

---

## A Survivor from Warsaw op. 46

## A Survivor from Warsaw op. 46

*Text: Arnold Schönberg / Shema Yisroel*

I cannot remember ev'rything.  
I must have been unconscious most of the time.  
I remember only the grandiose moment  
when they all strated to sing as if prearranged,  
the old prayer they had neglected for so many years  
the forgotten creed!

But I have no recollection how I got underground  
to live in the sewers of Warsaw for so long a time.

The day began as usual: Reveille when it still was dark.  
Get out! Whether you slept or whether worries kept you awake the whole night.  
You had been separated from your children, from your wife, from your parents;  
you don't know what happened to them how could you sleep?

The trumpets again –  
Get out! The sergeant will be furious!  
They came out; some very slow: the old ones, the sick ones;  
some with nervous agility.  
They fear the sergeant. They hurry as much as they can.

In vain! Much too much noise; much too much commotion – and not fast enough!  
The Feldwebel shouts: „Achtung! Stilljestanden! Na wirds mal? Oder soll ich mit dem  
Jewehrkolben nachhelfen? Na jutt; wenn ihrs durchaus haben wollt!“

The sergeant and his subordinates hit everybody:  
young or old, quiet or nervous, guilty or innocent.  
It was painful to hear them groaning and moaning.

I heard it though I had been hit very hard,  
so hard that I could not help falling down.  
We all on the ground who could not stand up were then beaten over the head.

I must have been unconscious.  
The next thing I knew was a soldier saying:  
„They are all dead“,  
whereupon the sergeant ordered to do away with us.  
There I lay aside halfconscious.

It had become very still – fear and pain.

Then I heard the sergeant shouting: „Abzählen!“

They started slowly and irregularly:

one, two, three, four

„Achtung!“ the sergeant shouted again,

„Rascher! Nochmal von vorn anfangen!“

In einer Minute will ich wissen,

wieviele ich zur Gaskammer abliefern!

Abzählen!“

They began again, first slowly: one, two, three, four,

became faster and faster, so fast

that it finally sounded like a stampede of wild horses,

and all of a sudden, in the middle of it,

they began singing the Shema Yisroel.

[Prayer: Shema Yisroel]