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talk! We thought, "Surely the Germans aren't that crazy! They wouldn't execute millions of innocent people!" But alas, it soon turned out to be true.

Upon our arrival at Auschwitz, there was a deathly silence. It was like the cliché "you could hear a pin drop." We were informed that the Nazis, in fear of an attack from American forces, had retreated from the camp a few weeks prior to our arrival and in the process had taken the majority of their captives with them.

After we smashed our way through the entrance gate to the camp, our entire platoon came to a grinding halt. Shortly afterwards, the general gave orders to proceed forward. As soon as he instructed us to do so, our senses went to work as we slowly and hesitantly walked through the camp. We saw the factory with the black smoke pouring out of

its chimney like a container filled with molasses - slow.

We smelled a tremendous stench further ahead. Every single one of us came face-to-face with a massive grave filled with hundreds of casualties involved in the Nazi slaughter. Despondantly, we trudged forward. Now we came to the factory. Even from the outside, our stomachs turned violently as we smelled a more horrible stench - the odor of burning flesh. It was enough to make a man want to puke his guts out (which many of us did).

Again, we marched forward, with even less hope of finding survivors that before our arrival to the camp. But right then and there, our once futile hopes were answered with a miracle. We heard the sounds of life. Although I must admit they were not pretty sounds (mostly groaning and crying), it brought back a lot of the faith that we had lost.

However, our somewhat zealous joy came screeching to an abrupt halt when we discovered the survivors of Auschwitz. Bald, dirty, bloody, bruised, and emaciated are the words which best describe what we uncovered. I felt pity for these poor souls who had felt the untold fury, horror, and treachery dealt to them by the Nazis.

These survivors, if one can actually call them that, were the weak and the ill. These people had been unable to march with the others as they departed from the camp. The Nazis, as cold-blooded as they had proven to be throughout the war, etched this message further into our minds as we came to learn that these people, after all they had been through, had been left there to die.

And as I looked upon these wretched souls, I wondered to myself, "Where was God when all of this destruction was taking place!!" At that point, I became unglued, for I began

screaming it as loud as I possibly could. The next thing I knew, a couple of my comrades, Kowalski and Kruschev, were busy trying to calm me down. Was it anxiety? Or was it a sign of mental degradation? To this day, I am not certain. Yet I believe that all of us had reached the point where we wanted to unleash the anger and frustration and horror that had built up inside each of us.

After sitting down for a few minutes (in the process I smoked 4 cigarettes), my mind began to wander and with it followed my body. I strayed away from the others in the battalion. I became a lost soul, mummified in the sense that I wandered aimlessly through the camp looking...and wandering...and crying. The further I traveled, the worse it became. More massive graves. More stench. More dead people. More living skeletons. It got to a point where I wanted to drop my

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