PAUL RYZMAN

As a child, Paul Ryzman was hidden by French farming families during the war.

> *"The families who hid us showed so much love for perfect strangers and carriers of misfortune such as us in this climate of terror. I did not realize until much later the courage of this brotherhood of happiness and honor."*

Paul Ryzman was born in Paris in 1938 to a Polish father and Romanian mother. In the summer of 1942, knowing that they were in danger, Paul and his parents, Feiga and Lajzer, fled Paris for the free zone in the south. They stayed for a while in Toulouse, where Lajzer picked grapes during harvest season and four-and-a-half-year-old Paul played with the local children. But after the Allied landing in North Africa, the German army headed south, and the free zone collapsed. The Ryzmans fled again, this time towards Grenoble where Paul's sister Jeanine was born.

For a few months, they felt safe—until the Nazis invaded the Alps, and roundups of Jews began in that area. From the family's apartment, Paul would watch people passing along the street below. Every morning, a group of three teenage brothers washed at the fountain. One day, Paul saw a German patrol recognize them as Jews and shoot them on the spot.

In December 1943, Feiga was informed that Lajzer had just been captured in a raid. Afraid they would be next, she took the children on the road again. They landed in the village of Allevard, where a farming family, the Villots, agreed to hide them. It was unsafe for Paul to attend school, and so he stayed at the farm.

In the spring of 1944, the Germans set up a search for Resistance fighters, and, fearing that their hosts would be killed if they were found harboring Jews, the Ryzmans once again fled. They were directed to another farm in the mountains where they were hidden in the barn.

In August 1944 France was liberated. The Ryzmans learned that Lajzer and many of his relatives had died in Auschwitz. Paul, Feiga, and Jeanine eventually returned to Paris and found that their apartment, emptied by the Gestapo, was illegally occupied. Paul's mother met and married a tailor, Isaac Brenner, a survivor of Auschwitz, and he adopted the children.

Paul resumed his education and eventually studied medicine, specializing in ophthalmology. He lives in Paris with his wife Marie-Thérèse and their two sons.