

TEARS OF STONE

Written by

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Based on, "Tears of Stone" by Avraham Fred Daniels

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BLACK

Super:

THIS MOVIE HAS BEEN MADE IN MEMORY OF THE 6 MILLION JEWS THAT WERE MURDERED BY THE NAZIS.

NEVER FORGET.

FADE IN:

INT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT - MORNING

Super: TEL AVIV, AUGUST 1972

MICHA LEVIET, a well-dressed, clean-cut middle-aged man in his mid-50s moseys around his apartment in the early morning as golden sunlight bathes the hardwood floor through the window. Although time has not been kind to him, he still looks sharp, wearing a brown, three-piece suit - sans jacket - with his tie loose around his collar. A variety of potted plants are placed elegantly around the apartment. He fills a pitcher in the sink and methodically waters them. This is his ritual, day in and day out.

Glancing at his watch he knows it is nearly time to leave, but spends a few more minutes tidying up. He straightens a stack of legal papers on the counter, but stops momentarily to consider a business card that reads DR. FLUSSCHER, PhD before tossing it on top of the pile of papers. With a heavy SIGH he walks to the bedroom where a few garments of clothing are sitting on the floor. Micha bends down to pick one up, the faded numbers 080613 barely visible on his worn and tanned forearm.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ SORTING YARD - DAY

Close on an old, raggedy sweater. Clothes that have been taken from the fallen prisoners of the death camp are littered across the field as far as the eye can see, a sea of debris, about 100 meters adjacent to one of the many gas chambers in the concentration camp. This is what the prisoners call CANADA. In the distance, two figures can be seen wandering about, as if in a perpetual daze, bending down ever so often to gather the discarded items. In the foreground, an emaciated hand reaches down, tattooed numbers 080613 clearly visible on the exposed forearm, and grasps a garment.

INT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT - MORNING

Beads of sweat glisten on Micha's forehead. He dabs the perspiration with a handkerchief before tightening his tie in the mirror.

EXT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

From the balcony Micha has a clear view of the sea and the beach. The golden light reflects off the calm morning water. The beach is deserted. There is no breeze. Micha dabs his forehead again.

EXT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT - A SERIES OF SHOTS

--Micha leaves his apartment and locks the door.

--Micha gets in his red sports car and turns on the ignition.

--Micha drives down the Herzliya toward downtown Tel Aviv.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN TEL AVIV - MORNING

After parking his car on the street, Micha approaches a newsstand to buy the morning paper. The day is already sweltering, and it shows on the accumulating perspiration on his face. For the ATTENDANT, it is business as usual.

MICHA
 (placing the day's
 newspaper on the counter)
 Shalom.

ATTENDANT
 Just the paper?

MICHA
 That's all for today.

ATTENDANT
 Shalom Aleichem.

Micha tucks the paper under his arm and walks toward his office. The street is beginning to fill with morning commuters. On the opposite side of the street, droves of people are exiting the busy bus station.

Micha opens his paper to peruse the day's news, not paying attention to the happenings around him. He bumps shoulders with a man walking past.

MICHA
My apologies.

Micha continues walking, and unfolds the day's paper once again.

Across the street, a bomb EXPLODES in a small cafe. Micha drops his paper and drops to a knee, covering his face.

Shortly after, another bomb EXPLODES in a cafe behind Micha, just near where he parked his car.

MICHA (CONT'D)
My god.

Micha's car is buried in a haze of dust and rubble, hardly visible. Micha stands up to evacuate, unsure of which direction he should go.

Just as he gets to his feet another EXPLOSION reverberates from the bus station, sending huge amounts of debris and sediment through the air.

Micha is knocked over and hits his head on the sidewalk with a loud CRACK.

EXT. - DOWNTOWN TEL AVIV - MORNING

The sounds of muffled screams are almost inaudible. Micha can see the wounded wandering about, screaming, looking for their loved ones -- their helplessness is palpable.

The carnage, destruction, and panic are not like anything he's witnessed in a very long time. Something he's long since pushed out of his mind.

A PARAMEDIC is tending to Micha's wounds.

PARAMEDIC
Sir, I need you to be still. Please relax.

MICHA
(squirming on the ground,
trying to get up)
Chana! Please, listen...

The paramedic is trying to patch up Micha's wounds. Blood from the open gash on his forehead is cascading down his face. The paramedic does his best to subdue Micha in order to stop the bleeding. Micha is losing consciousness...

MICHA (CONT'D)

Chana...

EXT. - BLOEMENDAAL BEACH - DUSK

Super: AMSTERDAAM, AUGUST 1940

Micha and CHANA OPPENHEIMER, a young, bubbly girl, full of life, wearing simple cloths and auburn hair, are finishing up their day at the beach. The sun is reflecting a familiar golden light over the horizon, and at this time of day they are surrounded only by the gulls circling above. They both sit in the sand with a small towel draped beneath them. It has been a perfect day. Close to the surf, two young children are building sand castles.

MICHA

Are you ready?

CHANA

Let's stay for a little longer.

MICHA

(Pressing a finger on his
skin)

I think I'm getting burnt.

CHANA

(Poking Micha's shoulder a
few times)

Hah! It looks like it.

MICHA

Knock it off!

CHANA

(mesmerized)

It's so red...

MICHA

(smacking her hand away)

Do we know what time the bus
leaves?

CHANA

(Digging through her bag)

If I can just find the schedule...

Chana digs through her bag, tongue hanging slightly out her the corner her mouth, until she finds the pamphlet, holds it up, and turns it over quickly in her hand, before she follows the schedule with her index finger.

CHANA (CONT'D)

Uhh-- let's see...

(looking up to the sky)

What time is it?--Shoot! It's now!

Chana springs up and slips on her shoes before running away from Micha toward the bus terminal. Micha gathers the towels and follows.

INT. - BUS - DUSK

Micha and Chana barely make it onto the bus before it departs. They sit down with a SIGH of relief. Micha is short of breath. Chana giggles.

Chana rests her head on Micha's shoulder as the bus pulls away from the station, and Micha tries to hide the pleasure on his face as the beach begins to disappear in the distance.

EXT. - AMSTERDAAM STREETS - NIGHT

Night has fallen over Amsterdam, and the reality of the world is setting in -- there is no more beach to distract them from the truth: the Nazis have invaded Holland, and the Aryan Declaration has been administered to Amsterdam's Jewish residents.

SS Guards walk in groups all over the street. Military vehicles cut through the larger thoroughfares, and motorcycles drive along the canals.

Chana and Micha walk through the streets, heading home.

CHANA

You know, my father says nothing is going to come from that questionnaire they sent out.

MICHA

Which one? The one that asked about our grandparents? What they're calling the 'Aryan Declaration?'

CHANA

Yeah. The one that asked if they were Jewish.

Micha is concerned about the questionnaire, but tries to hide it.

CHANA (CONT'D)
They say families are already
getting summons.

MICHA
Summons for what?

CHANA
To work at those labor camps.

MICHA
Only out on the outskirts, in the
country. We live in the city. We're
fine. Plus, they can't be as bad as
everyone thinks they'll be.

CHANA
(nodding)
You're right. They could be worse.

Micha takes Chana's hand, interlocking his fingers with hers.

MICHA
(smiling)
You worry too much.

EXT. - OPPENHEIMER HOUSE - NIGHT

The facade of the Oppenheimer house is faded and made of gray, watermarked stone--a modest yet dignified home for a Professor. At the door, Chana digs in her purse again, this time looking for her house keys. Losing things in her bag is a habit she's never tried to break.

CHANA
(still looking for her
keys)
Do you want to say hello to
everyone?

MICHA
I'd like that, yes.

CHANA
(holding her keys up
victoriously)
Here they are!

Chana finally finds her keys and unlocks the door.

INT. - OPPENHEIMER HOUSE - NIGHT

The Oppenheimer house is unusually quiet for this time of night. MRS. OPPENHEIMER, who would usually be preparing dinner, leans against the stove, arms crossed tight over her chest. Her clothes are starched and creased, and she holds her sharp chin high.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER, a small, stocky man, sits at the dinner table clenching a piece of paper in his stubby fingers. The knot of his tie is loose and his top button has been unclasped.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
Honorably dismissed, can you
believe that?

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
It's a load of rubbish is what it
is.

CHANA
What's going on?

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
Your father has been 'honorably'
dismissed from university.

CHANA
Fired?! What for?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
Being a Jew.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
Don't be crass.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
It's true!

CHANA
Can they do that?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
It looks like they can do anything
they want. Damn Germans, think they
can just come here, put us out of
work--

MICHA
Can't you fight it? Don't you have
friends on the university's board?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
 They've all been dismissed, too.
 (beat)
 Honorably, of course.

CHANA
 (sitting down at the
 table)
 This is horrible...

MICHA
 There's got to be something you can
 do!

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
 You should really go to the board-

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
 (SLAMMING his hand on the
 table)
 Enough!
 (beat)
 That's enough of that for an
 evening.

Professor Oppenheimer leaves the paper on the table, pours himself a glass of brandy in a small tumbler from the counter, and walks slowly to his bedroom, closing the door. Mrs. Oppenheimer, Micha, and Chana share an awkward silence in the kitchen.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
 Micha, do you want to stay for
 dinner? I haven't started cooking
 yet, but there will be plenty...

MICHA
 No thank you, Mrs. Oppenheimer. I
 should get home.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
 Suit yourself.

Mrs. Oppenheimer fusses around the kitchen, more so moving things from one place to another than actually cooking.

Chana and Micha exchange concerned glances with each other as Micha lets himself out.

INT. - LEVIET HOUSE - NIGHT

MRS. LEVIET, an elegant woman in black is clad in an apron, drying a handful of dishes over the sink. Micha sneaks up behind her and pecks her on the cheek.

MICHA

Hi, Momma.

MRS. LEVIET

Micha, you're home late. How was your day?

MICHA

(glancing in the fridge)
Chana and I went to the beach, and afterward I stopped in to chat with Mr. And Mrs. Oppenheimer.

MRS. LEVIET

(teasing)
At the Oppenheimer's again, huh? You must like them more than your mother.

MICHA

Maybe.
(producing chocolates from his back pocket)
But I don't bring them chocolates.

MRS. LEVIET

(patting Micha's cheek)
Good answer, smart boy.

MICHA

They might be a little melted. But you'll never guess what happened -- Professor Oppenheimer was relieved of his duties at the university.

MRS. LEVIET

(dismissively)
Oh, he'll get it back as soon as this occupation is over and done with.

MICHA

Momma, it doesn't seem like this is going away anytime soon.

MRS. LEVIET

(brandishing a spoon at Micha)

(MORE)

MRS. LEVIET (CONT'D)

Oh trust me, this time next year
the Germans will be long gone.
Different people come, different
people go, and all the while we
stay here. No reason to worry. Mark
my words.

EXT. - AMSTERDAAM STREETS - DAY

Super: AMSTERDAAM, September 1942

A damp but sunny afternoon. The leaves have changed color with the season, turning gold and orange and red, and stick to the ground, still wet from the morning rain. People of all ages shuffle around the street, going to various places on their daily routine. Despite the Nazi's increased presence on the street, life goes on as usual.

A Jewish family walks close to a canal, the Star of David embroidered on their shirt sleeves. Two SS GUARDS look over the family with contempt.

Chana walks alongside her bicycle, keeping pace with Micha. Both are a couple years older, cleaner, more adult. Both also wear the brand.

CHANA

Do you see the way they look at us?
Its disgusting. They look at us
like vermin.

MICHA

Try to ignore it.

CHANA

I can't ignore it. How can you
ignore what's happening all around
us? It's bad enough that they make
us tell them where our synagogues
are, what trams we use. They've
taken our radios. We can't go to
the market! We can't go to school.
(tugging at the star on
her arm)
We have to wear this garbage!

MICHA

Chana!
(looking around)
Keep your voice down.

Chana is visibly upset.

MICHA (CONT'D)
Come on, let's have a drink.

Reluctantly, Chana follows Micha into a familiar soda shop. Neither of them notice the sign in the window that reads NO JEWS.

INT. - SODA SHOP - DAY

The shop is dimly lit through the small windows. There's a mustiness in the air that's palpable. The counter is bustling with people standing around, idly chit chatting. Micha motions for two drinks. The man behind the counter SCOFFS at the pair.

MAN BEHIND THE COUNTER
Get out of here, kid.

MICHA
Wha-

MAN BEHIND THE COUNTER
No Jews!

MICHA
Since when?

MAN BEHIND THE COUNTER
Since I said so. Now get out of here. I don't want any trouble from anyone now.

CHANA
Come on, Micha. It's not worth it.

Micha grabs Chana by the crook of her elbow, and they leave, further defeated.

EXT. - AMSTERDAAM STREETS - DAY

Outside the soda shop, and across the canal, Chana can see rising commotion outside a synagogue.

CHANA
What's happening?

MICHA
I don't know. Let's go home.

Chana pulls away from Micha's grip and dashes toward the synagogue. Micha is quick on her heels.

INT. - JEWISH SYNAGOGUE - DAY

A pair of SS Guards have ransacked the synagogue. The rabbi is on his knees in front of the wreckage, the Torah on the floor. A large group of Jews gather around, watching in disbelief.

SS GUARD #1
Piss on it, swine.

The second SS Guard laughs.

The Rabbi is mortified, embarrassed, but also incredulous.

RABBI
I will do no such thing.

The SS Guard unholsters his weapon and presses it against the Rabbi's forehead.

SS GUARD #1
Do it.

The Rabbi closes his eyes and lifts his chin toward the barrel of the gun, muttering a prayer under his breath in Hebrew. The SS Guard brings the butt of his gun onto the Rabbi's forehead with a CRACK. Those gathered in witness GASP.

Chana is livid.

CHANA
You bastard!

Micha holds her back.

The SS Guards begin beating the Rabbi senseless, with their guns, their fists, their feet.

The Rabbi is defenseless, a bloody pulp on the ground.

After a moment, a handful of Jewish men push the SS Guards away, and surround the Rabbi in a protective circle. This is not a fight, but a rescue.

The SS Guards look around, and, laughing, leave the synagogue. Chana is mortified.

MICHA
(to Chana)
Are you ok?

Chana squirms from his grasp.

CHANA

Let's go.

Micha follows her out.

EXT. - LEVIET HOUSE - LATER

Just down the street from the Leviet House, Micha holds Chana's face in between his palms.

MICHA

You can't do that, you know?

CHANA

(looking away)
What?

MICHA

You can't be so visibly upset.

CHANA

I didn't...

MICHA

Oh, man. If that wasn't upset I don't want to see what is.

CHANA

(smiling)
Well, don't make me mad, and you won't.

MICHA

(laughing)
You... you're something else.

At this, Chana laughs too, and Micha, unable to resist, kisses her. It is not their first kiss, rather a familiar and welcomed sensation.

