

**MANYA
NAGELSZTAJN
KORNBLIT
1924-2008**



**UNTIL
WE
MEET
AGAIN**

Hrubieszow, Poland was home to Matl Nagelsztajn, where she lived from her birth in 1924 until the Nazis invaded in the 1940s. She was very close with her brother Chaim, who was two years younger. Along with her boyfriend Mayorik Kornblit, they would go on a lifelong odyssey that would change their lives forever.

During Gestapo raids, the Kornblits hid beneath a hollowed-out, three-story-high haystack on a friendly Pole's farm. The Nagelsztajns hid behind a false brick wall in their basement. In March 1942, a new raid was imminent so Mayorik rushed to visit Matl before heading to the farm. He asked her to come with him. Her mother gave her permission and sent Chaim with them.

Three days later, when Matl's father went out to search for water, he was recognized as Jewish. Soon the family was rounded up and executed in a mass grave. The Kornblits hid for two weeks, until the Nazis quit looking for Jews, and brought them back to work in the ghetto where they lived. While Mayorik's parents were traveling to another ghetto, they were taken off the train, and shot. By September 1943 all three teenagers were sent to different "camps".

In total, they were sent to eleven concentration camps. Matl and Chaim were in Auschwitz at the same time, but didn't see each other. When liberated, Matl was 19, Mayorik 20 and Chaim 16. Mayorik and Matl were reunited in Poland. Married in 1946 in West Germany, they changed their names to Manya and Majik Kornblit. Chaim headed to England, thinking no other family members had survived.

The Kornblits emigrated to America in 1950 and were settled in Ponca City with their son Sam. Their son Michael was born in 1951. When Mike was six, he became curious about the markings on his mother's arm. For the first time, she revealed how they survived the Holocaust. In 1958, while watching a news story about Clara Luper's sit-in at the Katz Drugstore, Majik took his sons to the park and showed them the water fountains marked "Whites Only" and "Coloreds Only". He wanted them to remember how prejudice can lead to violence.

In 1980, Mike and his wife Joan felt that his parents' story was so powerful that it should be documented in a book. They began interviewing his parents and traveling to sites in Europe. While visiting a cousin in Israel whose family emigrated from Hrubieszow in 1929, Manya discovered that he had received a letter from her brother – postmarked Scotland – after the war. She was stunned. For 39 years, she believed Chaim had died in the gas chambers at Auschwitz.

Searching telephone directories at the British Embassy in Washington, Mike located his uncle in England. When he called claiming to be the son of Chaim's sister Manya, he learned his uncle was now called Harry and thought all his family was dead. After some convincing, Harry realized that Manya was indeed his long-lost sister Matl – and was still alive! Within the hour, the siblings were speaking on the phone. A week later – in January 1982 – the Kornblits flew to England for a tearful reunion.

The book "Until We Meet Again" became a bestseller – with two happy endings. In 2000, Mike and Joan formed the Respect Diversity Foundation in Edmond, with Clara Luper as their first speaker. Manya and Majik was married for 62 years until she died in April 2008 at age 83. Majik died in June 2012 at age 88. Harry died in November 2010 at age 86.