



Closing Words

I acted too late.

I acted too late to receive information about my family members.

I acted too late to hear, from their surviving comrades, about their experiences during the War and their struggle to survive.

I acted too late to hear about the large Jewish families in Europe, religious and secular families – all of whom participated in Zionist activities.

Of the four families (bearing in mind that my parents were both married before the War) - Chaskelewicz, Lachman, Halperin and the family of my mother's first husband, whose name I do not know - of the four large families, only five individuals survived - my father and mother, Uncle Juda (Lajb), his wife Alte and son Zvi (Hersz). I was immersed in pain during the years of researching and writing this book, when I discovered that of all those dozens, only five had survived.

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One day, during the writing of this book, I was invited to participate in the programme "The Club", which was broadcast on Channel 23 and hosted by Hanny Nahmias. The programme's researchers had apparently heard about my activities for Holocaust survivors and I was invited to participate in the theme - "Good Deeds Day". At the end of the conversation, Hanny Nahmias asked, "Did your family members also perish in the Holocaust?".

I looked at the camera, with a teary eye, and in a weak, trembling voice I said, "Yes, yes, everyone perished ... everyone perished and no one spoke of it and no one answered our questions. Everyone perished, and we knew nothing".

And now, following my research, and having heard about the terrible suffering that was their lot, and the disconnection from home and the sane world for many years, I am able to comprehend the meaning of their silence.

During the investigation I was able to collect pieces of information, and draw forth some of the feelings of the survivors, mainly amongst those from

Krzepice. The meetings left their eyes dry - they did not shed a tear. The spring of tears seemed to have dried up. The years had done their part and they wished to forget. I was the one who shed a tear in their place, I felt their pain.

I truly appreciate their consent to tell me. I give them a loving embrace for their courage and I thank them for their cooperation and their willingness to convey the information that had been kept in their hearts.

I hereby conclude with the promise which I made to myself and to them - not to forget them and their suffering, not to forget their sacrifice and their fierce desire to struggle and survive, to renew themselves and start families - which is why they agreed, after some hesitation, to speak with me. They sought, through me, to pass their story on to their sons, grandchildren and future generations.

And I promised to immortalise their story and, every year, to participate on Holocaust Remembrance Day in the ceremony held next to the monument erected in the Holon cemetery.

Let us say a prayer in memory of those murdered and in memory of their comrades who survived, but who passed away following the Liberation and in the years which have passed since then to this day.