Holocaust Survivor: Primo Levi

Primo Levi was born in Turin in 1919 by a wealthy Jewish family of intellectual traditions. In 1941 he graduated in chemistry despite the obstacle of racial laws. After September 8, 1943, the defeat of the Italian army and the Nazi occupation of Italy, Levi adheres to a partisan of “Freedom and Justice”, but is arrested by the fascist militia. Handed over to the Germans he was deported to Auschwitz in January 1944 where he remained for eleven months. Survived the concentration camp is liberated by the Red Army in January 1945, but for nearly a year in the wake of Soviet troops along a route that led him crazy for all of Eastern Europe, One in October 1945 can go home . He made his debut in 1947 with If This Is a Man, testimony of imprisonment suffered in Nazi concentration camps and the struggle for survival, not only physical but also of his dignity as a man.

In 1947 he published the book “If This Is a Man” where he tells the terrible atrocities that he witnessed book that has been called one of the greatest posters of neorealism.
The book begins with a brief but meaningful poem: “Consider whether this is a man \ who works in the mud \ that knows no peace \ that fight for a bread \ who dies for a yes or a no.” This was not only a document that told the humiliation they suffered, but the degradation of the human before he died.
Primo Levi was spared because of his job, because he was employed as a skilled worker in chemical laboratories, where he says they were the only place where he himself was still a human being, because in the camps men were now reduced to bestiality.
Only secretly wrote in workers because they could not keep notes, and so secretly in the camps, he wrote what would not have had the courage to tell anyone. He wrote of what happened beyond that of barbed wire, beyond the written, “Arbeit Macht Frei”-work makes you free-
He gave another meaning to the barbed wire or written for him were only the boundary between the human and the inhuman.

Primo Levi-If This Is a Man. Poetry.

You who live safe
In your warm houses,
You who find, returning in the evening
hot food and friendly faces:
Consider whether this is a man
working in the mud
that knows no peace
Who fights for a bread
who dies for a yes or a no.
Consider whether this is a woman,
without hair and without name
no more strength to remember
Her eyes empty and her womb cold
like a frog in winter.
Consider that this has been:
Remember these words.
Carve them in your heart
When at home or in the street,
lying down, getting.
Repeat them to your children.
Or may your house crumble,
illness impede you,
your children twist their faces from you.

