



The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible . . . on Schindler's List

By Leon Leyson

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In the #1 *New York Times* bestseller, Leon Leyson (born Leib Lezjon) was only ten years old when the Nazis invaded Poland and his family was forced to relocate to the Krakow ghetto.

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This, the only memoir published by a former Schindler's List child, perfectly captures the innocence of a small boy who goes through the unthinkable. Most notable is the lack of rancor, the lack of venom, and the abundance of dignity in Mr. Leyson's telling. *The Boy on the Wooden Box* is a legacy of hope, a memoir unlike anything you've ever read.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best Books of the Month, August 2013: For readers ages 11 and up, Leon Leyson's remarkable memoir, *The Boy on the Wooden Box*, is the moving account of a happy childhood shattered by the Holocaust. Leyson was fortunate enough to survive, thanks largely to Oskar Schindler. As the youngest member of Schindler's list, Leyson offers a unique perspective on the man who became his lifelong hero and his first-hand account of day-to-day existence in the factory--which did not alleviate the fear or deprivation--and his personal interaction with Schindler is powerful and special. *The Boy on the Wooden Box* is an important work, helping mature young readers understand the Holocaust through the life of a young person who lived it. --*Seira Wilson*

From Booklist

This powerful memoir of one of the youngest boys on Schindler's list deserves to be shared. Leon Leyson grew up in Poland as the youngest of five children. As WWII breaks out, Leyson's ingenuity and bravery, combined with the kindness of strangers and a bit of serendipity, save his life, time and again. The storytelling can at times meander, and the various reflections of his life in Poland during the war can result in a certain patchiness, but Leyson's experiences and memories still make for compelling reading about what it was like to suffer through the Holocaust. This memoir is a natural curriculum addition to WWII units for upper-elementary- and middle-school readers. Be sure to have additional materials on hand about Oskar Schindler, as readers will want to do more research into Leyson's story. Grades 4-7. --Sarah Bean Thompson

Review

* "Leyson, who died in January at age 83, was No. 289 on Schindler's list and its youngest member. He was just 13 when Leyson's father convinced Oskar Schindler to let "Little Leyson" (as Schindler knew him) and other family members find refuge in the Emalia factory; Leyson was so small he had to stand on a box to work the machinery. Leyson and his coauthors give this wrenching memoir some literary styling, but the book is at its most powerful when Leyson relays the events in a straightforward manner, as if in a deposition, from the shock of seeing his once-proud father shamed by anti-Semitism to the deprivation that defined his youth. Schindler remains a kindly but enigmatic figure in Leyson's retelling, occasionally doting but usually distant. Leyson makes it clear that being "Schindler Jews" offered a thread of hope, but it never shielded them from the chaos and evil that surrounded them. Readers will close the book feeling that they have made a genuinely personal connection to this remarkable man."

(*Publishers Weekly*, July 1, 2013, *STARRED REVIEW)

* "A posthumous Holocaust memoir from the youngest person on Oskar Schindler's list.

Completed before his death in January 2013, Leyson's narrative opens with glowing but not falsely idyllic childhood memories of growing up surrounded by friends and relatives in the Polish village of Narewka and then the less intimate but still, to him, marvelous city of Kraków. The Nazi occupation brought waves of persecution and forced removals to first a ghetto and then a labor camp—but since his father, a machinist, worked at the enamelware factory that Schindler opportunistically bought, 14-year-old "Leib" (who was so short he had to stand on the titular box to work), his mother and two of his four older siblings were eventually brought into the fold. Along with harrowing but not lurid accounts of extreme privation and casual brutality, the author recalls encounters with the quietly kind and heroic Schindler on the way to the war's end, years spent at a displaced-persons facility in Germany and at last emigration to the United States.

Leyson tucks just a quick sketch of his adult life and career onto the end and closes by explaining how he came to break his long silence about his experiences. Family photos (and a picture of the famous list with the author's name highlighted) add further personal touches to this vivid, dramatic account.

Significant historical acts and events are here put into unique perspective by a participant." (*Kirkus Reviews*, August 1, 2013, *STARRED REVIEW)

"Tragic remembrances of war's sufferings often go untold. However, if we are to "study war no more" we need to hear them. After long silence Leon Leyson has written his World War II memoir. I am an African American veteran of World War II. I survived the invasion of Normandy. Leon Leyson's story returned me to a time when the life of each step could be one's last. THE BOY ON THE WOODEN BOX is a heartbreak story that ends, mercifully, with a heart restored." (Ashley Bryan, multiple Coretta Scott King Award-winning author, and former GI.)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robin Martz:

The event that you get from The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible . . . on Schindler's List is the more deep you rooting the information that hide inside the words the more you get interested in reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to understand but The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible . . . on Schindler's List giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by means of anyone who read that because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This book also makes your vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having this specific The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible . . . on Schindler's List instantly.

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