

# Night

Elie Wiesel

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# Night

Elie Wiesel

Indifference to evil  
is evil.

—Elie Wiesel



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## Night: Introduction

When you see something that's wrong, do you just stand by?



Or do you act to try and stop it?

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## Night: Introduction

Elie Wiesel's memoir *Night* describes a horrible time in the twentieth century, when too many people looked away from a terrible wrong.



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## Night: Introduction



In 1941, Eliezer was a twelve-year-old boy who lived with his father, mother, and three sisters in a small village near the border of Romania and Hungary.

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## Night: Introduction

Eliezer was a religious boy who welcomed nightfall as a time for prayer and who thought of becoming a rabbi.



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## Night: Introduction

But when Nazis took over Eliezer's Jewish community,

his family was first sent to live in a ghetto and then taken to Auschwitz, one of the most infamous concentration camps.



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## Night: Introduction

Eliezer and his father were separated from Eliezer's mother and sisters.

He would never see his mother or his youngest sister, Tzipora, again.



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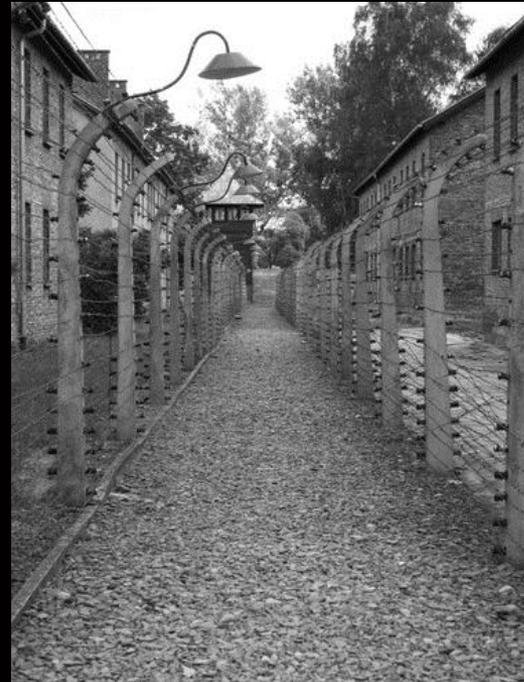
## Night: Introduction

Inside the camp, Eliezer will witness horrible acts of cruelty and suffer in terrible ways.

How will he survive?

Can his religious faith endure the atrocities he witnesses?

What message does he bring to the world from such horror?



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## Night: Background

In *Night*, Elie Wiesel shares his story of the Holocaust, the name given to the persecution and murder of millions of Jews and others during World War II.



*Holocaust* comes from a Greek word that means "a burnt offering."

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## Night: Background

Germany began World War II when it invaded Poland in 1939. ▼



German forces conquered most of Europe in the next two years.

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## Night: Background

Wiesel's story begins in Romania (now Hungary) in 1941 and ends in 1944. When Germans took over this area, local Jews were persecuted. ▼



They were forced to wear yellow stars and to live in ghettos, and were then sent to concentration camps.

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## Night: Background

Auschwitz, where Wiesel was sent, was the largest camp.



Jews from all over Europe arrived almost daily at Auschwitz.

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## Night: Background

Nazis also targeted other groups:

- Romany (Gypsies)
- Russians
- non-Jewish Polish intellectual and religious leaders
- Communists
- Jehovah's Witnesses

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## Night: Background

World War II ended in Europe in 1945 with the surrender of German forces to the Allied forces. ▼



More than six million Jews had been killed in the Holocaust.

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## Night: Background

Between 1945 and 1946, the Allies tried twenty-two major war criminals for their crimes against humanity. ▼

In later years Israeli agents worked to capture and bring to justice Nazis who had escaped the war trials.



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# Night: Discussion Starters

## Discuss (1)

The German soldiers followed orders to persecute and murder Jews. Many people were bystanders who let the actions unfold without doing anything.

- What is the danger of blindly following the orders of others?
- Why do you think some people stand by and do nothing to help others in need?



# Night: Discussion Starters

## Discuss (2)

What other genocides—attempts to kill large numbers of a group of people—have you heard or read about?

- Did people ignore these genocides or try to stop them?
- What do you think makes people hate members of another group?

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