A bizarre episode has remained engraved in my memory.

Four weeks after the akcja in which my father perished, I said Kaddish in the afternoon with Reb Jankel the Lame at Machzikei Hadas. Since it was forbidden to be out at night, we wished to pray Ma’ariv [the evening service] directly after Mincha [the afternoon service].

But part of the congregation argued, “What’s all this? It’s still daytime!”

At this point, Reb Jankel Melamed stood up, banged once on the table, and shouted out, “Let us pray Ma’ariv already!”

Once complete silence had fallen, Reb Jankel added, “Just as the Master of the Universe does not care for us, so we too shall not risk our lives for Him”.

The result was that we prayed Ma’ariv when it was still daytime.