

JEWISH DIARY FROM THE LODZ GHETTO

There is no justice in the world, not to mention in the ghetto. Right now they are deporting people on welfare. People are in a state of panic. And this hunger. A struggle against death from starvation. Life is terrible, living conditions are abominable, and there is no food . . .

Wednesday March 11, 1942

This ration is much worse than the previous one. Terrible hunger is awaiting us again. I got the vegetable ration right away. There is only vinegar and ice in the beets. There is no food, we are going to starve to death. All my teeth ache and I am very hungry. My left leg is frostbitten. I ate almost all the honey. What have I done? I'm so selfish. What are they going to put on their bread now, what will they say? Mom, I'm unworthy of you. You work so hard. Besides working in the workshop, she also moonlights for a woman who sells clothes in the street. My mom looks awful, like a shadow. She works very hard . . .

Today I had a fight with my father. I swore at him, even cursed him. It happened because yesterday I weighed twenty decagrams of zacierki [egg noodles] and then sneaked a spoonful. When my father came back, he immediately noticed that some zacierki were missing. My father started yelling at me and he was right. But since the chairman [Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, the head of the Jewish Council of Łódź] gave out these zacierki to be cooked, why can't I have some? I became very upset and cursed my father. What have I done? I regret it so much, but it can't be undone. My father is not going to forgive me. How will I ever look him in the eyes? He stood by the window and cried like a baby. Not even a stranger insulted him before. The whole family witnessed this incident. I went to bed as soon as possible, without dinner. I thought I would die of hunger, because we have our meal only in the evening. I fell asleep and woke at twelve. My mom was still working at the sewing machine. I couldn't stand the hunger, so I got up and took a piece of meal. We would be a happy family, if I didn't fight with everybody. All the fights are started by me. I must be manipulated by some evil force. I would like to be different, but I don't have a strong enough will. There is nobody I can talk to. Why isn't there anybody who would guide me, why can't anyone teach me? I hate my sister. She is a stranger to me. God, show me what is right. Today there was a ration of eight kilograms of briquettes for those who don't get provisions in the kitchen.

Saturday March 14, 1942

. . . O freedom! Will I have to stay behind this barbed wire forever? Will that sign be on the big board forever, [Entering Jewish residential area forbidden]? Will there always be a booth with a German guard who has a rifle on his shoulder? Has it always been like this? Will it stay like this? Oh, no! But who is going to live through it? I miss freedom. Especially on a warm sunny day. O sun! It's you who make me yearn for freedom. My heart is bleeding and my eyes are full of tears. Someone reading this in the future may sneer at me, say I'm an idiot. But my hand is writing this involuntarily. I would like to stand there for days and feast my eyes on this sight. I came home at seven o'clock, had dinner, and went to bed at nine.