

Through Eva's Eyes

Gazing at the passing ground,

the snow glared back.

Escape seemed so impossible,

as many tried and failed.

Preparing to take that same chance

his words lingered in my mind.

You are blessed, and therefore saved.

It is you who will survive.

Through the same window as the others,

the same as my brother and sister,

I lept.

We all landed,

but only I remained.

Only I heard the gunshots and the train

growing softer in the distance.

Was it the blessing?

As I trudged back to my Polish city of Oleszyce

I made a promise to myself.

That star that had labeled me,  
that sent so many people to die,  
would not be worn by me.

Never again.

I feared the city I grew up in,  
worried about recognition  
by former friends and neighbors  
who laughed at my life,  
laughed at my peoples' disastrous fate.

Even the two families who hid me  
wanted nothing to do with me  
when morning came.

But I kept walking, kept fighting starvation,  
when I came across a market.

Young people being sent to work in Germany.

I, among them now, was happy,  
for there I was a Gentile,  
not a Jew.

A family's farm.

For a year, I endured anti-Semitic remarks

from the husband, who knew not

of my true identity.

Illness relieved me,

sent me to a different farm

with much kinder people.

But it was not yet over.

More hardships came

where my identity was tested,

but I hid on

through lies and deception.

The true pain would sink in at night

when I was left alone with nothing

but my wandering thoughts.

My family and friends

appeared only in my nightmares.

Even after all that later occurred,  
after being rescued by distant relatives,  
after marrying and having children,  
I would question my faith.  
But without my faith I would not have survived.

Time would heal pain,  
and life goes on,  
but this pain will never be forgotten.

We must share the story.

Not to scar,  
but to remember.