Hand-in-hand, they approach the Leviet House. From the street, they can see Mrs. Leviet sobbing through a window. She clutches a letter.

Chana shoots Micha another worried look.

Micha grits his teeth and turns toward the door.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Wait here.

Through the window Chana watches the Leviets in their home.

Micha enters the room, calls to his mother. She looks to her son, tries to stand, but collapses to a knee. Micha rushes over and picks her up.

Mrs. Leviet buries her head in his chest and weeps.

INT. - LEVIET HOUSE - LATER

Micha sits in an armchair in the living room; Chana stands with her back against the wall, arms crossed in front of her chest. Mrs. Leviet has finally stopped crying for long enough to speak.

MRS. LEVIET
I didn't think this day would
come...

MICHA
What day? What are you talking
about.

MRS. LEVIET
(crying)
It's not our turn. It can't be our
turn..

MICHA
(angry now)
Momma, what are you talking about?

MRS. LEVIET
The summons! What do you think this
is?
(picking up the envelop)
Do you think this is some entrance
letter for university? No? Its not,
because Jews aren't allowed in
University, remember *Micha*? What do
you think this is?

MICHA
I--

MRS. LEVIET
It's our death sentence! Do you
understand? You stupid, stupid boy.

Chana scratches her ear in the corner.

MICHA
Momma, calm down please.

MRS. LEVIET
(hysterical)
What are we going to do? What are
we going to do?!

MICHA
(pacing around the
kitchen)
Relax, Momma. Let me think, please.

Mrs. Leviet is on the verge of another breakdown. Her breathing increases in speed and her chest heaves up and down.

MICHA (CONT'D)
What about hiding? We could go into
hiding.

MRS. LEVIET
That will never work.

MICHA
I've heard plenty of stories about
Jews that have escaped the Gestapo
on the outskirts of the city. It's
worked for them. Why not us?

MRS. LEVIET
It's too dangerous.

MICHA
Momma, its the only way to escape
transport to the camps. You said it
yourself-
(pointing to the envelope)
This is a death sentence.

MRS. LEVIET
It's impossible.

MICHA
Momma, please listen to me.

MRS. LEVIET
I said its impossible. Everything
is impossible. We're all going to
die.

This sentiment is too much for Micha. The young, adolescent hope he carries around with him, day in and day out, is slowly being drained. Mrs. Leviet is rocking back and forth, clutching her shirt in her hand.

Chana watches Micha become increasingly frustrated. She attempts to say something, anything, that will relieve the tension in the room. Her voice fails her.

MICHA

You're impossible! I can't stand it. This problem isn't going to fix itself! We have to fix it.

MRS. LEVIET

It won't work!

Micha is furious, his face is red. He grabs at his hair.

MICHA

(storming toward the door)
I can't talk to you!

Micha slams the door with such force that the window panes, which are plastered with strips of plastic, shatter.

EXT. - LEVIET HOUSE - DAY

Outside, Micha seethes. The sky is a dark, gray blanket overhead, and in the cool October air Micha's breath is barely visible in front of his lips. The neighbor's dog, riled up by the sound of the door slamming, barks at Micha.

MICHA

Oh, hush, you.

The dog continues to bark. After a short moment Chana approaches Micha from behind, and lays a comforting hand on his shoulder.

CHANA

What were you saying about being calm?

MICHA

That was different.

CHANA

No, its not.

MICHA

She's insufferable.

CHANA

She's scared.
(beat)
You're all she's got.

MICHA
You're all I've got.

CHANA
Stop it. You've got that fabulous woman in there. Plus, my parent's kind of like you, too. Be nice.

Micha relents, and the two embrace before they part ways.

INT. - LEVIET HOUSE - NIGHT

Inside the home, all the lights are off, aside from a single candle.

MICHA
Momma, can we turn on some lights?

MRS. LEVIET
No! We don't want anyone to know we're home.

MICHA
They know. We can't hide from them here.

MRS. LEVIET
I can't go into hiding! I'm too old, and if they find us, they will kill us for sure.

Mrs. Leviet begins sobbing again.

MICHA
Oh, Momma. I'm sorry. Don't worry.

MRS. LEVIET
(sniffling)
Are you finished yelling?

MICHA
Yes. I'm sorry.

MRS. LEVIET
(reaching to touch Micha's cheek)
I'm sorry, too. What are we going to do? They will annihilate us, our people, our family.

MICHA
No, Momma. The French or the Brits, they will stop them. Watch.

MRS. LEVIET

Stupid boy. We will be long gone before the French or the British ever arrive...

MICHA

(panicked again)

If not, we'll leave. We'll...we'll go south.

MRS. LEVIET

We can't go to France. Spain is no better. How will we get there? We have no money. They took what your father left us, God rest his soul.

MICHA

I don't know yet, but we'll figure it out. We should just run--someone is bound to help us. Someone has to help us.

MRS. LEVIET

No no, my love. We can't run. We'll go to Westerbork.

MICHA

Momma, please. We can leave tonight.

MRS. LEVIET

I can't. I just can't. You go, you will be better without me.

Mrs. Leviet rummages around the living area, picking up a blanket, a coat jacket, various loose garments, shoving them at Micha.

MRS. LEVIET (CONT'D)

Go.

Mrs. Leviet falls backward on the couch, defeated. Micha goes to sit next to her.

MICHA

Momma, you're all that I have. I won't leave you.

Mrs Leviet rocks back in forth in Micha's arms in silence.

INT. - LEVIET KITCHEN - LATER

The sky is dark, and the darkness seeps in through the windows of the kitchen. A small lamp on the kitchen table illuminates Professor Oppenheimer, Mrs. Oppenheimer, Mrs. Leviet, and Micha.

Chana is at the sink pouring water into a kettle. She stares out a small window at the dark sky.

CHANA
(to herself)
No stars tonight.

At the table, everyone is solemn.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
We came as soon as we heard.

MRS. LEVIET
Thank you for coming, but we've decided to just go to the camp.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
Now hang on a minute, there's got to be other options. Lets put our heads together and think.
(beat)
Hiding here will be too dangerous. We need to find a way to move you-- both of you--across the border.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
What about shipping? We know the shoemakers are always importing leather from Italy.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
It's too risky. Micha could perhaps survive, but even then, Italy would not be so friendly to him.

MRS. LEVIET
I'm telling you, there's nothing to do except go to the work camp.

Chana sets the kettle on the stove.

MICHA
Momma, listen to the Oppenheimer's. There's got to be a way.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
What about Spain?

MRS. LEVIET

I've heard they're secretly allied
with the Germans.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER

London?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

Surely they won't let just anyone
in there. They will be inspecting
cargo, too. What about New York?

Micha looks at Chana who has abruptly turned around to face
the table, a look of utter surprise and dismay on her face.
Micha holds her gaze for a moment before speaking.

MICHA

Professor, New York is so far
away...

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

Precisely. They are far from the
war, so the ports will be safer,
easier to get into.

MRS. LEVIET

How do we even get there?

MICHA

By boat, Momma.

MRS. LEVIET

Oh shush.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

I may not be able to teach in
Holland, but I'm still a professor,
damnit, and I can still travel. I
can try to book a lecture in New
York.

MRS. LEVIET

Do you think that would work?

MRS. OPPENHEIMER

You could go as me. You could be
his wife.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

Seems like its worth a shot.

MRS. LEVIET

But what about Micha? You don't
have a son.

MICHA

I could borrow a dress?

Chana sets the kettle down on the table. The other four eye her up and down.

CHANA

What?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

No, Micha. I'm afraid you're far too ruddy for that.

They all smile, and then quickly remember their plight and grow serious again.

No one talks for a moment. They all think.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER

Henry, didn't you have a male teaching assistant? Is he sympathetic to our cause?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

Arthur? More than many these days.

MICHA

That's brilliant!

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

Hold on, hold on. We still have to book a lecture.

Everyone sits and considers the possibility. Chana stands up and walks back to the sink, holding back tears as she considers the possibility of Micha leaving for America.

INT. - OPPENHEIMER HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

ARTHUR, a thin, young Teaching Assistant with messy hair and black glasses opens the door to Professor Oppenheimer's office and passes Micha as he leaves.

He pauses for a moment in the hallway. Neither is sure what to say.

MICHA

Arthur? I'm Mic--

ARTHUR

I don't want to know.

Arthur continues down the hall. Micha, confused, watches.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER (O.C.)
Micha? Come in. Shut the door.

INT. - OPPENHEIMER HOUSE - DAY

Mr. Oppenheimer's office is as warm as the professor. Wood bookcases, large volumes of books, and pictures of his family sit around the room. Micha stops to take in one of Chana when she was a girl, posing next to a sand castle she built at the beach the two are so fond of frequenting.

The professor looks out his window. His deep stare is broken by the door shutting.

He quickly turns.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
Micha. Thanks for coming.

MICHA
No, thank you. Any news?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
Seems my request to give a lecture has been approved by a university in Boston.

MICHA
That's great news. But Arthur didn't seem too pleased to meet me.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
Don't worry. These days, the less people know, the better.
(beat)
Arthur has agreed to go to his aunt's in Leeuwarden while we're gone. Is your mother ready?

MICHA
To be honest Professor, she's a mess. She doesn't want to leave our house--she doesn't want to leave everything behind.
(beat)
How do you pack your whole life into a suitcase?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
I'm sorry to say it, but at this point we have little life left to take with us. God willing, you will be able to return by next year.

MICHA

And you?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

I can't abandon my family. As soon as we secure safe passage to New York, you and your mother will be on your own, unfortunately. I will be heading to Holland on the first ship back.

(beat)

How are you doing, Micha?

MICHA

I'll be fine, Professor.

Professor Oppenheimer SIGHS, and takes a moment before he stands and walks to Micha, placing his hands firmly on his shoulders.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

Chana will miss you, and I know you will miss her. She is very fond of you. *I'm* very fond of you.

Micha's eyes well up with tears, but he pushes them away.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)

You are allowed to be sad, Micha. You are allowed to miss Chana. Your home.

MICHA

Momma is so frail...

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

You're right. None of this is easy. You're doing the best that you can.

MICHA

Thank you...

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

Have you thought about what you would do once you arrive in New York?

Micha is confused.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)

For work. What will you do for work? These are things you need to think about.

MICHA

I don't know? I'm sure Momma can find a job in a factory somewhere.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

And you?

MICHA

Anything. Whatever work they'll give me.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

You will have to find something quick, ideally a place that will provide lodging. The streets of New York are no place for a boy and his mother.

MICHA

I will, Professor.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

I know you will, my boy. Now, go home and get some rest. We leave in two days.

Micha takes a deep breath.

EXT. - AMSTERDAAM STREETS BRIDGE - DAY

Micha and Chana sit on a bridge crossing one of the many channels that cut through the city of Amsterdam. Their legs dangle off the edge.

They both hold onto the railing, looking out into the grayness.

MICHA

Not exactly the same as the beach, huh? Just one more thing they've taken from us.

CHANA

(with a short smile)

It's not exactly the season for it, anyway.

The two don't speak for a moment. Chana takes Micha's hand into hers.

CHANA (CONT'D)

You're very brave, you know? You're doing the right thing.

MICHA

(beat)

I don't want to leave you.

CHANA

You don't really have a choice.
Plus, this is only temporary. By
next summer you'll be back and
we'll be at the beach again.

MICHA

Building sand castles?

CHANA

What?

MICHA

Nothing. Nevermind.

Micha starts as if he has something to say to her, but stops himself. He has something he desperately wants to say to her, but he can't muster the words, can't convey that feeling he gets in his stomach every time he sees her walking down the road.

MICHA (CONT'D)

I--I--you...

Micha brings Chana's hand to his lips and kisses it.

MICHA (CONT'D)

I feel so small.

CHANA

What do you mean?

MICHA

Like nothing I do makes a
difference. Do you remember when we
were sitting shiva for my father?
When all those people brought
flowers, dozens, hundreds? They
filled our little house. And then
you brought me that one lonely
daisy, and it sat in the corner,
and in the bustle of the day I
forgot about it until it was too
late. It's like that.

He turns to Chana. His face is stone.

INT. - LEVIET HOUSE MICHA'S ROOM - DAY

The room is lit by one large window.

Micha sets an old suitcase on a table near the window. Dust lifts through the broad ray of sunlight.

The dark floor board CREAKS as Micha passes through the room.

He pulls a small pile of shirts out of his dresser and throws them into the suitcase before he turns to get more items.

The case is almost full.

Micha returns with a handful of books. The stack is too large to fit.

Micha takes his siddur from the pile of books and holds it in his hand, weighing it. He thinks for a moment before tossing it aside.

MICHA

Dead weight.

Micha finishes packing his case.

EXT. - AMSTERDAAM STREETS - DAY

Micha and Mrs. Leviet walk down the street, their suitcases in tow. Micha hasn't slept, and his face and hair show it. People are unusually on edge, as SS Guards go from door to door in pairs. In each pair, one SS Guard holds a large stack of envelopes.

MRS. LEVIET

What's happening?

MICHA

Nothing good, Momma.

Micha grabs his mother by the crook of her elbow and hurries her down the street

EXT. - OPPENHEIMER HOUSE - DAY

Micha and Mrs. Leviet stand at the front door to the home. Mrs. Leviet is frazzled, glancing over her shoulder, expecting nothing in particular, yet expecting anything she can imagine.

Micha knocks. Once, twice...three times. When Chana answers the door her face is red and puffy. Tears well up in her eyes.

Beyond her, Professor Oppenheimer sits in the corner of the house, looking out the window. He is motionless. Mrs. Oppenheimer stands behind him, trying to comfort him.

MICHA

What happened?

Chana tries but can't speak. Instead, she grabs a letter off a hallway table and hands it to Micha.

Micha can't believe it. He turns it over in his hand. He doesn't open it because he knows exactly what's inside.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Professor...

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER

I'm sorry, Micha. I'm so sorry.

Professor Oppenheimer buries his face in his palm. There's nothing more to be said.

CUT TO:

INT. - TEL AVIV HOSPITAL - DAY

Micha lays in a hospital bed, the fresh gash from the attack still visible on his forehead. A NURSE bustles around the room. She checks monitors, feels Micha's forehead.

In the doorway, GITA stands, not sure what to do. She is a portly woman with a soft, round chin and large cheeks, dressed in a skirt that falls to the floor. Her sweater reaches to her wrist despite the hot, dead summer air.

GITA

Mr. Leviet?

MICHA

(stirring)

I--I have--need to--our baby...

GITA

What's wrong with him?

NURSE

He has a concussion, but he should be ok. He needs rest.

GITA
What's he saying?

NURSE
He's been mumbling about someone
named Chana since he came in. And a
baby.

Gita walks to the side of the bed and sits in a chair. She looks at his hand, waiting for a moment, before taking it into her own.

