

# Yehuda and Eva Schwarz

**Yehuda (born Kalman) and twin sister Eva Schwarz** were born on April 8, 1932 in Szikszo, Hungary, to parents Albert and Sabina Schwarz. Their father was a winemaker; their mother a homemaker. Yehuda and Eva had two older siblings, Nandi and Kati. On May 8, 1944, the family was forced to move to the Tisa ghetto, a former brick factory, where they lived for about four weeks with 120 other Jewish families. In June, Sabina and the younger three children—Kati, Eva, and Kalman—spent three horrific days in a cattle car and arrived at Auschwitz around June 10. Albert and Nandi were sent to a labor camp.



A group of Jewish children leaves Budapest for Palestine, 1945. Among those pictured are Yehuda Schwarz (back row, second from right) and his twin sister, Eva. (Courtesy of USHMM)

On the selection platform, Kalman was separated from his mother and siblings and sent with the men. His mother learned that the camp doctor named Josef Mengele was looking for twins. Hoping this might provide her children with better conditions, she requested that Kalman stay with Eva and other family members. Initially Kalman remained separated, but when twins were taken for experiments, he and Eva saw each other almost daily. At that time, Eva was living with other twin girls in the Roma (Gypsy) barracks. There was an adult twin named Erno Zvi Spiegel who looked after the younger boy twins, and he tried to make sure they received full food rations. Still, the children were very hungry.

As the war neared its end, the Germans forced Eva and other prisoners on a death march that eventually ended at Ravensbruck, the concentration camp for women located in northern Germany. Kalman stayed behind at Auschwitz with about 35 other twins. Zvi Spiegel remained with these twins to protect them during this dangerous and chaotic time. On January 28, the day following the liberation of Auschwitz, Spiegel urged the twins to leave and accompanied them to the Hungarian border and made sure each of the children could return to his or her home town. Kalman took a train to Tisa and then walked across the river to his hometown, a journey that took him about a month and a half. He was the first of his family to return home, and he was taken in and cared for by a Jewish

photographer named Benedik. Eva was liberated from Ravensbruck on May 9, 1945, and returned to her hometown and found Kalman. Later, their oldest brother Nandi returned from a labor battalion in Mauthausen. Their father had been liberated in Bergen-Belsen but had contracted typhus and died there. Their mother, Sabina, and sister Kati also perished.

Kalman, Eva, and Nandi stayed together in their hometown for a couple months. In August 1945, they moved to Budapest, where the twins stayed in an orphanage called "Mexico #3" and attended Jewish school. After a year there, they tried to immigrate to Palestine. They boarded the "Exodus" bound for Palestine, but were forced to turn back and landed in Germany. In 1948, Kalman and Eva tried again, boarding the ship "Providence" in Marseille, France. This time they succeeded; after arriving in Haifa in May, they were sent to a youth aliyah kibbutz with another set of Mengele twins. Kalman (now Yehuda) studied, joined the army, became a member of the kibbutz, married, and became a high school principal. Eva also joined the army and lived in a kibbutz, but she immigrated to Canada in 1959. She had a son and a daughter, and died in 1978.

(adapted from USHMM account)