

I have lived a thousand years

Livia Bitton-Jackson

About the book

I have lived a thousand years is the testimony of Holocaust survivor Livia Bitton-Jackson. It tells the story of Livia and her family and their deportation from Budapest to Auschwitz and the events which took place from then until liberation in 1945.

About the author

Livia Bitton-Jackson, born Elli Friedmann, was born in Czechoslovakia. She was 13 and living with her father, mother and her brother in Hungary when the Nazis invaded and brought in exclusionary laws and ordered their eventual deportation. Elli and her mother were sent to Auschwitz before being moved to Camp Plaszow, Augburg and finally Dachau. Elli survived with her mother and was eventually reunited with her brother. Her father died in Bergen-Belsen two weeks before liberation. Elli and her family relocated to America in 1951, where Livia lived and worked until 1977 when she moved to Israel.

Discussion Questions

Please note that some of these questions will act as spoilers for the book.

1. why is school so important to Elli?
2. in the chapter 'The Tale of the Yellow Star' what do you think Elli learns from her brother's attitude?
3. Livia says she convinced herself that in Auschwitz there was a separate camp for old people and children despite people telling her the contrary. Why do you think she only believed the truth about the gas chambers when she was reunited with her brother?
4. Elli's relationship with her mother changes throughout their shared experience. Is this inevitable?
5. is Elli's poetry an important part of her story?

You can use HMD resources to find out more about: The Holocaust
<http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/the-holocaust>, Life in the Camps
<http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/the-holocaust/life-in-the-camps> or see images of
Auschwitz <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/image-library/life-in-the-camps>