropping names like Raoul Wallenberg, whom my parents knew had gotten some Jews out so they thought this was legitimate. It came through friends who had sent their children away too. I stopped blaming my parents; I just missed them too much. The first

part of the journey seemed authentic enough, but then it took a dark turn. One night we were waiting, a small group of us children, and instead of our next contact arriving, we found we had been betrayed. The woman with us turned out to be a part of it and the next thing we knew, we were being deported on a train to a camp.

So there I was. Starving, tired, with some other kids, who didn't know me, and dressed like I was going on a trip with my name hidden in my clothes and money too. We got into a divided line, the men going one way, the women and children and old people the other way. Some women got picked to stand with the men, some men got sent to stand with the women. In a few minutes we were marching over to the showers to disinfect, before we would be sent to our sleeping quarters.

You know what happened. You heard about it. We were considered unuseful to the Nazis and were gassed in those shower rooms. It was all over so quick; I had hardly a chance to understand. I really did not feel anything because before it was over, I, being small, was crushed to death by those scrambling to avoid the gas. I was suffocated by them falling on top of me. I don't know, but I think this was lucky for me. I was not terrorized, it was all over too quickly for me. What I do remember, I black out and just remember what happened next.

When I wrote this, I was writing from the vision I had, the dream. I am very aware of much of the holocaust saga, having read about so much of it, met survivors, visited camps, and most likely met a former camp guard. I have a sensitivity that was developed a very long time ago when I was just a young girl. There has always been a kind of seriousness about me. When I would be least looking for information, this history would present itself to me over and over.

Ten years ago, in my spare time, I began to do research for a book, whose premise was also born from a dream. The ideas and visions begun with a dream, drew on information from the many years prior to that of reading, knowledge and experiences relating to the holocaust.

I was of course fascinated to discover a Rabbi who at the time had developed a theory popular with new age thinking of the recycling of those murdered in the holocaust. The experience of so many souls being sent back without years of living and years of waiting to return to this existence on earth. This Rabbi has since stopped discussing his earlier writings and retired to a farm where he raises organic food. I don't really blame him. I do know that I was fascinated with this at the time in the 1980's when I first read of it and I feel that this thought, his idea, is in some ways a seed for my most recent dream of the children.

My thought is that the children, because of their innocence, were really in a kind of holding place, a limbo, a place in between, when they died so abruptly. I sensed that the field where they played with each other was a way to pass the time until they were called to move into a new physical existence.

What I know about Auschwitz Birkenau is that most of the Hungarian Jews were brought to Birkenau in late April 1944. It was the largest Nazi camp. It was literally a death factory. There was no industry nearby for the prisoners to be engaged in.

Birkenau means Birch Tree Meadow. I have seen birches myself and always loved them. In my dream I remember large open meadow, with big oak trees, lots of sun, wildflowers, the brilliance of warmth and light, and a forest nearby. A forest with some birch trees, close together, forming a kind of soft darkness, near the road, near the fence where Anna first sees Magda.

I spent my honeymoon and many hiking trips before that amongst birch trees. They hold no bad thoughts for me. I was presented by the German owner of the resort with a message of good wishes on birch bark for my wedding, and many years later my children wrote on a large piece they found, their anniversary wishes. Birch does not frighten me, it is a source of comfort.

There were 437,402 Jews from Hungary sent to Auschwitz Birkenau between April 29, 1944 and July 9, 1944. Most were gassed immediately.

So what does this dream mean? I have some thoughts about it. If the Rabbi's ideas were correct, then many of these children came back to the earth in a short time, to begin again, in perhaps a better world for them. The youngest to go, the babies, came back the quickest. They left the meadow the quickest having spent such a short time here before, less memory to ease. Then according to this idea, all the others may have left. But why then was Anna left? Why is Magda someone who can communicate and 'see' Anna?

In my mind, I think that has something to do with who Magda really is and who Anna might really be. I think that somehow they are related and that somehow there is a place for them to meet and come together, and resolve the sense of loneliness that Anna feels and the sense of kinship that Magda displays in being able to see her and care about her.

I have had no vision of this, no resolution. I know in my own mind what feels right. I do not know if that is the end or not. Perhaps I will write that ending and share it. Perhaps as Anna has thought that Magda looks like her Aunt Mitzi, that they are somehow related. It is possible that they are in fact sisters, or cousins. Maybe Anna's parents survived and did not know what happened to her at first, maybe now they know. I think that Magda wants to know, and I think that in knowing, she will set Anna free. Is it possible that if your

parents were alive and did not know you were dead, that somehow you were waiting for them to find you? Perhaps their desperate belief that they had done the right thing, even twenty years later, forces them to keep hope for you alive.

Again, there might not be a real connection. It might be that Magda is someone that Anna years prior has attached herself to in a way. She looks for her, tries to see her, in her idea of each day. As the years have passed, she still recognizes her. She still knows it is the very same girl, but she is older. This might be the reason she has not left the place between.

Raoul Wallenberg himself is a mystery. We do not know when he really died. His parents waited almost thirty years trying to learn of his fate before they committed suicide. Who is to say how strong the bonds of love are, loss is, with respect to the soul?

Perhaps this is the beginning of a great adventure with Magda and Anna, setting out together to bring closure to Anna, to heal some wound which must be cleaned and bound, and has yet to be done.

I have a sense of real connection to this time period of WWII. I have a thirst for history of this time, an interest in the human stories and a connection that keeps returning in strange ways. I have a panoramic sense of involvement, never just the same character forms in my thoughts.

My father was Hungarian. His father immigrated from the Austria - Hungry Empire about 1910. My husband's family are German and Swedish. They came around the same time.

RGW

Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish savior to over 10,000 Hungarian Jews.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raoul_Wallenberg

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