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Mietek Pemper: Incredible Life

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It is impossible to imagine what it was like to enter a Nazi death camp. To live through such an experience is simply beyond the comprehension of any of us who live anything close to "normal" lives.

Mietek Pemper was one such person. According to the *New York Times*:

Mietek Pemper was doing his job as a secretary taking dictation. One day his boss, Amon Goeth, glanced out the window and saw that a worker did not have a full load of stones in his wheelbarrow. Mr. Goeth walked outside and shot the man to death, then returned to his desk and said, "Where were we in the text?"

Mr. Goeth was commandant of the Plaszow concentration camp just south of Krakow, Poland, and Mr. Pemper was a Jewish prisoner from Krakow whom he had forced to be his secretary. Mr. Goeth personally murdered hundreds during the course of World War II, and Mr. Pemper regarded his assignment as a death sentence.

So Mr. Pemper, with nothing to lose, plotted against Mr. Goeth. His acts of defiance included typing the names on what became known as Schindler's List, a roster of labor camp workers who were supposedly essential to the German war effort and who were thus spared almost certain extermination.

Despite the horror that he suffered, he had the satisfaction of saving lives and bringing at least one moral monster to justice.

Rest in peace Mr. Pemper.

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