

*Excerpt from a poem written in the summer of 1943*

### **Weyssenhoff Street<sup>1</sup> (Waisenhof)**

A small room with a barred window that's called a cell.  
Sixty people in it,  
Share their final hours.  
Death nears, lurking in the shadows,  
Every minute seems to last a year.

...

The sun goes down.  
Exhausted.  
People are lying on the floor.  
And again the sun rises,  
And while the city is still steeped in a slumber,  
Nine trucks arrive at Weyssenhoff.  
The cell occupants clamber in  
And in Piaski<sup>2</sup> their lives come to an end.  
One of the prisoners worked in the Flick<sup>3</sup>,  
Sorting the victims' clothes.  
Suddenly, he bent down, shaken.  
And clinging to a pink dress,  
Picked up a picture of his sweetheart.

*Janowska camp, 1943*

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> A prison for Jews in Weyssenhoff street in Lvov, from which most prisoners were taken to their death. The title "Waisenhof" (Orphan's Court) used in the English edition is misleading and is due to a translation error. The street name was already used in Polish times from 1931 (ul. Weyssenhofa Józefa). Józef Weyssenhoff (1860-1932) was a conservative Polish writer and publisher who came from German-Baltic nobility.



(Detail from a German city map of Lviv from 1944,  
<https://uma.lvivcenter.org/en/maps/34489> )

<sup>2</sup> The Piaski are the sand hills behind the Janowska camp where the mass shootings took place

<sup>3</sup> Flicken: Workshop where the clothes and shoes of the murdered were sorted and mended