GITA
Mr. Leviet... I'm so glad you're
ok.
(crying now)
I was so worried. You're never
late.

Micha is sweating. He turns his head.

GITA (CONT'D)
You're going to be ok. Everything
is going to be ok.

Micha's eyes open, and he takes in the room before he turns his head toward Gita.

MICHA
Gita...
(beat)
Did you cancel my appointments?

GITA
(with a snotty laugh)
What appointments? No one is coming
with all the mayhem out there.

The nurse approaches Gita.

NURSE
I'm sorry, miss. You'll have to
come back tomorrow.

Gita nods in agreement, and Micha closes his eyes with a sigh.

GITA
(under her breath)
Feel better, Micha.

Gita leaves the room with one last glance at Micha. The nurse tucks the blanket beneath his chin.

CUT TO:

EXT. - AMSTERDAAM STREETS - DAY

Micha and his mother walk through a crowd of people all wearing several layers of clothes -- still clean -- and carrying what little bags they can. They are witnessing the beginning of the mass exodus of the Jews from Amsterdam.

The only real sound is the people's soft footsteps. Yellow stars are branded on everyone's coats. SS Guards stand by as the crowd shuffles along.

They are on a familiar street where the Oppenheimer's live. Across the way, Micha sees Chana, Mrs. Oppenheimer, and Professor Oppenheimer exit their home. They, too, carry their bags and are dressed for travel.

Micha instinctively starts to cut through the horde of people.

MICHA
(waving)
Chana! Professor!

The Oppenheimer's look up. Relief spreads across their faces.

MICHA (CONT'D)
Momma, this way.

He pulls her through the thick of people toward Chana. They move swiftly, until an SS GUARD blocks their path.

SS GUARD #2
Wrong way, Jew.

MICHA
I'm going to help that family.

Micha points toward the Oppenheimer's, who watch.

SS GUARD #2
You'll see them soon enough.

The guard pulls his rifle off his shoulder into his hands. Micha looks past him with the most subtle smile before trying to pass him.

Hatred spreads across the SS Guard's face like a cancer. He strikes Micha in the face with the butt of his rifle.

Micha crumbles to the ground. A large gash on his forehead trickles blood.

SS GUARD #2 (CONT'D)
Not smiling now, are you, swine?
Now move.

Mrs. Leviet grabs Micha under his arm and picks him up. Micha dabs his bloody forehead with his shirt sleeve.

MRS. LEVIET
Let's go, Micha.

Defeated, the Leviet's trudge onward.

EXT. - WESTERBORK GATE - DAY

Super: WESTERBORK, November 1942

Westerbork, a former Dutch refugee camp turned transit camp after the Nazi occupation of Holland. The beginning of the Jews' journey, although none yet realize how arduous the journey will actually be.

Everything is cold, damp, and gray. Micha and his mother walk through a sopping trail of mud. The Oppenheimer's are not far behind them.

Outside of the gate they stand in line with hundreds of other displaced Jews, waiting to be checked in.

MRS. LEVIET
This place is awful.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
Dreadful.

MICHA
How long do you think some of these people have been here?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
I heard word they started moving people out here months ago.

MRS. LEVIET
I can't imagine being stuck here for that long.

Chana is silent. She stares at her feet as she shuffles along behind the group. Micha takes notice and falls back, takes her hand.

MICHA
Are you ok?

CHANA
I'll be alright.

MICHA
At least we are all together.

CHANA
For now.

MICHA
(shaking her hand)
Come on, you can't think like that.
We have to stay positive.

CHANA
Look around.

SS Guards lined at a row of tables take the envelopes each family was given back in Amsterdam, and checks them against their logs. Mechanically, like some well oiled machine, they stamp the paperwork and pass it back.

SS GUARD #3
Off to the barracks. Down the hill.

The Leviet's and Oppenheimer's trudge through the slop. Water soaks their legs up to their coats. Mrs. Leviet shivers from the cold.

They reach the top of a small hill overlooking the barracks. Below, water pools around the porches in the low ground.

EXT. - WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

The mud and slop are thicker down the hill. Chana is shaking from the cold and Mrs. Oppenheimer is struggling to put one foot in front of the other. Beads of sweat appear on Professor Oppenheimer's brow, despite the cold.

Each building is marked with large white letters. Micha checks the Leviet's form against the building.

MICHA
This is us.

CHANA
I think we're a little further
down.

MICHA

I'll come find you soon. You know
where we are.

Chana nods in agreement. Her eyes are heavy.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Chin up, yeah?

Chana allows herself a small smile.

INT. - LEVIET WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

The barracks are dim and cold. The building is nothing more than a gutted wooden structure full of people and noise. Women wail and babies cry. In a corner closest to the entranceway a group of Jews sit, fingering the knots on their tallits as they recited the familiar prayers.

There is very little room to move.

In another corner, a husband is yelling at his wife while their children quarrel with each other over a stick.

Micha and Mrs. Leviet make their way through the dismal crowd, disbelief plastered over their faces.

In the corner are two vacant bunks, one stacked on top of the other. Micha throws his things on the top bunk and Mrs. Leviet collapses on the bottom bunk and buries her head in her hands.

MRS. LEVIET

You were right. What have we done?

MICHA

We'll manage, Momma.

MRS. LEVIET

We should have left. We should have fled. Now we are going to die here.

Micha sits and puts his arm around her shoulder.

MICHA

We have to keep our spirits up. We still have our health, a roof over our head...

(looking around)

...hopefully something to eat.

A stiff wind blows through the rotten sideboards.

Micha and Mrs. Leviet look at the moldy wall and pull their coats tighter over their shoulders. Mrs. Leviet rocks back and forth methodically.

MRS. LEVIET

No, this is the beginning of the end.

She looks up at Micha.

MRS. LEVIET (CONT'D)

They will annihilate us. Down to the last Jew.

She breaths in deep.

MRS. LEVIET (CONT'D)

Oh Micha, can you ever forgive me? I've forsaken us. I'm so sorry. I should've listened to you. You're the man of the house and I should've listened, but I didn't, and now we are going to die in this place.

MICHA

Shh, Momma. Its alright. You and I are still together.

Mrs. Leviet buries her face in Micha's shoulder. Micha embraces her, doing his best to provide what little comfort he can.

INT. - LEVIET WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

Micha sits on the top bunk reading. Across the way, people are getting rowdy.

A VOICE (O.S.)

It's posted.

Slowly, Micha closes his book and climbs down the bunk. Mrs. Leviet lays on the bottom bunk, eyes closed as if in prayer. Feeling Micha's movement, she opens her eyes. Neither say a word.

Micha walks toward the entrance of the barracks. The mud has hardened in the cold, and everyone's breath follows them like a specter.

EXT. - WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

A group of people gather to see a list tacked to a wall. An SS GUARD stands watch.

A YOUNG GIRL and her MOTHER weep and stagger away from the group.

SS GUARD #4

If your name is on the list, get your things.

MOTHER

Where are you taking us?

YOUNG GIRL

Momma, do we have to get on the c again?

SS GUARD #4

To the work camps. To serve the fatherland in the only way you're useful.

Micha pushes his way through the line. The list reads: TRANSFER.

Micha scans the names with his fingers--they are listed alphabetically: KULLMAN, LEWIS, LEVY...

Their name is not on the list. He scans further down, quickly, pushing others out of the way as they, too, try to examine the list. He breathes a sigh of relief. The Oppenheimer's name isn't on the list either.

INT. - LEVIET WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

Back at the bunk, Mrs. Leviet looks at Micha expectantly.

MICHA

Not today, Momma.

MRS. LEVIET

Spared then.

Another INMATE in a nearby bunk chimes in.

INMATE

Just for today, my friends. Eventually, we will all meet our maker. If not here, then certainly in a place far worse.

MICHA
 (with distain)
 Keep that to yourself.

Micha can barely hide his disgust.

EXT. - WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

Micha and Chana walk hand-in-hand through the yard. They have barely been in Westerbork for two days, and have yet to see each other since arriving. Everyone is cramped, the noise seems to never end.

MICHA
 The last two days have felt like an eternity.

CHANA
 I know, I'm sorry. It has taken a while to get settled in. My father hasn't been the same.

MICHA
 He'll come around.

CHANA
 I don't know, Micha. I don't know if he will.

They turn the corner into a much more open space and an SS GUARD spots them.

SS GUARD #5
 Stop! You! Jew!

Micha and Chana stop in their tracks. The SS Guard takes a long pull from his cigarette.

SS GUARD #5 (CONT'D)
 You know the rules.

Micha and Chana are confused, but quickly surmise that he is talking about their public display of affection. Micha drops Chana's hand.

CHANA
 Sorry...

The two keep walking past the guard toward the Oppenheimer's barracks. Micha sneers.

MICHA
 Don't apologize to them.

CHANA
What do you want me to do?

MICHA
I'd rather you didn't say anything.

Chana is speechless, and a little hurt. She wipes a few tears from her eyes.

MICHA (CONT'D)
What's wrong? Are you crying?

CHANA
(sniffling)
No...

MICHA
What's the matter then?

CHANA
I don't want to fight.

MICHA
This isn't a fight.

CHANA
It sure feels like a fight.

MICHA
(taking Chana's hand)
Its not, trust me.

Off camera, a piercing SCREAM reverberates through the air. Panic spreads across Micha and Chana's faces and they race off towards the scream.

A group of inmates have gathered around a building off the main thoroughfare, unable to take their eyes off the horror at hand.

Micha pushes his way through the crowd with Chana close behind him. When he finally sees what everyone is staring he stops in his tracks.

MICHA (CONT'D)
Chana stop!

It's too late. Chana is right beside him, unable to unsee what's right in front of her.

In the rafters a YOUNG BOY, no more than 7 years old, hangs nearly five feet off the ground from a noose made out of tattered strips of what looks to be an old jacket tied together. His MOTHER hangs next to him, a blanket wrapped around her neck. Both swing helplessly.

VOICE (O.C.)

He hung them. He hung them!

To everyone's disbelief, the FATHER is unable to get the bedsheet he has tied around his neck over the rafter. He tries again and again, failing every time. He SOBS. His neck is raw and red.

CHANA

Oh my God...

MICHA

Don't look.

Eventually, two YOUNG MEN subdue the father, dragging him to the ground.

YOUNG MAN #1

What did you do, you crazy bastard?

The father continues to WAIL.

YOUNG MAN #1 (CONT'D)

What did you do!?

Micha and Chana are petrified, unable to take their eyes off the swinging boy and his mother. Eventually, the father's continued CRIES garner the attention of two SS GUARDS, who push through the crowd.

SS GUARD #6

What's going on here?

Nameless voices are now LAMENTING the scene. For most, it is the first real horror they've seen.

The SS GUARD also takes in the boy and his mother hanging from the rafters. He looks down at the father crying helplessly on the ground, unholsters his sidearm, and without a second thought, shoots him square between the eyes as if flicking a bug off his shoulder. Blood splatters on the young man's face.

SS GUARD #6 (CONT'D)

Fucking animals. All of them.

SS GUARD #7

Back to your bunks. All of you.

Slowly, the group starts to disperse. Chana is shaking.

CHANA
Micha, what is happening?

MICHA
Shh. Chana, its ok.

CHANA
There's nothing ok about this.

The SS Guards keep their eyes lazer-focused on the group.

MICHA
Chana, we have to go.

He grabs her by the shoulders and leads her back the way they came.

EXT. - WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

Micha and Chana slowly walk back to Chana's barracks. Neither one has much to say, although they can't resist the urge to try.

CHANA
I don't understand...

MICHA
What's to understand?

CHANA
Why would he...?

MICHA
Hang his wife and child?

Chana slaps Micha on the shoulder.

CHANA
Have a little sympathy, for God's sake.

MICHA
Maybe he was doing them a favor...

CHANA
Don't you dare talk like that.

MICHA
No, please don't misunderstand. I'm trying to wrap my head around it just as much as you.

Chana looks at him expectantly...waiting...

MICHA (CONT'D)
 Maybe he thought he was doing them
 a favor by providing a mercy...

CHANA
 But we're supposed to protect human
 life at all costs.

Micha takes a moment to consider Chana's point.

MICHA
 That's the thing. Protecting it
 from what?

Micha's answer resonates with Chana, and for the first time, the gravity of their situation settles in. Chana cries. Micha does his best to console her, but at this point, he doesn't know how.

The two continue walking without saying another word.

INT. - OPPENHEIMER WESTERBORK BARRACKS - DAY

The Oppenheimer's barracks is just as crowded as the Leviet's. It hasn't rained since the group arrived, but there are still numerous standing pools of water to avoid.

In the corner, Mrs. Oppenheimer attends to the sores that have appeared on Professor Oppenheimer's feet. Professor Oppenheimer is nearly catatonic, his hair disheveled. He seems to be giving himself a history lesson.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
 (to himself)
 Cause and effect...Germans lose the
 Great War...lose their
 identity...it makes so much
 sense...it's so clear, don't you
 see it?

Mrs. Oppenheimer pays no mind to the Professor. Chana, on the other hand, anxiously awaits what the Professor will say next.

MICHA
 Professor, what are you talking
 about?

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
 Find an enemy. A common cause.
 Instill fear. Hate.
 (MORE)

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER (CONT'D)

Make everyone see it. So they can't see anything else anymore. No one can see anything anymore.

(yelling now, to no one in particular)

Don't you see it!? It makes so much sense...

(quiet again)

So much sense...

MICHA

Professor...

Mrs. Oppenheimer grabs Micha's arm. Micha is taken aback, his eyes wide, but quickly understands.

MICHA (CONT'D)

(to Chana)

I have to get back to Momma.

CHANA

Go. We'll be ok.

Micha starts for the exit but stops abruptly.

MICHA

You know that place we've passed, that small alleyway between the barracks? Meet me there tonight after everyone is sleeping.

Chana sits next to her father and wraps her arms around his bicep.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Will you?

CHANA

Its not safe.

MICHA

Please. Meet me.

CHANA

I don't know.

MICHA

Its safe. We're not like him. They have no reason to hate us.

CHANA

Ok, Micha. Ok.

MICHA

(stopping)

Mrs. Oppenheimer, there has to be something I can do to help.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER

Oh, Micha. You're doing more than anyone could ever ask.

MICHA

Please let me know if you need anything. I'm worried about the Professor.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER

So am I, Micha. So am I.

Micha steps over and kisses Chana on the forehead. Mrs. Oppenheimer watches out of the corner of her eye, and as she continues to tend to the Professor's sores, a small smile sneaks out from the corner of her mouth.

EXT. - WESTERBORK BARRACKS - NIGHT

A quiet night. All sound is dampened by heavy snowflakes that lazily drift in the air. They land on the now damp path and dissolve like memories.

A pair of SS GUARDS walk past. They stop their gregarious talk and look at Micha.

