

## Jakub Bromberg Sitting On Julian Tuwim's Bench In Lodz



This is me sitting on Julian Tuwim's bench on Piotrkowska Street in Lodz. The photo was taken in the year 2000. Julian Tuwim was a very well known Polish poet of Jewish origin, born in Lodz. This is how he called himself.

My life was my schooling. I toughened in the army and in the mines. I wear a star of David on the lapel, on purpose. Everybody knows me. At the Grand Hotel and at other hotels. They have respect for me. When they want to find out where some street used to be, they call me. Nobody offends me and if there is such a person, I give him a lesson, so he won't think I'm a 'jojne karabin' that shoots onions from a crooked barrel.

My life is very bad now. I'm alone. Drugs are expensive, everything is expensive. They won't admit you to hospital. The doctor doesn't care about the patient. You have to bribe him, and where am I to get the money? I live off my pension.

My friends have died. They used to visit me, the director, the manager and the workers from the many textile workshops I was employed in. We used to meet up. I would invite them and they would invite me. Now I lie here and think: Frank is gone, Staszek is gone, Wojtek is gone, and this one is gone...

Now everyone has some entertainment: televisions and all these different games. At my house, it's like a cemetery. I only keep listening to the radio. I stay at home all day long, like in some prison. I've been through so much in the army and in the mines. I managed to survive each misfortune, pull through. My entire life was tough. My plans were never realized. That's why I don't plan anything; I arrange things at the last minute. I don't want to break my word, and for me a promise is worth more than money. Siberia, mines, army, poverty, lack of food. And so my story keeps going.