

4. Winters in Buchenwald

John Guzowski

My father remembered the frozen bodies.

Some looked like they had been cemented in the ice, heads and hands and knees above the ice line, stomachs and feet below. The prisoners who died this way must have been trying to raise themselves out of the freezing water, but the water froze too quickly.

Some of the living prisoners peeled coats and pants from the bodies of the frozen dead and put them on, but my father couldn't. He stood there staring at the dead. Their legs were black with frostbite, their pricks shriveled to the size of acorns.

He never forgot the lesson he learned. The frozen, naked men were his brothers.