Micha looks straight down to the dirt and stands still until they pass.

As their voices fade, he looks up. He weaves his way through the barracks to the point he and Chana agreed to meet at, but he cannot see anyone in the darkness.

For a moment, panic washes over him in a way he's never felt before. The unpredictable doubt that Westerbork has instilled in him is beginning to shake his resolve.

After a moment, a blurry shadow appears from behind one of the barracks. Micha squints.

Chana steps out of the shadow and into the light. Both freeze for a second.

CHANA

Micha...

MICHA

Chana.

Micha is hesitant, stunned, happy to have just a moment they can share under the clear, starless night.

CHANA

Oh, Micha.

She runs to him and wraps her arms around his waist. Slowly, he wraps his arms around her shoulders. Snowflakes land on their shoulders and melt.

CHANA (CONT'D)

I have something to--

MICHA

I love you.

CHANA

I--

MICHA

You are the only bright spot in this.

CHANA

(breathing a sigh of relief)

I love you too, Micha.

MICHA

I have always loved you, Chana.

SS Guard's VOICES are heard nearby.

CHANA

I don't want to lose you. I'm scared my father is already gone.

Micha puts his hand on her cheeks and kisses her, like he's never kissed her before, like he knows he never will again.

MICHA

You won't. I will always be here for you.

CHANA

What happens when we get transferee?

Micha has done his best to not think about the inevitable. He looks up to the black sky.

MICHA

When all of this is over, when the world we knew returns to normal, I will find you. I will love you then as I do now. And we will grow old together.

Chana steps back. Micha instinctively grasps her.

MICHA (CONT'D)

We will have a life. Children. We will grow old together. We will forget about all this. It will always be us, you and me.

CHANA

Promise me?

MICHA

Of course I promise.
(looking around)
We should go. We'll meet in the morning.

Chana kisses Micha one last time.

INT. - LEVIET WESTERBORK BARRACKS - NIGHT

The long night continues on when Micha returns to the barracks. Everyone is already asleep. He quietly climbs into his bunk, takes off his boots.

As he lays down he notices his mother has packed all her things into a bag.

Tipping his head over the edge, he peers at her through the darkness. She quietly sobs, shaking in her bed.

MICHA

Momma?

MRS. LEVIET

Where have you been?

MICHA

I went to go see Chana. The professor isn't doing so well.

Mrs. Leviet continues to cry, harder now.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Momma, what's the matter?

MRS. LEVIET
Their name...its on the list.

MICHA
What? When? Where?

MRS. LEVIET
They're on the list, Micha.

Micha is at a loss for words.

MRS. LEVIET (CONT'D)
So are we.

Micha jumps off the bunk, but for the first time, doesn't know how to offer his mother comfort.

EXT. - WESTERBORK GATE - DAWN

The early morning sun is barely visible behind the clouds blanketing the sky. Chana is pushed to the ground in a horde of bodies. People are WAILING and CRYING. It is pandemonium; families that have been separated are trying to get back together. A young GIRL holds a doll, SHRIEKING, Micha reaches down and picks Chana up.

MICHA
Chana! Get up, hurry.

Micha drags Chana to her feet by the crook of her elbow.

MICHA (CONT'D)
Are you ok?

CHANA
I think so.

With one arm on her he reaches back and grabs hold of his mother's hand. Micha, his mother, Chana, and her parents are in a mass of people being ushered toward the same train cars from which they came.

An old, frail man falls to his knees, unable to continue. An SS Gaurd shouts in his face. The man pleads, tries to stand, but cannot. The SS Guard grabs his beard under his chin and YANKS him toward the cattle car. A part of his beard rips off in the SS Guard's hand and small pellets of blood appear where the hair used to be like seeping bits of water. The SS Guard grabs another handful and drags him through the mud, picks him up beneath his crotch, and tosses him into the car.

When the Oppenheimer's and Leviet's reach the car, Micha climbs on first. All around, men are pulling up their wives. Mothers are passing children up to their fathers.

Micha, with little help from Professor Oppenheimer who sits looking out at the havoc below, begins dragging Chana, Mrs. Leviet, and Mrs. Oppenheimer onto the train.

INT. - TEL AVIV HOSPITAL - DAY

Micha lays in his hospital bed, drifting in and out of consciousness. A nurse checks his vitals. Across the room, the TV blares.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.C.)

The attack appears to be centralized at three different locations around downtown Tel Aviv's bus terminal.

The television shows the aftermath of the attack on the bus terminal Micha was involved in from a shaky helicopter.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

No word yet as to who is behind these heinous attacks. We'll update you as soon as additional reports come in.

(beat)

In Europe, a train traveling through the French countryside derailed this morning. It appears that no injuries or deaths have been reported, although the search is still underway.

Micha tosses and turns. The nurse dabs his head.

MICHA

Should've been us..

NURSE

Mr. Leviet, please try to relax.

Micha slides down the bed, deeper beneath the sheet.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - DAWN

Just as the Oppenheimer's and the Leviet's climb into the cattle car, an SS Guard begins to close the iron door.

After a few moments of tugging, and with some help of a couple additional SS Guards, the door slams shut. Some people WAIL, others SOB and CRY. The blackness that falls over the steel car obscures defeated faces. Single beams of rectangular light slip through the small air holes lining the top of the wall.

A shrill HISSING signifies that the train is about to depart.

There are too many people crammed together, like sardines. Men, women, children, babies, the elderly, the disabled, all stand or sit together, one pressed against the other, scant luggage sitting behind them, laying in waste. Some hang on to their belongings out of instinct. Others hold on to their loved ones dearly.

Micha and Chana drag their families toward the back corners of the cattle car, away from the door.

CHANA
(holding her father)
Stay close.

The two families hunch over as if the ceilings could fall at any minute.

Mrs. Oppenheimer gasps when she sees the two buckets in the corner near where they are huddling. One is filled with water. The other with urine and feces. In the dark, its nearly impossible to tell which is which.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
They expect us to use that?

MICHA
Wait a minute.

Micha, in a panic, pushes his way to the air holes and looks out, looking for any way out. Barbed wire, meant to prevent anyone from escaping, obscures his view. Outside, more people are thrown around waiting for the next car to come and rescue them.

Micha hurries back to the group.

MICHA (CONT'D)
Don't worry about that, Mrs.
Oppenheimer. Everything will be ok.

Micha turns everyone away from the makeshift latrine and blocks it behind his back.

Micha and Chana slowly herd them forward, like cattle, away from the buckets.

Suddenly, the train lurches forward with a HISS of steam.

The Leviet's and Oppenheimer's brace themselves against each other. Some in the car fall to the floor.

Once the train starts moving at a steady pace, a YOUNG NURSE with soft, light skin starts singing a Dutch melody.

Micha looks around the car. The same fathers that were crying hold their children with conviction. The women who once wailed hang tight to those close to them in silent prayer. In the corner, Professor Oppenheimer watches as if he's seeing the world for the first time.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - LATER

Micha and most of the passengers try to sleep. With each jolt the uneven tracks jar them awake.

Chana puts her hand on Micha's back and soothes him gently.

MICHA

Hey...

Someone passes the water bucket to them. All the women lean in to drink. Micha waves a hand.

MICHA (CONT'D)

I'm ok.

MRS. LEVIET

You need water, Micha.

MICHA

Other people need it more.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER

Chana, dear.

CHANA

(passing her the bucket)
Yes?

Mrs. Oppenheimer's face is twisted.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER

I need to use the other pot.

Immediately, Micha stands and takes off his coat, shivering a bit. Mrs. Oppenheimer begins to voice her objection.

MICHA
 (raising a hand)
 It's fine, Mrs. Oppenheimer.

He holds his coat up like a curtain, separating the pot from the rest of the train as Mrs. Oppenheimer relieves herself.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - A SERIES OF SHOTS

-- The heads of the passengers bob up and down as the train trudges along.

-- Through the air hole, Micha can barely see the countryside as it whisks by under the moonlight.

-- Night turns into day back into night again. Those crammed into the train do their best to make themselves comfortable. Some encroach on others' space. There is a small tussle, but everyone is too weary to fight each other.

-- Sleep is a hard commodity to come by. Most sleep only when the train makes frequent but inconsistent stops. They all are jolted awake when the train begins to move again.

-- The water buckets quickly run dry. The latrine buckets overflow onto the saw-dusted floor. The smell of sweat and vomit and feces lingers in the air. The tenants of the cattle car do their best to cry for water when they hear the SS walking the length of the car when it stops. None pay them any bother.

-- Over the thunderous staccato of the racing wheels, the young nurse begins singing Hebrew songs. Everyone is thankful for the brief reprieve.

EXT. - CATTLE CAR - LATER

The train hurdles down the track through the fog. Overhead, it seems to stretch for miles. The sun peaks over the horizon.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - MORNING

In the far corner across from the Leviet's and Oppenheimer's, an OLD WOMAN, wrapped in soiled blankets MOANS uncontrollably. Her face is deeply wrinkled and her quivering mouth is nearly toothless.

Both families are unnerved by the sound.

MRS. LEVIET
 Micha, what's the matter?

MICHA
 I don't know, Momma.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
 Can we help her?

Professor Oppenheimer has barely moved since they boarded.

PROFESSOR OPPENHEIMER
 (to himself)
 Shut that thing up.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
 (dabbing his forehead)
 Henry, try to relax.

Professor Oppenheimer mumbles something indecipherable.

MRS. LEVIET
 Micha, will you please go see
 what's happening?

Micha, with a small nod, stands and pushes his way through
 the crowded car.

A YOUNG MAN kneels next to the old woman, dabbing her
 forehead with a handkerchief. Micha kneels down next to them.

MICHA
 What's wrong with her?

YOUNG MAN #2
 I don't know. Nothing good.

MICHA
 You don't know this woman?

YOUNG MAN #2
 Not much.

MICHA
 (frustrated)
 Well do you or don't you know her?

YOUNG MAN #2
 We just met. Look at her. What's
 there to know? She's dying. From
 what she said, they took her from
 Joodse Invalid. No family here.
 They must've been separated.

Micha falls back on his butt. Wipes his forehead with his sleeve. Next to him, an ELDERLY FATHER holds his four year old daughter next to his shoulder as she coughs into his chest.

MICHA

I don't understand.

YOUNG MAN #2

My friend, there's nothing to understand. We have to look out for our own, that's all.

Micha understands.

MICHA

What can I do to help?

YOUNG MAN #2

I don't know. Try to make her comfortable.

Micha takes off his coat, rolls it into a ball, and elevates her head. The old woman smacks her dry, chapped lips.

OLD WOMAN

Aharon, Dientje, Bennie, Slomele...

The old woman's head suddenly goes limp, her mouth agape. The young man says a quick prayer under his breath and covers her face with the blanket. Micha is shook, but still cannot cry.

YOUNG MAN #2

(somber)
L'chaim...

MICHA

(looking around)
What's left of it.

Across the cattle car, his mother and the Oppenheimer's are looking at Micha expectantly. Micha shakes his head, but can't bring himself to make the journey across the car just yet. Next to them, the four-year old daughter coughs uncontrollably into the elderly father's chest.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - A SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Two men carefully drag the old woman's body into the corner of the car.

-- The four year old girl continues to cough into her father's shoulder.

Her cough has moved deeper into her chest and comes more frequent. Her ELDERLY MOTHER is beside herself.

-- Night turns into day and back to night again. The concept of time is lost on most. The train stops and begins again moving without rhyme or reason.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - DAY

The train stops yet again. The elderly father holds his four year old daughter close to his chest. She is red and sweating with fever. He stands and holds her up to the air hole.

ELDERLY FATHER
Please, someone. Help. My daughter
is sick.

Outside the SS Guards can be heard laughing, joking.

ELDERLY FATHER (CONT'D)
Anyone. Please help her. She's just
a child. She needs water. We all
need water.

The elderly father's cries for help fall on deaf ears. No help is coming.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - SOMETIME LATER

The stench of the old woman's corpse is nearly corrosive and becoming unbearable. The air is heavy and all those packed in the cattle car squirm.

The elderly father holds his four year old daughter in a cradle in his arms, tapping his fingers on her cheek. She is unresponsive.

ELDERLY FATHER
Sweetie?

ELDERLY MOTHER
Oh God!

ELDERLY FATHER
(tender)
Sweetie, wake up.

The mother sits up and shakes her four year old daughter.

ELDERLY MOTHER
Please, God, no!

The elderly father cradles his four year old daughter in his arms. The elderly mother breaks down, sobbing.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - A SERIES OF SHOTS

-- The elderly mother is inconsolable. During the day, her wails shake everyone to their core. The elderly father stares off into the distance in total defeat.

-- At night, even in sleep, the elderly mother whimpers heart-rending sobs. The elderly father never takes his gaze off a far-distant point across the car.

-- Another mother, surrounded by her four adolescent children, gather around to witness the youngest, a one year old boy, succumb to the heinous conditions of the car. His cries slowly reduce to a squeak until they are no more. Deprived of food, water, and necessary vitamins, he looks like a wrinkled, emaciated dwarf.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - DAY?

Micha and Chana lay on a few salvaged blankets, embraced in each others arms. Beside them, Micha's mother and Chana's parents have found a brief moment to sleep.

CHANA

Micha, what do you think is going to happen?

MICHA

I don't know. I really don't.

CHANA

We'll keep in touch right?

MICHA

As long as I breathe. No matter what it takes.

Micha takes the rare opportunity to embrace her, kiss her.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Let's put our education to work. We can write each other letters. Our own secret code: Dutch, but written in Greek characters.

Chana starts to cry.

CHANA
 (wiping her tears)
 The classics might prove to be
 useful after all, huh?

MICHA
 I hope so.

Micha and Chana cuddle together, waiting for the moment the train will jar them awake.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - A SERIES OF SHOTS

-- More perish on the train ride. One after another, those still living stack the bodies up in the corner of the car.

-- Stops become more frequent. The SS Guards take inventory of the dead and carry them to an undisclosed car toward the back of the train.

-- The soft cries of the passengers in the cattle car are muffled under tightly closed mouths and make-shift masks meant to ward off the stench of departed.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - NIGHT

The young nurse, quiet in the corner, suddenly begins singing the Mourner's Kaddish, her eyes closed in prayer.

YOUNG NURSE
 (in Hebrew)
 May His great Name grow exalted and
 sanctified...

RANDOM VOICES (O.C.)
 (In Hebrew, quiet at
 first)
 Amen

YOUNG NURSE
 ...in the world that He created as
 He willed. May He give reign to His
 kingship in your lifetimes and in
 your days, and in the lifetimes of
 the entire Family of Israel,
 swiftly and soon.

RANDOM VOICES (O.C.)
 (louder now)
 Amen. May His great Name be blessed
 forever and ever.

