

3: Source sheet, excerpts from Holocaust survivor-writers Elie Wiesel, Tadeusz Borowski, Jerzy Kosiński, and Paul Celan.

1. From *Night* by Elie Wiesel, 1951.

Then came the march past the victims. The two men were no longer alive. Their tongues were hanging out, swollen and bluish. But the third rope was still moving: the child, too light, was still breathing...

And so he remained for more than half an hour, lingering between life and death, writhing before our eyes. And we were forced to look at him at close range. He was still alive when I passed him. His tongue was still red, his eyes not yet extinguished.

Behind me, I heard the same man asking:

"For God's sake, where is God?"

And from within me, I heard a voice answer:

"Where He is? This is where—hanging here from this gallows..."

That night, the soup tasted of corpses.

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed....Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

Source: Eli Wiesel, *Night* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2009), 32.

2. From *This Way to the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen* by Tadeusz Borowski, 1959.

I go back inside the train: I carry out dead infants; I unload luggage. I touch corpses, but I cannot overcome the mounting, uncontrollable terror. I try to escape from the corpses, but they are everywhere; lined up on the gravel on the cement edge of the ramp, inside the cattle cars. Babies, hideous naked women, men twisted by convulsions. I run off as far as I can go, but immediately a whip slashes across my back. . . Only from this distance does one have a full view of the inferno on the teeming ramp. I see a pair of human beings who have fallen to the ground locked in a last desperate embrace. The man has dug his fingers in the woman's flesh and has caught her clothing with his teeth. She screams hysterically, swears, cries, until at last a large boot comes down over her throat and she is silent.

Source: Tadeusz Borowski, *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen* (London: Penguin Books, 1959), 45.

3. From *The Painted Bird* by Jerzy Kosiński, 1976.

It mattered little if one was mute; people did not understand one another anyway. They collided with or charmed one another, hugged or trampled one another, but everyone knew only himself. His emotions, memory, and senses divided him from others as effectively as thick reeds screen the mainstream from the muddy bank. Like the mountain peaks around us, we looked at one another, separated by valleys, too high to stay unnoticed, too low to touch the heavens.

One day he trapped a large raven, whose wings he painted red, the breast green, and the tail blue. When a flock of ravens appeared over our hut, Lekh freed the painted bird. As soon as it joined the flock a desperate battle began. The changeling was attacked from all sides. Black, red, green, blue feathers began to drop at our feet. The ravens ran amuck

in the skies, and suddenly the painted raven plummeted to the freshly-plowed soil. It was still alive, opening its beak and vainly trying to move its wings. Its eyes had been pecked out, and fresh blood streamed over its painted feathers. It made yet another attempt to flutter up from the sticky earth, but its strength was gone.

Source: Jerzy Kosiński, *The Painted Bird* (New York: Bantam, 1976), 62.

4. "Death Fugue" by Paul Celan, 1948.

Black milk of morning we drink you at dusktime
 we drink you at noontime and dawntime we drink you at night
 we drink and drink
 we scoop out a grave in the sky where it's roomy to lie
 There's a man in this house who cultivates snakes and who writes
 who writes when it's nightfall *nach Deutschland* your golden hair Margareta
 he writes it and walks from the house and the stars all start flashing he whistles his dogs to draw near
 whistles his Jews to appear starts us scooping a grave out of sand
 he commands us to play for the dance

Black milk of morning we drink you at night
 we drink you at dawntime and noontime we drink you at dusktime
 we drink and drink
 There's a man in this house who cultivates snakes and who writes
 who writes when it's nightfall *nach Deutschland* your golden hair Margareta
 your ashen hair Shulamite we scoop out a grave in the sky where it's roomy to lie
 He calls jab it deep in the soil you lot there you other men sing and play
 he tugs at the sword in his belt he swings it his eyes are blue
 jab your spades deeper you men you other men you others play up again for the dance

Black milk of morning we drink you at night
 we drink you at noontime and dawntime we drink you at dusktime
 we drink and drink
 there's a man in this house your golden hair Margareta
 your ashen hair Shulamite he cultivates snakes

He calls play that death thing more sweetly Death is a gang-boss *aus Deutschland*
 he calls scrape that fiddle more darkly then hover like smoke in the air
 then scoop out a grave in the clouds where it's roomy to lie

Black milk of morning we drink you at night
 we drink you at noontime Death is a gang-boss *aus Deutschland*
 we drink you at dusktime and dawntime we drink and drink
 Death is a gang-boss *aus Deutschland* his eye is blue
 he shoots you with leaden bullets his aim is true
 there's a man in this house your golden hair Margareta
 he sets his dogs on our trail he gives us a grave in the sky
 he cultivates snakes and he dreams Death is a gang-boss *aus Deutschland*

your golden hair Margareta
 your ashen hair Shulamite

Source: Paul Celan, *Paul Celan: Selections*, ed. Pierre Joris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 46-47. © 2005 by the Regents of the University of California.