

Jeannine burk



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

September of 1939 was when Adolf Hitler's evil Nazi army, invaded Poland and the war was declared. It was the month Jeannine was born, with no knowing of what was going on with the government and Germany's crude and cold army. In May, 1940, the Germans swept across Western Europe and Brussels was occupied for the second time of the century. Rumors constantly rose about the Jewish nation getting "rounded up" and that is when Jeannine's father (Isaac Rasalowicz) made plans to hide Jeannine and Jeannine's sister (Augusta) and brother (Max).

Her sister was bed ridden at the time, which made a difficult transaction. In 1942, Jeannine's father boarded a train with her, to arrive at a Christian home on the outskirts of Brussels. As they arrived at their destination, the lady answered occupied by her two older daughters. This was the last time Jeannine saw her father and she kept hidden in the house for two years, without ever leaving (1942 - 1944). Being so young, Jeannine wanted to go outside and live a little, but because she was of Jewish decent, she could only play in the backyard.

She did this alone as the two daughters were out of age range to properly enjoy any fun time with little Jeannine. She had to create imaginary friends and made little crafts, like handbags, out of newspaper clippings. Jeannine's biggest fear was the Nazi army parading around the streets of Brussels. Jeannine stated, as you see them march on television, they used to march the exact same right outside of her hidden home. People had to keep their doors open and once this rule applied, Jeannine had to hide in the outhouse. It was a small structure made out of two by four plywood.

As she hid, she used to peer through a crack that was created in the outhouse, and watch the world from there, while hiding in the outhouse Jeannine stumbled across a kitten that was oddly enough right outside the foot of the outhouse. This kept her sane for two years. Her father was later arrested by the Gestapo, at five o'clock in the morning. They woke up the neighbor and ran through the entire house, climbing over the wall to Jeannine's house where they broke in and broke down her parents bedroom door. They grabbed her father by the arm as he screamed, and threw him in their cold, musty, truck.

The officer then grabbed Jeannine's bed ridden sister, and as they did this their mother (Sarah Bluman Rafalowicz) screamed after them: " You can shoot me. You can shoot me right here. But I am not leaving my daughter. She is very sick with a disease. (This sickness was never spoken of). As the officer saw Jeannine's sister lying there, he tore the covers off of her, exposing her Jewish body wrapped up in a cold, white cast. The officer told Sarah they'd be back for her later, and in the time of them being gone, she contacted the Catholic Hospital and they sent an ambulance for her sister, shortly after placing her in the Isolation ward.

Jeannine's brother was also rescued by Christians. He was in a Christian home, for boys only, and he stayed there for the duration of the war and after the war. When the liberation was complete, he had found his way home, while Sarah was still hidden. Her mother had gotten away by saying that she was not Jewish, and escaped easy at this because most of the S. S blandly looked for dark olive eyes and hooked noses. Sarah had blond hair,

and blue eyes. She got a job and it was pre-arranged that she would be a nurse's assistant or a practical nurse in the nursing home.

The Nazi's were afraid of entering the Isolation ward as they were so selfishly, scared of getting sick from disease. Max had then found the family and was 12 years senior by the time they saw him again, also being married at a very early age. As they waited for her father, weeks went by until they found out that he had been exterminated in Auschwitz. In 1986, Jeannine moved to New Orleans in 1986. She was a mother with six children and she still had fantasies that her father was alive. Later on, still being 1986, there was a gathering of survivors in Philadelphia and a nice group from New Orleans went.

Jeannine, her sister and her brother all attended, and the gathering took place in a big hall. There were mostly Polish survivors. Some were French. Most would state their ethnicity. They arrived at a large table, where the Germans had meticulously recorded every Jewish citizen that was deported and every city in that country. Jeannine spotted her father's name, and under it was when he was deported and when they were set free. Jeannine's father had the listing of when he was deported, but never when he was set free.

This is when she realized, her father really was dead. After the war, she did not observe religion for a long time. She never denied she was Jewish. She just stopped believing. She stopped believing, because she questioned how God would allow such a genocide to occur. How God could have allowed what happened to her father, or the rest of the six million people, half a million being children. To this Day, Jeannine Burk does not forgive the

German nation. Jeannine still resided in New Orleans by 1971, with her husband and six children.