YOUNG NURSE

May His great name be blessed
 forever and ever. Blessed, praised,
 glorified, exalted, extolled,
 mighty, upraised, and lauded be the
 Name of the Holy One, Blessed is
 He. May there be abundant peace
 from Heaven, and life, upon us and
 upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen.

RANDOM VOICES (O.C.)

(even louder)

Amen.

YOUNG NURSE

He Who makes peace in His heights,
 may He make peace upon us, and upon
 all Israel...

RANDOM VOICES (O.C.)

Amen...

The Leviet's and the Oppenheimers, though these words have no special meaning to them, find solace in this shared moment. Briefly, there is peace amongst the passengers of the train as it barrels onward toward their unknown destination.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE - DAWN

SUPER: AUSCHWITZ, NOVEMBER 1942

Overhead: the train rolls to a smooth, slow stop.

Small, green mountains surround the train station.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - DAWN

Micha stands and works his way to the air hole.

Outside, Micha can see the SS Guards line up like ants along the platform.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE - DAWN

German soldiers line the vast space along the platform in orderly rows. The train lurches forward once again, the SQUEAL of the large brakes is followed by another HISS of the exhaust engine.

Overhead: The cattle car doors are opened one by one, down the line, and scores of Jewish prisoners pour out of the car like grain.

INT. - CATTLE CAR - DAWN

Micha scrambles to the back of the car.

MICHA

Mamma, Chana! We're stopping.

The cattle car door RATTLES open and SS Guards begin dragging the tired, weary, and sick out of the car.

The rest follow.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE - DAWN

On the platform, scores of soldiers direct bewildered Jews, separating them into two groups.

In one group, the sick, elderly--those deemed unfit to work, are pushed to the left toward a set of Lorries. The other group--the young, those still viable to carry out other tasks--are grouped to the right in another line.

Families hug, weeping, as children are ripped from their mother's arms.

MICHA

Professor, where are we?

Professor Oppenheimer's eyes are vacant, staring off in the distance, as he shuffles along with the crowd.

Micha can see the sign of the gate at the entrance of the death camp. It reads: ARBEIT MACHT FREI.

SUPER: WORK SETS YOU FREE.

A TALL OFFICER with a dangling, lit cigarette grabs Micha and Chana's shoulders.

TALL OFFICER

You, arbeitsfähigen. This way.

Next to Micha, a man is holding his naked, two-year-old son tightly in his arms. A PORTLY GUARD is repeating the same words to the man. The two-year-old is crying inconsolably.

The SS Guard pries him from his father's arms. The boy wails louder.

PORTLY GUARD
 Verschließen.
 (shaking the baby now)
 Verschließen!

The portly guard carries the child toward one of the lorries, flips the baby on his head so to hold him by the ankles, and bashes the boy once, twice...three times into the side of the machine.

With each BANG, the boys cries soften, until he is nothing more than a rag doll in the portly guard's hands. The guard drops him to the dirt, and turns his attention to another group of Jews.

The tall officer pushes Micha and Chana away from their parents. In desperation, Micha breaks free and runs to his mother.

MICHA
 Momma!

MRS. LEVIET
 Micha!

Mrs. Leviet embraces her son, as if she knows it will be for the last time.

MRS. LEVIET (CONT'D)
 (brushing his cheek)
 Go, Micha. Go.
 (beat)
 I will see you soon.

Behind, Chana is trying to follow Micha to say goodbye to her parents, but her path is constantly obstructed by the mass of people being herded the other way.

Mrs. Oppenheimer grabs Micha's hands, panic crying in her eyes.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
 Micha, look after Chana.

MICHA
 I will, Mrs. Oppenheimer.

MRS. OPPENHEIMER
 (shaking his hands in her
 own)
 Promise me. Promise me.

Over Mrs. Oppenheimer's shoulder, he can see the Professor shuffling along into the crowd.

MICHA

I will.

Micha kisses Mrs. Oppenheimer on the cheek, and once more embraces his mother.

Suddenly, the tall officer grabs Micha by the collar of his shirt and pulls him backward. Micha falls on the ground. The tall officer holds his rifle in Micha's face.

TALL OFFICER

This way.

(beat)

Unless you want to go with them.

Behind, tears stream down Chana's face as she continues to try to get to them through the crowd -- to say one last goodbye to her family.

Micha solemnly nods as he stands, brushing the dirt off his pants. He quickly makes his way to Chana and grabs her hand.

Chana is a sobbing mess, barely able to stand.

MICHA

I'm sorry, Chana.

Micha pulls her up, grasping her at her waist.

MICHA (CONT'D)

We have to be strong.

Chana sobs.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY - MORNING

SUPER: BLECHHAMMER, JANUARY 1943

The morning is grey. The fog clouds the vast muddy field between the factory and the barracks.

A few dozen inmates walk. Most are quiet. A few smoke cigarettes.

Micha, dressed in the tattered grey clothes all the inmates wear, walks briskly into the loud, steaming warehouse.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY HALL - DAY

Micha is in the main hallway. Behind him doors lead to the refinery. The men stop here to put on their work gloves and aprons.

A few men are huddled together. They notice Micha. They've been watching him for a while.

BENNY

Micha, come over and take a look.

Curious, Micha walks to the center of the huddle.

A short, thick man with hollowed cheeks, called BENNY, holds a few pieces of chocolate, cradled in a dirty handkerchief.

BENNY (CONT'D)

One piece for a pack of cigarettes.
Interested?

MICHA

I don't smoke.

BENNY

No? How long have you been here?

MICHA

Three months.

BENNY

(tapping him on the cheek)
You will soon enough.

MICHA

(gesturing to the
chocolate)
Where'd you get this?

BENNY

Leftovers. Made for the officers.

MICHA

I don't want to get caught with
this. Couldn't it get you in
trouble?

Micha turns from the group toward the rack where he grabbed his apron.

BENNY

(laughing)
The new boy trying to give me
advice. Ha! Well, Hans was the one
who gave it to me. So what do you
say?

Micha pauses with an inquisitive frown.

MICHA

Not worth being sent off. Besides,
I told you I don't smoke.

(beat)

I'm getting to work. You should
too.

The gang of men follow suit, putting on their gloves and donning their aprons.

Benny glares, chuckles to himself, and pockets the chocolates. He taps another man, gestures for a cigarette, which he stashes behind his ear.

Micha is already opening the hallway door to the chaotic, steamy petrol refinery.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER CAMP YARD - DUSK

Workers are walking out the refinery, their 12 hour shift over. The sky is still stuck in a dark, oppressive grey.

Micha buries his hands in his jacket, pushing past groups of people walking the opposite way.

Most of the workers are cold, rubbing their hands together. Guards, warm in their thick coats and hats, scan the huddle.

Micha passes a group of women inmates. They are being escorted by guards.

CHANA (O.C.)

Micha?

Micha looks up and sees her. Same lovely features, just a little more worn. Her face is a little less perky.

Chana steps out of formation toward him. Shocked, Micha stands still.

MICHA

Chana? I didn't think I would see
you again.

Micha extends a hand toward her, but before they can embrace an SS GUARD barks at her in German.

SS GUARD #8

Halt, madchen.

Frozen, Chana and Micha stare into each other's eyes. The SS Guard approaches. Chana turns and moves back in line before he reaches them.

The guard glares at Micha.

SS GUARD #8 (CONT'D)
Move along, Jew.

Micha stands, frozen. The guard steps close to his face.

SS GUARD #8 (CONT'D)
Don't make me repeat myself.

From beyond the near conflict Benny and JOHANNE watch Micha. Johanne is fatter than the other inmates, but tattered nonetheless. Their eyes drift from Micha to the pretty young girl resuming her place in line.

BENNY
(to Johanne)
What do you suppose that is about?

JOHANNE
I don't know.

The two men watch as Micha walks back toward the barracks, his chin tucked to his chest.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER KITCHEN - DAY

Chana carries a large pot of water to an industrial-sized stove.

RUTH, an older but fit woman with taught skin, stands next to the stove chopping vegetables. Chana sets the pot down and Ruth drops the chopped vegetables in the pot.

RUTH
Thank you, dear.

A thin, clean-shaven and well-kept German Officer, HANS, approaches. He has dark hair and deep-set eyes unlike the other German soldiers. Chana turns away.

HANS
Afternoon, Ruth.
(looking at Chana)
Who's this?

Hans leans on the counter next to the women, lighting a cigarette.

RUTH
(attempting to pay no
mind)
Her? She's new.

Ruth pulls off a wedge of cheese wrapped in a cloth and hands it to Hans.

RUTH (CONT'D)

This just came in from France. I was saving it for you.

Hans carefully places the cheese in his mouth, savoring it.

HANS

How new? I know all the beautiful women in this camp.

RUTH

I don't know. She just started working in the kitchen a few weeks ago.

HANS

Does the pretty lady have a name?

Hans pulls a package out of his jacket. Chana frowns, confused, trying to find something to occupy her time. Ruth continues cooking.

HANS (CONT'D)

(eating more cheese)

Well, does she have a name, or should I assume she's nobody?

RUTH

Her name is Chana.

Hans steps toward Chana.

HANS

Hello there, Chana.

Chana looks around the kitchen, trying to find something to command her gaze.

HANS (CONT'D)

I said...hello.

CHANA

(beat)

Hello.

Hans hands Ruth the package. She examines it, then tucks it behind her apron near her waist.

HANS

Well, this conversation has been quite lovely, but I must be off. Same time next week?

RUTH

You know where I'll be.

Hans walks the dirt-stained floor to the kitchen door.

HANS

Oh, Ruth. Do you have someone to clean up here? This floor is filthy?

At the door, Hans takes a moment to look around.

HANS (CONT'D)

(nodding toward Chana)

Perhaps your new help can make better use of her time?

Hans leaves. Chana stands, staring at Ruth. After a moment Ruth turns and offers Chana a cigarette. Chana reluctantly takes it.

CHANA

Are we allowed to smoke here?

RUTH

If you know how to ask, dear, that's not all that is allowed here.

Ruth pulls the package from her waist, revealing a hair-dying treatment.

CHANA

(confused)

But your hair is so dark already. Why do you need that?

Ruth takes a long drag of her cigarette. She blows the smoke out of the side of her lips.

RUTH

Its very important here to look fit and young, my dear.

CHANA

What do you mean?

RUTH

Don't worry, sweetie. This will all be over years before your hair starts to turn grey. But, in the meantime, you may want to be more friendly to some of the guards. They don't all bite.

Chana considers this for a moment. Ruth offers her a light. Chana obliges.

CUT TO:

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER COMMAND OFFICE - MORNING

Hans stands outside the command office. Just above, loud shouting can be heard inside the office. The DOOR GUARD outside is unflinching.

Hans tosses his cigarette into the dirt.

HANS

Who's in there with him?

DOOR GUARD

Sir, its Rudoff Höss.

HANS

From Auschwitz?

The door guard stares straight ahead.

DOOR GUARD

I don't know sir.

Hans pushes past him and steps into the command office.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER COMMAND OFFICE - MORNING

Hans sits in front of two officers he's familiar with, Group Leader LARS, and the commandant of Auschwitz, RUDOFF HÖSS.

LARS

Hans, this is Commandant Höss. He's here to inform me you are to lose a dozen workers to Auschwitz.

HANS

(swallowing)

Yes, sir. I am aware.

(saluting)

(MORE)

HANS (CONT'D)

Commandant, it is an honor and a privilege.

(beat)

Sir, we recently received new workers from Holland. There are many that can suit your needs.

RUDOFF

We have some very specific requests. I'm sure you can find suitable candidates?

Lars hands Hans a piece of paper. Hans scans it, mouth slightly agape.

Hans turns to turns to Rudoff in a bit of a shock.

RUDOFF (CONT'D)

Your neighbors would greatly appreciate you expediting this transfer. Of course, everyone needs a little R&R, don't they?

HANS

Yes, sir.

RUDOFF

How long will it take to gather this list?

HANS

I don't know.

LARS

Give us a few weeks, Commandant.

RUDOFF

Very well.

(beat)

Gentleman.

The commandant tips his hat and exits the room.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY HALL - DAY

The men are in the hallway putting on their gloves and apron.

Micha removes his coat, hangs it up, and finds there are no more gloves.

MICHA

(looking around)

Who's got my gloves?

Benny and Johanne watch nearby.

JOHANNE

I don't see names on any of these.

BENNY

Don't worry, Micha, you can just use this.

Benny tosses Micha a greasy handkerchief. Benny and Johanne chuckle.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY FLOOR - LATER

The factory floor is noisy with the sound of metal and steam.

Micha wheels and empty barrel to the south water valve. He grabs the wheel that controls the pressure and turns.

Steam rushes from the valve and burns Micha's hands. Micha SCREAMS in pain.

A guard blows his whistle. Everyone on the floor stops.

A few workers rush to Micha. He is hunched, clutching his hand in pain. Benny kneels down, taking Micha's injured hand.

BENNY

Let me see...

Hans is striding over from across the room.

Micha reveals his pink, blistering hand. Benny looks up to Hans as he makes his way through the group.

BENNY (CONT'D)

He needs to go to the infirmary.

HANS

(beat)

Where was this man's gloves?

Micha glares at Benny, before wrapping his hands in the dirty rag.

MICHA

Sir, I forgot them. It's not so bad. I can work.

HANS

Stupid boy.

(beat)

No, go to the infirmary.

MICHA
 (nodding)
 Thank you, sir.

HANS
 Don't thank me. Production would be
 better without you here.
 (beat)
 Make no mistake. This is your one
 and only chance. If you can't
 contribute, I'll send you to
 Auschwitz. They will not be so
 lenient.
 (beat)
 Do you understand?

MICHA
 Yes, sir.

Micha gathers his things and hustles out of the room.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER INFIRMARY - DAY

The infirmary is the brightest room in the camp. Bulbs dangle from the lofted ceiling, wires exposed. A dozen beds line the two walls. Most are empty.

Micha sits on the edge of one bed while ABBEY, a Jewish woman in her 30's, attends to his hand.

Abbey dabs Micha's burns with cotton and alcohol. Micha WINCES and groans.

ABBEY
 Almost there.

Abbey dabs the wound one more time, and Micha GROANS again. Abbey reaches for bandaging before wrapping his hand.

MICHA
 Thank you.

Abbey keeps her eyes down.

MICHA (CONT'D)
 How long have you been here?

Abbey continues to treat his wound.

ABBEY
 Nearly a year now, but who's counting?

MICHA

I am. Probably about three months.

ABBEY

(pausing)

Your family came with you?

MICHA

I came here with my mother, and a friend and her family. We were all separated.

ABBEY

Are they all here, in Blechhammer?

MICHA

No, my friend and I were brought here. We got separated from our parents at Auschwitz.

Abbey keeps treating his wound, becoming increasingly somber.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Do you know her? Her name is Chana.

