Elie Wiesel was a victim of the Holocaust- he was a Jew from Sighet, Hungary in a time when Jews in Europe were in a bad situation. They were kept in separate parts of their cities, and they were sent to places of suffering that were called concentration camps. During his time in these concentration camps, he endured many kinds of treatment- kindness, abuse, and betrayal, for a few examples. Different groups of people offered different kinds of treatment at different times, and sometimes one was no better or worse than the other. These groups of people were the Nazis and the others- the other Jews that he met in the camps. I believe that the two groups were very similar in their treatment- they had the two extremes of humane and inhumane.

The other side of the spectrum is the humanity, the good and kindness that was shown and experienced. There are examples abound of the Jews being allies to each other- doing good, advising, and protecting. However, there are also many examples of them being enemies- fighting over bread, betrayal, and greed. The good shown towards prisoners by the other prisoners usually came when they first came in to a new camp. For example, when Elie and his family arrived in Auschwitz, they were helped by the others. They were advised on how best to stay alive- there was one who told Elie and his father to lie about their ages so that they would not be deemed to old or too young to work (Wiesel, page 30). There are countless other examples of advice given, such as when they arrived in Buna- they were advised on what Kommandos would be a good Kommando to be assigned to (Wiesel, pages 47 and 48). Yet another example of the kindness shown by the others was when the French girl- who Elie thought could only speak French- spoke to him in German. “‘It was impudent to say those few words to you, but I knew that you would not betray me…’” (Wiesel, page 54). This shows that the girl risked a lot to comfort Elie, but she did it anyway. This is a very important example of how the other prisoners were kind. There was also some kindness from the Nazis- not much, but there was still kindness. The best of this was when they first started staying in the camps. Despite one man’s warning that Auschwitz was “Not a convalescent home” (Wiesel, page 38), they were able to rest well. However, this was just the one man, that certain *Blockälteste*, who was later replaced due to the fact that he was “too humane.” (Wiesel, page 44).

The inhumanity shown and experienced by all involved in the Holocaust was horrible. How else can inhumanity be described? In the beginning, the Nazis were the ones who had the evil of inhumanity. They were horrible to the children. So many were killed and burned. "Never shall I forget the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoked under a silent sky." (Wiesel page 34). The Nazis took everything from their victims. They were not allowed shoes. They were not allowed their own clothing. They were not allowed anything of value. "They beloved objects that we had carried with us from place to place were now left behind in the wagon..." (Wiesel page 29). Even worse, humanity was taken away. "In a few seconds, we had ceased to be men." (Wiesel page 37). This inhumanity shown by the Nazis is comparable to the inhumanity shown by fellow prisoners. They fought over bread, not caring what they did to others- “And the spectators observed these emaciated creatures ready to kill for a crust of bread.” (Wiesel, page 101). In a way, the greed over little things was worse- for example, Franek’s greed over Elie’s gold crown. Franek made much too big of a deal over this. When Elie refused to give it up, Franek beat his father relentlessly- until Elie finally gave up. When Franek got what he wanted, he turned to again be an ally. (Wiesel, pages 55 and 56) Franek turned from being an ally to being an enemy. Since there was no absolute need for this crown to survive, perhaps it is worse that Franek was so greedy at this point.

There were some in between times as well, in which neither the Nazis nor the prisoners were not humane or inhumane. They just lived- they did not do anything cruel, nor did they do anything good. One such example is when Elie first arrives in Buna. He was approached by a boy that offers to help Elie get into a good Kommando if Elie pays him his shoes. (Wiesel page 48). This could be judged kind, but Elie was rather attached too his shoes- this deems this act neither good nor bad. Examples of the Nazis being in between come in Buna. Since the whole idea of keeping the Jews prisoner in such conditions is inhumane in itself, the fact that the Jews were treated well (in the situation’s own, strange way) makes it not so bad.

The Nazis and the other prisoners both showed goodness, cruelty, and what is in between. Even so, there is an obvious difference between the two groups: the Nazis were much crueler than the other prisoners- most of what they did could be understood as inhumanity. Those that someone such as Elie would meet were pretty even in good and bad though they leaned more to the side of goodness. There is a difference, but every group involved had its share of moments in which both sides of the spectrum were shown.