



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

By Leon Leyson

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“Much like *The Boy In the Striped Pajamas* or *The Book Thief*,” this remarkable memoir from Leon Leyson, one of the youngest children to survive the Holocaust on Oskar Schindler’s list, “brings to readers a story of bravery and the fight for a chance to live” (VOYA).

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. 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. With incredible luck, perseverance, and grit, Leyson was able to survive the sadism of the Nazis, including that of the demonic Amon Goeth, commandant of Plaszow, the concentration camp outside Krakow.

Ultimately, it was the generosity and cunning of one man, Oskar Schindler, who saved Leon Leyson’s life, and the lives of his mother, his father, and two of his four siblings, by adding their names to his list of workers in his factory—a list that became world renowned: Schindler’s list.

Told with an abundance of dignity and a remarkable lack of rancor and venom, *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 dotting 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 tacks 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 heartbreaking 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:

Richard Reardon:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Are you aware? Many a lot of people spent they free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read a new book. It is really fun for you. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent the whole day to reading a guide. The book *The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible . . . on Schindler's List* it is quite good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. These were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book through your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

Carmen Hamm:

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Thomas White:

In this particular era which is the greater man or who has ability in doing something more are more treasured than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple way to have that. What you should do is just spending your time little but quite enough to experience a look at some books. One of several books in the top record in your reading list will be *The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible . . . on Schindler's List*. This book which is qualified as *The Hungry Inclines* can get you closer in growing to be precious person. By looking up and review this book you can get many advantages.

Kristin Saylor:

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