ABBEY

Come see me tomorrow. I'll change your bandage.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER WOMEN'S BARRACKS - EVENING

A group of women, huddled together, walk to their building. Chana is sandwiched in the middle, next to Ruth. No one speaks. A guard escorts them.

Hans is waiting by the entrance to the building. He holds Rudoff's paper in his hands.

Hans makes eye contact with Chana, but she abruptly looks away.

HANS

Stop there, ladies.

The guard walks to Hans, and they share a few silent words. The women watch as the guard points to a few of them.

HANS (CONT'D)

You, you, and you, Chana. Come with me.

Chana looks to the other women. Ruth leans in.

RUTH

Don't worry, honey. Hans is a good soldier. Just do as he says and you'll be fine.

Chana, along with the other girls, follows Hans.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER INFIRMARY - LATER

Hans stands at the entrance of the infirmary, smoking a cigarette, staring at a white standing partition. Shadows of the women move in silhouette on the opposite side.

Behind the partition, the three women stand shoulder to shoulder. Chana stands at one end, her dress hiked up above her knees. Her face is tight with pain.

ABBEY

Ok, dear. That's all. You can put your dress down.

Abbey stands and looks at the girls.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

(to Hans)

We're all finished here, sir.

In a slow, sad line, the three women walk from behind the partition toward Hans.

HANS

Well?

ABBEY

All three still have their chastity.

HANS

(beat)

Very good.

Hans takes a long drag from his cigarette.

HANS (CONT'D)

Ladies, feel free to return to your bunks.

Hans walks out the door, a cloud of smoke circling his head like magic trick. The girls linger for a moment.

CHANA

Come on, girls. Let's go.

Abbey sets down her instruments.

ABBEY

Wait.

(beat)

Your name is Chana?

CHANA

Yes?

ABBEY

I met someone who knows you.

Chana's eyes light up.

CHANA

Micha? He was here?

ABBEY

Yes, just yesterday. He burned his hand. He's returning later today to replace his bandages.

Chana's eyes are like fire.

CHANA

Do you have paper?

ABBEY

For what?

CHANA

I have to get him a message.

ABBEY

I don't think I can do that.

CHANA

Please. I have to let him know I'm ok.

Abbey takes a moment, considering the risk she's about to take. Chana's eyes are glowing -- Abbey hasn't seen a look like that in a long time.

ABBEY

(beat)

One moment.

Abbey turns.

CHANA

And a pencil.

The two other girls demand they hurry.

CHANA (CONT'D)
One moment! Please...

Abbey returns with a pencil and paper, holding them out quickly. Chana's smile spreads across her face.

Chana kneels down and writes on top of the nearest bed. The note is simple, free from the code as they previously discussed. There's little time for that anymore. I LOVE YOU -- C.

Chana stands, folds the note, and hands it to Abbey.

CHANA (CONT'D)
Please give this to him.

Abbey holds the note for a moment.

CHANA (CONT'D)
Please. Promise me.

ABBEY
I will. I promise.

The two women don't move for a moment.

ABBEY (CONT'D)
And if he writes back?

CHANA
Can I come back tomorrow?

ABBEY
(beat)
I'll pass this on to him.
(beat)
But I'd really prefer to not be in the middle of whatever this is.

The two girls brought in with Chana are eager to get back. Very eager.

CHANA
Please...

Abbey consider's Chana's note one more time.

ABBEY
Fine then. Come back tomorrow. Say you're ill with fever.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY HALL - DAY

Snow covers the ground. The Germans crunch through the snow with large boots. The Jewish workers huddle together outside the door for warmth.

Finally, the sound of a large bolt clicks from inside the factory door.

The freezing men file in. Their steps are short. They waddle like penguins.

As Micha nears the door, several other inmates push past him in a hurry.

One man shoulders Micha a bit too hard and he falls into the snow.

Hans rushes over to see what the commotion is. He notices the pitiful, freezing man with the bandaged hand.

HANS

You again. It seems like I always
find you like this.

After a deliberate pause, Hans unexpectedly extends a hand down to Micha.

HANS (CONT'D)

My name is officer Shroeder. Hans
Shroeder.

Micha takes his hand and Hans pulls him to his feet. Hans dusts off Micha's shoulders and inspects his worn jacket.

HANS (CONT'D)

May I offer you some advice?

MICHA

Of course, sir.

HANS

Be very careful with whom you
choose to make a friend, and whom
you choose to make an enemy. Do you
understand?

MICHA

I believe so.

HANS

Good.

(beat)

One more small thing before you go.

(MORE)

HANS (CONT'D)

I understand you arrived here with another Dutch Jew. A striking young woman named--

(beat)

--what was her name?

Micha hesitates, looks at his feet. Hans pokes him hard in the shoulder with his first two fingers.

HANS (CONT'D)

Answer me, boy.

MICHA

(beat)

Chana?

Micha practically gasps as he says her name. Hans' expression changes from subtle mischief to intrigue.

HANS

Precisely. I noticed you two in the yard a few days back. Do you...how do I ask this...have an affection for her?

Micha is frozen, unsure how to respond, so he says nothing.

Hans grabs a cigarette from his pocket, places it slowly between his lips, and lights it.

HANS (CONT'D)

Well then. Curiosity killed the cat, didn't it?

(Hans takes a drag)

You see, I like to know the state of affairs with my stock here on the farm.

(beat)

You understand that, right?

(beat)

It helps me maintain everyone's happiness. Now, mind what I said about friends. There are plenty of wolves in this camp, hiding in plain sight.

Hans turns and leaves Micha standing in the snow.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER INFIRMARY - DAY

Micha sits on the edge of the bed. Abbey stands over him, changing the dressing on his wound.

ABBEY

Don't worry about the men. They will accept you soon enough. You're new, and they are burdened. There's only so much a person can take before they turn on their own.

MICHA

What do you mean?

Abbey takes a moment to think.

ABBEY

It's very easy for a man to project his misfortune on another. Always very easy to blame. Right now, you're that person. But they'll come around. You're not that person to blame.

(beat)

Its Officer Shroeder you need to be wary of.

MICHA

He seems polite enough.

ABBEY

Yes, but he's up to something. Earlier, he brought some girls into see me.

(beat)

One of them knew you.

MICHA

Chana?

ABBEY

Yes, that's her. She left you this.

Abbey hands over the note. Micha opens it and reads it. He lowers his head, running his thumb over the words.

ABBEY (CONT'D)

Be careful with that.

MICHA

No, its true. She loves me, and I love her.

ABBEY

I meant the note. There's no place for love here. I'd destroy it immediately. Nothing good will come if they find you with it.

MICHA

How could I? Its the only thing I have from her anymore.

(beat)

Can you get her a note from me?

ABBEY

No. Leave me out of this. I don't want any trouble.

MICHA

Just one more...

ABBEY

I said no.

Micha turns to leave, but stops.

MICHA

What would you do?

ABBEY

I just told you what I would do. I wouldn't get involved.

MICHA

No. What would you do if the one good thing left in your life was a few hundred meters away and you couldn't even speak to him? What would you do if every where you walk, every where you go, you felt like you were passing a ghost in the night? Would you just walk away if you had the chance to exchange a few words?

Abbey fusses with some medical supplies.

MICHA (CONT'D)

I can tell you what I'd do. I'd risk everything.

(beat)

Please. If not for me, for her.

(beat)

She's all alone here.

Abbey nods, unable to deny Micha of his request.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER YARD - DAY

Hans and Group Leader Lars stroll through the yard. Groups of Jews slog past, heads low toward the mud. Guards stand tall, observing their officers.

Lars is reviewing a piece of paper. In stride, he hands it back to Hans.

LARS

There are more than a dozen names on this list.

HANS

I haven't had them all examined yet. I thought it would be prudent to have a few extras...

LARS

Prudent?

HANS

Yes, in case the commandant does not approve of one selection.

Lars stops in his tracks, looking at Hans now.

LARS

And what sort of message are we giving the commandant if we give him 15 names instead of 12?

HANS

That we--

LARS

That we are not diligent. That we cannot follow orders.

Lars stares for a moment. Hans does not rebut. Lars begins to walk again.

HANS

I will bring you a new list, sir. 12 names.

LARS

And be certain they are all pure. Do not embarrass me.

The two men continue walking through the yard.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

Hans stands in front of a second floor office on the catwalk watching the floor below. The operation is running smoothly. He smiles with pleasure.

He pulls his brass cigarette holder from his pocket. It's empty. A minor disturbance.

From the bottom of the metal stairs Micha calls up.

MICHA

Sir?

Hans doesn't look down but replies.

HANS

What is it, Jew?

MICHA

I would like to get my bandage changed, if you will allow.

HANS

It would seem your friends have succeeded in lowering your productivity.

MICHA

Today will be the last day. I will see to that.

HANS

Very well, then.

Hans turns his attention back to the floor.

HANS (CONT'D)

My young Jew, it would be wise for you to try to fit into this camp.

Micha nods, and starts walking toward the exit.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY HALLWAY - DAY

Micha hangs up his apron, goggles, and gloves in the hallway.

Micha finds a pencil on the top rack where he sets his gloves. Pulling a piece of paper from his pocket, he looks around, then starts writing his note.

Benny and Johanne enter the hallway from the floor.

BENNY

Leaving work early today?

Micha calmly folds the note and puts it in his pocket.

JOHANNE

What's that there?

The two men circle Micha and block the exit. Micha hangs his head. Johanne reaches into Micha's pocket and finds the note. He chuckles, and passes it to Benny.

BENNY

Who's this for?

MICHA

What concern is it of yours?

JOHANNE

You leave work early. Now we're forced to take on your duties. So yes, it is our concern.

BENNY

Look, kid. This here...
(holding the note)
This kind of thing can get you in big trouble. This is the kind of thing that gets you sent to Auschwitz. Where there are no cute Dutch girls to consort with.

MICHA

How do you know about--

JOHANNE

We're always watching. Just like the SS.

(beat)

We see the way you look at her.

BENNY

We're just looking out for you. Helping you stay out of trouble.

JOHANNE

(holding the note)

But Benny, this kind of note. We could get in trouble for not handing it over.

Micha breathes deeply, realizing this is just a negotiation.

MICHA
 Alright. What do you want?

BENNY
 That's a good boy.

Johanne puts the note back into Micha's pocket.

JOHANNE
 The infirmary. They have some goods we want. You're headed there anyway, right?

MICHA
 I thought you wanted to keep me out of trouble?

BENNY
 Don't worry so much, Micha.

Micha follows suit, determined to see Chana again.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER KITCHEN - DAY

Ruth stirs a pot of boiling water.

RUTH
 Chana, come here.

Chana stops sweeping and walks to Ruth.

RUTH (CONT'D)
 Taste this. Its missing--

CHANA
 Garlic?

RUTH
 Hmm, no. The guards don't like garlic.

CHANA
 More salt, then?

RUTH
 Did you ever cook with your mother at home?

CHANA
 No. Sometimes I helped bake cookies.

HANS (O.C.)
I bet you made delightful cookies,
pretty girl.

Ruth and Chana are startled by Hans' sudden appearance. He strides over and points to the pot. As Ruth offers up a spoon full of soup. Hans grabs it from her.

HANS (CONT'D)
(taking a sip)
Mmm. Needs more salt.

Ruth motions to Chana. Chana walks to the rack of seasoning in the back of the kitchen.

HANS (CONT'D)
Ruth, I need a few more names. Some
of the last group didn't pass the
examination.

From the back of the kitchen Chana watches Ruth and Hans in deep conversation. They seem quite friendly. At one point, they turn to Chana. She quickly pulls down the salt and starts walking back.

RUTH
I'll have more names tomorrow.

HANS
See that you do.

Hans notices Chana approaching. He reaches in his coat pocket for a cigarette case, then holds an empty case into the air.

Ruth frowns. She pulls out a case of her own, takes a few cigarettes, and hands them to Hans.

Hans holds his stare.

Ruth gives in and hands him her entire case, keeping only two for herself.

Hans places a cigarette in between his lips.

HANS (CONT'D)
That's a good Jew.

Hans exits. Ruth puts a cigarette in her mouth, and hands the last one to Chana.

CHANA
I don't smoke, Ruth.

RUTH
 (laughing)
 Neither did I.
 (beat)
 Lie to me all you want. But, do me
 a favor, don't lie to yourself.

The two women sit and share a cigarette as the night drags on.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER INFIRMARY - DAY

Micha waits on the bed alone. His bandages sit on the bed next to him. He peers around. Abbey is with a patient in the back.

Calmly, he strolls to the medicine cabinet.

Micha eyes the bottles labeled MORPHINE. He grabs all he can handle. Then he snags the rubbing alcohol and the cotton balls.

ABBEY
 What are you doing?

Micha holds up the alcohol.

MICHA
 Cleaning the wound.

ABBEY
 Trying to take my job, are you?

MICHA
 I wouldn't dare.

ABBEY
 Sit back down then. I'm ready for
 you.

Abbey guides Micha down onto the bed. She examines the clean bandages.

ABBEY (CONT'D)
 I think your hand has healed quite
 nicely.

MICHA
 Thanks to you. You're quite the
 expert.

ABBEY
 Micha?

MICHA

Yes?

ABBEY

Why are you really here?

Micha hangs his head a moment, digging in his shirt pocket.

MICHA

I hoped you could pass this
along...

Micha pulls out another note.

MICHA (CONT'D)

This will be the last one, I
promise.

Abbey cocks her head, side-eyeing Micha, before she tucks the note into her shirt.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER FENCE - NIGHT

Behind most of the buildings, near the edge of the wood, is a long, tall fence. Micha waits in a dark area.

He sits with his back against the chain-link fence, breathing into his hands for warmth.

He stares to his left for a long time, then, switches to his right. There's nothing to see but barracks and stars.

Finally, Micha hears a CRUNCH in the snow.

Around the corner, Micha sees nothing. Eventually, Chana appears from the dark, bundled in a blanket.

CHANA

Micha?

MICHA

You came!

Micha runs to her.

CHANA

What are we doing out here?

MICHA

I can't believe you came.

(beat)

I'm glad you got my note. I had to
see you.

A spotlight rolls overhead, just barely missing them.

Micha grabs her hand and takes her closer to the fence.

MICHA (CONT'D)

This place is safe. No one comes here, trust me.

CHANA

Are you going to escape?

MICHA

I don't know. In this cold, in the dark. Who knows how far we would get.

CHANA

We?

MICHA

I'm not going anywhere without you.

CHANA

I can't, Micha. Its too dangerous.

Micha leans back against the fence.

MICHA

(looking at the stars)

We should have ran when we had the chance.

CHANA

Micha, there's something going on at this camp.

MICHA

Besides what?...

CHANA

With Hans. He's sending girls to the nurse to be examined.

(beat)

They examined me.

MICHA

For what?

Chana leans into Micha. She rests her head on his chest.

