

- 0. THE LAST BROADCAST Story Preface
- 1. JEWS IN WARSAW
- 2. THE LAST BROADCAST
- 3. GERMANY INVADES POLAND
- 4. WARSAW GHETTO
- 5. EVACUATION of the WARSAW GHETTO
- 6. DESTROY THE GHETTO
- 7. WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING
- 8. THE WARSAW GHETTO IS NO MORE
- 9. DEATH OF WARSAW
- 10. ALONE IN WARSAW
- 11. WILM HOSENFELD
- 12. HOSENFELD'S DIARY
- 13. THE REST OF THE STORY

## THE LAST BROADCAST



German forces bombed Warsaw in September of 1939. This image is from the German National Archives and depicts "Warsaw Burning." Image online via Bundesarchiv, Bild (Picture) 141-0763. License: <u>CC-BY-SA 3.0</u>

Within the first few days of September, 1939, the German army had surrounded Warsaw. People <u>tried</u> to go about their business, despite the <u>constant shelling</u>, death and <u>destruction</u>. Before German troops actually entered the city, Szpilman (when he could) reported for work at the radio station.

On September 23rd, just five days before <u>Warsaw surrendered</u>, <u>Wladyslaw</u> played the last live broadcast that anyone would hear from a Warsaw radio station until the war was over. He had selected a favorite piece by <u>Fryderyk Chopin</u>: the Nocturne in C Sharp Minor.

While he performed, he could hardly hear his own music because of exploding shells. As nearby buildings burned, the pianist <u>played</u> on. (The link takes you to a video of an older Szpilman playing the famous work.)

When his recital was over, more exploding shells kept him from going home for two hours.

At 3:15 p.m. that afternoon, while Warsaw Radio was broadcasting a recording of Rachmaninov's <u>Piano</u> <u>Concerto No. 2</u> in <u>C Minor</u> (composed by a brilliant musician with an incredibly <u>wide hand span</u>), a bomb destroyed the power station.

As the beautiful second movement was ending, so too was the cultural life of pre-World War II Warsaw.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at: <a href="http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-LAST-BROADCAST-Pianist-The">http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-LAST-BROADCAST-Pianist-The</a>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at: <a href="http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-LAST-BROADCAST-Pianist-The">http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-LAST-BROADCAST-Pianist-The</a>

## Media Stream



<u>Warsaw Scene from 1939</u> Image online, courtesy the <u>Polish Greatness</u> blog. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Warsaw-Scene-from-1939</u>



<u>German Plane Bombing Warsaw - September, 1939</u> Image online, courtesy <u>thefullwiki.org</u> website.

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View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/German-Plane-Bombing-Warsaw-September-1939

<u>Krazinski Square, Warsaw Surrendered</u> Image online, courtesy the <u>Polish Greatness</u> blog. PD View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Krazinski-Square-Warsaw-Surrendered

<u>Wladyslaw Szpilman Photo</u> Image online, courtesy the <u>szpilman.net</u> website. View this asset at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Wladyslaw-Szpilman-Photo</u>

<u>Fryderyk Chopin - Musical Genius</u> Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD

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## Rachmaninov and His Amazing Hand Span

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. PD

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## Rachmaninov - Concerto No. 2 in C Minor and Its Creation Video clip online, courtesy BBC's WorldWide Channel at YouTube. View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Rachmaninov-Concerto-No.-2-in-C-Minor-and-Its-Creation



Rachmaninoff - Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Part 2 Video clip online, courtesy YouTube. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Rachmaninoff-Piano-Concerto-No.-2-in-C-Minor-Part-2



Rachmaninoff- Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Part 3 Video clip online, courtesy YouTube. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Rachmaninoff-Piano-Concerto-No.-2-in-C-Minor-Part-3