CHANA

I don't know. I'm scared.

MICHA
Can you meet me back here tomorrow?

CHANA
I can try.

MICHA
Please.

CHANA
I will.

Chana nestles herself deeper in Micha's arms. Sleep is nearly in her grasp.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER MEN'S BARRACKS - MORNING

The barracks are mostly empty aside from some wooden bunks. Some have make-shift mattresses, some just have blankets, and a few are empty.

The shirtless men are gaunt.

Micha is already dressed. He approaches Benny and Johanne. They are facing each other on their respective bunks putting on their boots.

BENNY
Morning, Micha. How's the hand?

Micha puts a bundle on Benny's bed. The metal morphine squibs clank inside.

Benny lifts the dirty napkin and smiles.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Well done.

JOHANNE
I wouldn't have taken you to be so resourceful.

Johanne removes a floorboard under his boot. Benny stashes the morphine with the other items they've scavenged.

Benny hands one squib to Johanne.

MICHA
I've heard you should be careful with those...with how much you take.

Johanne glances at Micha.

JOHANNE

Who do you think these are for?

Johanne walks over to an old Jew a few bunks away, a man still shirtless, barely able to stand.

Johanne sits next to him. He carefully injects the man with the medicine. After a moment, he carries on to the next old man.

MICHA

I'm sorry. I thought those were for you...

BENNY

These are only for the ones who need it to stay productive. Do you understand?

Benny leans in close to Micha.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Do you understand?

(beat)

This stash keeps people from Auschwitz.

Micha nods.

MICHA

Yes, I understand.

BENNY

Good boy. And thank you. You saved some of these mens' lives today. Johanne and I can make what you've brought last for a few weeks.

MICHA

Benny...?

BENNY

Yes?

MICHA

There's something I need.

Benny nods in anticipation.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Chana--

BENNY

Your girl?

MICHA

She says they are examining the women for something. She's scared.

BENNY

Johanne and I will look into it.

Johanne stops what he is doing, looks over his shoulder, and nods to Micha.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

A steam whistle screams. Hans looks at his watch. It's noon. He shouts.

HANS

Lunch!

Hans turns to go into his office when he hears footsteps on the metal staircase. An SS Guard is walking up, followed by Benny and Johanne.

INT. - HANS' OFFICE - DAY

Hans takes his cigarette case out of his pocket, sits down at his metal desk. Benny and Johanne sit down opposite Hans.

Hans offers a cigarette to Benny. He takes it.

Hans pulls out another cigarette and motions toward Johanne, who declines. Hans fires it up for himself.

Benny is anxious to speak but Hans lets the moment linger. After a few puffs, he waves to guard out of the room.

HANS

Tell me, why are we here?

BENNY

Well, sir. We heard you were searching for something in camp, and, well, we thought we could help. If, of course, you need help.

HANS

And what is it I'm searching for?

JOHANNE

We don't know.

HANS

You don't, but--

JOHANNE

We heard...

Benny frowns at Johanne. Johanne, realizing he cut off an officer, hangs his head. Hans stands and paces.

HANS

Help me understand. You two heard I've been searching for something, but you don't know what it is. And you figured, what the hell, we'll go see if an officer needs our help. The help of two Jews?

BENNY

Sir, it's--

HANS

Am I understanding this situation?

BENNY

Yes, sir. But please, let me explain.

Hans sits back down.

HANS

I'm listening.

BENNY

You see, Johanne and I, we look out for the camp.

HANS

Oh you do? And all this time I thought it was my job.

BENNY

It is, sir, of course. What I mean is, we try and keep everyone safe, in line, so everything goes smooth. So no one gets hurt.

Hans walks around the desk behind the two men. Benny and Johanne continue to look straight ahead, while Hans looks out over the factory.

BENNY (CONT'D)

If we see an opportunity to help, we take it.

HANS

That's quite noble of you. And, may I ask, what would you like in exchange for your kindness?

BENNY

Nothing, sir. Just good will.

Hans considers this for a moment.

HANS

Good will it shall be, then. As it turns out, there is a delicate matter at hand. It requires someone with discretion. Do you people have that?

BENNY

Yes sir, we do.

HANS

I suppose we'll see.

Hans takes Benny's cigarette, which hasn't been ashed in some time, and snubs it out.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER FENCE - NIGHT

The moon is dark beneath cloud cover. Under the cover of night, Micha walks to length of the fence.

He pulls on it, checking for holes, anything large enough to slip through. He runs his hand along the ground checking for places to squeeze under.

Above, the clouds break, illuminating the vast field beyond the fence. Micha can see nothing but freedom in the distance. He cranes his head, examining the barbed wire.

Micha smiles.

MICHA

(hushed)

Yes!

Optimistic, he turns back toward the barracks.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER OFFICE - DAY

Soldiers carry unopened crates into the office. Lars sits calmly in a chair behind his desk with a piece of paper in his hand. Hans stands in the corner, examining a volume from the bookshelf.

LARS

In the corner is fine.

Lars examines the list.

LARS (CONT'D)

And you're sure of the purity of these girls?

HANS

The nurse in the infirmary examined them all, with the exception of the last three.

Hans puts the volume back and picks out another one.

LARS

Why not the last three?

HANS

They were just added today. I am assured of their virtue.

LARS

By whom?

HANS

Benny.

LARS

A Jew?

HANS

Yes, but a resourceful man. A smart man, who knows his place here. One that knows what it takes to survive.

LARS

He's still a Jew. Perhaps he wants to embarrass us.

Hans puts the volume away and walks to the front of the desk. Another guard brings in a crate.

HANS

Guard. Let me see the wares.

The guard looks to Lars, who nods. He opens the crate. It's full of liquor bottles.

Hans pulls a bottle out and sets it on the desk. The guard stacks the crate on top of the others and leaves.

HANS (CONT'D)
For your party?

Lars nods.

HANS (CONT'D)
I trust this Jew. He's vermin like the rest of them, but he's not stupid. He knows what will happen if he crosses us. I am sure of the list's quality.

LARS
It better be.
(beat)
Go ahead, take that.

HANS
Thank you, sir.

LARS
It's not for you. It's for the men on the outer fence. Let them have a drink, so they know their commander is kind.

Hans, disappointed, nods and takes the bottle.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER FENCE - NIGHT

Chana walks the fence, and sees Micha there pacing. He has a package in his hand.

CHANA
Micha? What's wrong?

MICHA
Come on. We don't have much time.

CHANA
What do you mean?

MICHA
We have to run. Tonight. Now.

CHANA
But what if we're--

MICHA

You have to trust me.

Micha holds out his hand.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Come on.

Chana looks around. She is petrified.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Chana! We have to go.

Chana takes Micha's hand.

MICHA (CONT'D)

This is the only way to keep you safe.

Micha stops and turns to his package, pulls out a blanket, and then slings the sack over his shoulder.

MICHA (CONT'D)

We will climb, quickly. I'll cover the wire at the top. We won't have much time. Do you think you can do it?

CHANA

Micha! I don't know. You're scaring me.

Micha drops the sack and grabs Chana's face with both hands.

MICHA

You have to trust me. You will be fine. Just follow me, and do as I say, ok? Don't hesitate.

(beat)

We have to go now.

The fence is nearly twice Micha's height. Still, he scales the fence and lays the blanket over the wire. Chana struggles behind him. Micha takes her hand and drags her over the wire.

INT. - HANS' QUARTERS - NIGHT

The complete blackness of Hans' quarters is broken when the door slightly opens. Outside, the THUD of Hans falling to the floor permeates the room as the door slowly swings open.

Eventually, Hans stumbles into his quarters, clutching the bottle of liquor he took from Lars' office. His uniform is disheveled and his tie is loose.

Hans feels around for the light switch. After a moment, he finds it, and the light flickers on. The bottle is nearly empty, and Hans can barely stand.

Hans stumbles in, wobbles into the wall and catches himself. He eyes the bed, and takes a few labored paces before throwing himself on his mattress. He takes another swig from the bottle before haphazardly setting it on the table next to his bed. The bottle teeters and falls on the floor.

Hans covers his face with his forearm in an attempt to block out the light. He tosses and turns, trying get comfortable, burying his head under a pillow.

Soon, Hans is defeated, and eyes the light switch from across the room.

Hans unholsters his gun and, closing one eye, aims for the light.

He fires one shot, missing. The slug embeds itself in the ceiling. He fires a second shot and misses again.

HANS

God damnit.

Hans sighs and reaches to the table for the bottle, unaware it fell to the floor. He slaps his hand around looking for it. Soon, he sees it and rolls out of bed with another THUD and picks it up. He takes a swig.

Liquor drips down Hans' face. He finds his gun on the floor, takes aim, and fires another shot at the light bulb.

The room goes black.

EXT. - FOREST - NIGHT

Micha and Chana walk through the quiet, dark forest. Moonlight illuminates their path. The trees are so tall that the first branches are far above their heads. No other living thing can be seen in the dark.

CHANA

Micha...?

MICHA

Yes?

CHANA

Will you tell me why we had to run?

MICHA

Hans is sending away girls.

CHANA

Why?

MICHA

I think for the SS officers. Only pure girls. There's only so many in the camp.

The two walk in silence for a moment.

CHANA

It's pretty out, tonight.

MICHA

We're lucky. The moon is on our side.

Micha looks up and points to the moon overhead. He pauses and waits for Chana to catch up to him.

Silhouetted by the soft glow and framed by the trees, they share a quiet kiss.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Come on. We have until morning to get as far away from this place as we can.

Chana takes his hand and follows him further into the forest.

EXT. - FOREST - LATER

Micha and Chana are walking side by side when Chana sees it.

Ahead the tree line breaks and another tall fence blocks their path. Wooden, and taller than the one before. There's no chance they can scale it.

CHANA

No.

Chana pushes past Micha and runs to the fence.

MICHA

Chana, don't.

Micha runs after her.

CHANA

No. No no no no. No!

Chana is pounding her fist on the fence. Micha rushes up behind her and grabs her by the waist, pulling her to the ground. She doesn't see the watch tower in the distance.

MICHA

(finger to his lips)

Shh...

Micha points toward the tower.

CHANA

What's this?

MICHA

We're forsaken.

Micha rolls onto his back and stares toward the sky.

CHANA

(crying now)

There's no way out. We're trapped.

The ruckus of drunk Germans can be heard in the distance.

MICHA

Should we go back? Before the commander's party ends? No one will know we were gone.

CHANA

Party? What party?

MICHA

The commander is having a party.

CHANA

How do you know this?

MICHA

I made some friends.

(beat)

Finally...

Micha sits up to leave. Chana grabs his hand.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Chana?

Chana sits up and looks for a moment at Micha. His face is much thinner than it once was, but still the same face she remembers. She burst into uncontrollable tears.

CHANA

I don't want to die, Micha. Not here.

Micha turns to her.

MICHA

Listen to me. You aren't going to die. We are going to make it out of here. We're going to get married. We're going to have a family. We're going to take them to our beach and they're going to make sand castles, just like you did when you were a girl.

Chana is taken back.

CHANA

How do you know about that?

MICHA

I saw a picture of you in your father's study.

(beat)

I see you, always.

Chana, snorts, somewhere between crying and faint laughter. Facing Micha, she unbuttons her blouse. Sitting in the cold, exposed, she reaches out and kisses him.

Clouds part and the full moon appears behind the dark, tall trees.

Micha leans into her, caressing her head. He kisses her on the neck, shoulder, breast. The two lay down in the snow. Gently, they make love.

At first, Chana winces in pain. Micha stops.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Are you ok?

CHANA

I'm fine.

Micha pulls the blanket over their head, and for a moment, they're alone again, without a care in the world.

After, Micha and Chana lay side by side, staring at the stars. Micha lays a soft hand on her leg.

MICHA
Are you ok, Chana?

Chana turns her head and smiles -- really smiles -- for the first time in a long time.

CHANA
I've never been happier.

Micha leans over and kisses her cheek before falling back with a SIGH of content.

EXT. - FOREST - LATER

The German's singing in the distance is sloppier -- slurred. They are getting drunker.

Chana rests her head on Micha's chest. He strokes her cheek. Kisses her forehead.

CHANA
Thank God he sent you to me now.

Micha SIGHS, strokes her hair.

MICHA
There is no God here, Chana.

Dogs bark in the distance. Micha jumps to his feet, dragging Chana with him.

MICHA (CONT'D)
We have to go back. Quickly.

Chana is shaking.

CHANA
Micha...
(beat)
This is it for us...

MICHA
We're still in the camp. We weren't trying to escape. Remember that. Stay calm. Everything will be alright.

The dogs' barking gets louder. Micha looks back. Guards are running, shouting.

As the dogs and the guards get closer, Micha grabs Chana's hand and starts to run.

It's not long before he pushes Chana ahead and stops to fend off the dogs.

SS GUARD #9

Stop, Jew!

Micha and Chana drop to the ground. Chana closes her eyes, clasping her hands together.

More guards pile in and pin them to the ground.

The guards press their faces into the snow. Micha looks to Chana, and sees nothing but unadulterated fear.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER OFFICE - NIGHT

Micha and Chana sit in chairs with their hands bound behind their back, faces dirty.

Hans sits in the corner of the office, his shirt unbuttoned, clearly still drunk. He smokes a cigarette.

Lars stumbles into the room, slightly disheveled, but still somewhat presentable.

HANS

How's the party?

LARS

It would be better if I were still there.

Lars slightly slurs his words as he slumps down into his chair.

LARS (CONT'D)

Now. Can someone please tell me...

Lars lights a cigarette.

LARS (CONT'D)

What the FUCK happened with these two tonight?

Lars' eyes are heavy and he looks as if he's ready to fall asleep at any moment. Hans takes another drag of his cigarette and motions to Micha.

MICHA

Sir, we just wanted to see each other. We weren't trying to run.

LARS
Shut your mouth! I wasn't talking
to you...

Lars sways and closes one eye to focus. He fumbles with his
cigarette.

LARS (CONT'D)
Yes, go on. Tell me.

MICHA
Sir...we like it here. We just want
to be productive. Be part of the
greater effort.

Chana keeps her head down. Hans can't take his eyes off her.
Micha looks from Lars to Hans. Hans takes another smoke out
of his pocket and lights it with the cigarette he was
smoking, all the while staring at Chana. Suddenly, he breaks
his gaze and turns his attention to Micha.

MICHA (CONT'D)
Back home, she was to be my wife.
We just wanted to see each other.
That's all. I swear.

LARS
Yes, yes. That's all. For now.

Lars struggles to stand. He careens to the side and catches
himself on Hans' shoulders. He gathers himself momentarily,
and begins aggressively rubbing Hans' shoulders before
slapping him on the cheek. Lars stumbles toward the door.

LARS (CONT'D)
Hans, we'll discuss this tomorrow.

Lars opens the door to leave.

HANS
Sergeant!

The SERGEANT, a young man of only 16, enters.

SERGEANT
Sir?

HANS
See this man to his barracks.

MICHA
Sir, what about--

HANS
Don't speak to me, Jew.

Chana lifts her head to meet Micha's eyes as he is led from the office.

After Micha is gone, Hans stands and walks to the door, closing it.

He stumbles back to Chana and brushes her hair away from her neck. He leans in close.

HANS (CONT'D)
(whispering)
I don't know what it is about
you...

Chana pulls away. Hans pecks her cheek with a brisk kiss.

HANS (CONT'D)
But I do know.
(beat)
You're going to be trouble for me.

Hans snubs out his cigarette and leaves Chana in the room alone.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER MEN'S BARRACKS - NIGHT

Benny wakes to Johanne pushing his shoulder. Silently, they watch as Micha walks, head low and utterly defeated, to his bunk.

JOHANNE
(whispering)
Look who it is.

BENNY
How late is it?

JOHANNE
It must be near sunrise.

Micha, in his bunk now, weeps.

ANOTHER PRISONER (O.C.)
Would you please. I'm trying to
sleep.

BENNY
(shouting)
Leave the kid alone.

Johanne is surprised.

Benny and Johanne try to go back to sleep as they listen to Micha's soft sobs.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER CAMP YARD - DAY

The prisoners shuffle slowly in the morning light, warming themselves by rubbing their shoulders or cupping their hands.

As they pass the women's barracks, Micha looks for any sign of Chana. There's no sign of her. He lurches over, almost sick.

Johanne and Benny rush to his side and pick him up by the arms.

BENNY
Come on. Get up.

Micha is a crumbled mess.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Get up, damnit.

MICHA
I can't...

BENNY
You have to. Do you want to die?

Johanne and Benny force Micha to his feet. Holding him up under his arms, they march along beside the other men.

Hans notices them as he crosses their path. His anger flares.

HANS
What's wrong with him now? Is he too tired to work?

JOHANNE
No, sir. Just a cramp in his foot.

BENNY
He will be fine.

HANS
I hope you're right, for both your sakes. I'm getting tired of seeing his face around here.

Hans keeps a close eye as the three men march along.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER OFFICE - DAY

Hans sits in Lars' office, waiting. He checks his pocket watch.

Lars enters, holding coffee.

LARS
Jesus, close the blinds.

Hans obeys. Lars circles around his desk.

LARS (CONT'D)
You're here early.

HANS
Sir, I think we should discuss what happened last night.

LARS
Those two Jews.

HANS
Yes.

Lars sits down in his chair.

LARS
You think the boy was lying?

Hans walks back around the desk, back into his seat. Lars sips coffee.

HANS
She's not a virgin anymore.

LARS
You're certain? Her and that boy?

HANS
I am.

LARS
How do you know?

HANS
Call it intuition.
(beat)
When have I ever let you down?

Lars thinks for a moment, lighting a cigarette.

LARS

I suppose there's a first time for everything.

(beat)

What are you going to do about it?

HANS

Well, sir--

Lars snuffs out his cigarette and points his finger directly at Hans.

LARS

I'll tell you what you're going to do. You're going to make this right. You're going to deal with the situation.

(beat)

You will not embarrass me in front of the commandant.

Hans sits in disbelief.

LARS (CONT'D)

Do you understand me?

HANS

I do, sir.

LARS

Very well. Go on.

Hans stands, still slightly stumbling, and leaves the office.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER KITCHEN - DAY

Women line up outside the kitchen for roll call. The snow is gone and the grass is barely sprouting outside the gates. Spring is upon them.

The early morning sun casts a shadow over the women. An SS Guard counts them.

SS GUARD #10

I only count 11. We are one short.

RUTH

Chana isn't feeling well this morning.

The SS Guard nods, and continues with his duties.

INT. - BLECHHAMMER KITCHEN - DAY

Ruth has a new girl assisting her in the kitchen. SARA is small, young, and quiet. The two women stand over a large skillet.

RUTH

Sara, we've been over this. What are the keys to a good stew?

SARA

First sear, then skim.

RUTH

Exactly. See all the fat floating on the top of the broth? You need to remove it.

HANS (O.C.)

I couldn't agree more.

Hans walks behind the two women.

HANS (CONT'D)

Are you going to introduce me to your new cook?

RUTH

She is only filling in while Chana is sick.

HANS

(to Sara)

I'm Hans.

SARA

Hello.

Ruth steps closer to Hans.

RUTH

She's my niece.

Hans looks Ruth in the eye.

HANS

Sara.

Sara stops what she's doing to look at Hans.

HANS (CONT'D)

How old are you?

SARA

15.

Hans smiles to Ruth, and now eyes Sara.

HANS

You'll do, I think.

(beat)

Ruth, why did you say Chana is not at work today?

RUTH

She's feeling ill, sir.

HANS

Perhaps it's time I sent her to the doctor, then.

Hans takes a spoon full of broth and brings it to his lips, tasting it.

HANS (CONT'D)

Needs salt.

Hans brushes his fingers over Sara's hair and leaves.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER PETROL FACTORY - DAY

Johanne, Benny and Micha exit the factory. The men breathe deep the spring air. No one is happy, but they all are a bit lighter now that the cold and the snow have passed.

JOHANNE

Challah, that will be it. That's the first thing I'll have.

BENNY

After all these years, all this shit soup. Challah?

JOHANNE

My mother used to bake it the best.

BENNY

We have lekach back home.

JOHANNE

Oh.

Micha, head down, smiles just a bit at their delight.

BENNY

And you, Micha?

Benny slaps Micha's back. Before he can answer, they see a group of women exit the kitchen. Micha looks up, scanning for Chana.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Micha, perhaps they re-assigned or--

MICHA

A transfer.

BENNY

Have hope. We don't know that.

Benny and Johanne exchange worried glances.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER YARD - DAY

The spring flowers and green grass have all changed to the orange and browns of the fall. The sky is grey.

A whistle blows and all the prisoners line up for a count.

Hans, more decorated, patrols the ranks of men. A YOUNG GUARD approaches.

YOUNG GUARD

Storm leader, the men are accounted for.

HANS

Very good.

YOUNG GUARD

Should we dismiss them to work?

Hans strolls through the ranks, eyeing the prisoners closely.

HANS

One moment.

He stops. Toward the back of the line is Micha. His black beard is thick.

HANS (CONT'D)

Him.

SS Guards shove Jews aside. Micha looks to his friends, Johanne and Benny. Both are also confused as to what's happening.

The SS Guards grab Micha. They struggle for a moment.

MICHA

What are you doing? I've done nothing wrong.

Benny and Johanne exchange glances and, against their better judgement, step in and shove the guards away.

One guard slams the butt of his rifle into Benny's forehead. He crumbles to the ground. The other inmates all distance themselves from the scuffle.

Johanne takes a punch, but remains standing.

The fray stops when Hans fires his pistol into the air.

HANS

Enough. Bring him to me.

The SS Guards drag Micha toward Hans and throw him to the grass in front of his feet.

Hans bends down.

HANS (CONT'D)

Well then, Micha. Are you ready to go?

Hans turns on his heels. The SS Guards scoop him up.

HANS (CONT'D)

Dismiss the rest.

Micha is limp as the guards follow Hans.

EXT. - BLECHHAMMER GATE - CONTINUOUS

The guards drag Micha near the main gate to a waiting SS car. The loud motor thumps in neutral.

A small crowd of prisoners watch in the distance.

Micha is thrown into the back seat. The two SS Guards sit on either side of him.

INT. - CAR - CONTINUOUS

From inside the car, Micha looks out the back window. He sees the prisoners watch him being taken away.

Micha sees Hans speaking with Benny, who is pleading with the officer, before Hans waves his hand and approaches the car. Hans sits in the front with the driver.

The gate opens and the truck motors out.

INT. - CAR - LATER

The car turns at a junction. The road sign directs to AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU.

Micha is defeated. Panic washes over him. His breathing becomes rapid and he squirms in his seat.

Hans eyes Micha in the rearview mirror.

HANS

Calm, boy. It will only be a few minutes longer.

Micha leans forward and vomits between his legs.

EXT. - ROADSIDE - CONTINUOUS

The SS Guards throw Micha to the ground on hard dirt just in front of a tall concrete wall.

The SS Guards stand over him.

Hans strolls up slowly. Micha breathes heavily into the dirt.

Hans bends down, grabs Micha by the hair, and jerks his head up.

HANS

Do you know how much trouble you've made for me, you stupid boy?

Hans points to an observation hole in the wall.

HANS (CONT'D)

Watch.

Slowly, Micha crawls to the wall.

Through the hole, Micha sees a large hall centrally located between several buildings. Along the walls are wooden benches with evenly spaced metal hooks above them for clothes. It looks like a bathing house. Unsure of what he's seeing, Micha turns back to Hans, to gently direct him back toward the wall.

The green space around the hall is peaceful and quiet.

A moment later trucks pull up to the bath house. Frightened people are ushered out. Elderly men, women, and children mutter prayers. Mothers hold their children.

MICHA

What am I doing here?

HANS

Just watch. You can't miss her.

Micha coughs something fierce, gathers himself, and looks back through the observation hole.

He scans the line. Prisoners shuffle past.

Then, Chana appears.

She is shaking, holding her swollen belly. She is clearly pregnant.

MICHA

Chana!

Micha presses his palms on the wall.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER FRONT - CONTINUOUS

Chana is terrified. A SS Guard orders them to remove their clothes. Chana looks around. Everyone's fear is palpable.

The prisoners begin to undress.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER REAR - CONTINUOUS

Behind the bath house, an old Polish ambulance drives up and quickly halts to a stop. Out the back, SS Guards file out, holding canisters of Zyklon B.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER FRONT - CONTINUOUS

Naked, Chana and the rest of the prisoners are pushed into the bath house. She holds her bulging stomach, trembling.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

The group is led down a flight of stairs to an open room. Tile covers the floor and walls. Everyone is pressed shoulder to shoulder. Some MUTTER their concern. Others SOB into their hands. Chana shakes.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER REAR - CONTINUOUS

Behind the bath house, an SS Guard approaches a ventilation column protruding from the side of the building. He pulls a gas mask over his face. Another guard hands him a canister of Zyklon B.

The guard drops it down the chute.

A second guard hands him another canister of Zyklon B. He drops it down the chute.

They repeat this process. And then, again.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

As the gas begins to fill the room, the prisoners desperately WAIL. There's SHRIEKING, pain, agony.

The prisoners COUGH, HACK, and SCREAM.

Chana is wedged against the wall, holding her stomach with one hand, the other pressed against the tile.

She coughs. As the gas thickens, she claws at the wall until her fingernails are bloody, leaving thick, red streaks on the tile.

EXT. - ROADSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Micha watches in disbelief. He slams his fist into the ground and turns to Hans.

MICHA

What did you do?

Hans lights another cigarette. He walks toward Micha.

HANS

You people are a scourge on the Earth. I'm just doing my part.

Micha stands and lunges toward Hans. The two SS Guards intervene. One rams the butt of his rifle into Micha's forehead. Micha falls to the ground. The other guard kicks him in the gut. Both men proceed to beat Micha senseless.

Hans watches and takes a pull of his cigarette.

The road is quiet. No more screaming. Only the sound of a brutal beating, and then Han's boots in the gravel rounding the car remains.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER - LATER

Three Jews are pushed into the bath house by SS Guards.

All around them there is nothing but death.

Some of the dead are still standing, as they were in life.
Some squat.

The bodies show evidence of the horror. Dried blood drips
from their ears. Others have frothed at the mouth.

Chana remains standing, clutching her stomach, the blood from
her fingers painted on the wall.

The three Jews begin removing the bodies from the bath house.

INT. - TEL AVIV HOSPITAL - DAY

Micha has dressed and is putting on his tie. In the mirror he
is still bruised, but alive. The nurse is tidying up the
room.

Micha steps forward and stumbles.

NURSE

Are you ok?

MICHA

Yes. I'm fine. There are worse
things that can happen to a man.

NURSE

You've recovered quickly in the
last three days.

(beat)

I'm glad.

MICHA

Thank you. For everything.

NURSE

Take care of yourself, please.

MICHA

I'll try.

Gita is standing at the door. She reaches out and grabs his
arm.

GITA

Come on. Let's get you home.

Arm in arm, Gita leads Micha out.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAY

Micha wakes up on the cold floor of the cement barracks. He is badly bruised and bleeding. Jewish men meander in and out of his vision.

Micha hears a FRENCHMAN speaking.

FRENCHMAN
Help me lift him up.

Blurry figures lift Micha from the ground.

FRENCHMAN (CONT'D)
On this bunk, here.

Micha sees the ceiling loom as he floats from the floor to the bed. His vision pulses and distorts.

FRENCHMAN (CONT'D)
Rest, mon ami. Rest.

The blurry Frenchman stands over Micha, wiping his head. Soon, Micha closes his eyes.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAY

Micha is propped up in a simple bed. His face is still badly beaten. The Frenchman sits on the edge of the bed. He is young and thin, and his head is completely shaved.

FRENCHMAN
(in French)
Comment allez-vous, mon ami? I am
Eli.

Micha is still groggy.

MICHA
Eli, I'm Micha.

Micha reaches forward to shake Eli's hand, but the pain is too great. He falls back on the bed.

ELI
It's ok. Don't move now. Here, eat.

Eli hands Micha a piece of bread.

MICHA
Where did you get this?

ELI
Don't worry about that just yet.
Rest. I will come back to check on
you soon.

Eli stands to leave.

MICHA
Eli?

Eli stops and turns.

ELI
Yes?

MICHA
Where am I?

ELI
You are in Auschwitz. It is
important you heal. We must get you
'arbeitsfahig,' as these devils
say.

Eli winks at Micha and exits the barracks.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAY

A loud whistle wakes the prisoners. Micha painfully sits up.
His face has healed some.

Eli rushes to his bunk.

ELI
You have to get up. It's roll call.

Eli puts his arm around Micha and helps him up. Other
prisoners bump the two as they struggle toward the door.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - CONTINUOUS

Outside, the sun is bright. It takes a moment for Micha to
adjust. The buildings in Auschwitz are larger than
Blechhammer, but look similar. Brick buildings line the yard.
Guards are everywhere.

The men stand shoulder to shoulder for roll call. Micha
stares at his feet, trying his best not to fall over.

An OLD MAN at the end of the line slouches, barely able to stand. The GROUP LEADER eyes him curiously.

GROUP LEADER
You. Where are you assigned?

OLD MAN
Laundry, sir.

He coughs violently, nearly falling over.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
(wiping his chin)
I can work. I am fit.

The Group Leader looks to the lapel of his uniform at a fresh stain.

GROUP LEADER
If you can work, why is my uniform
so dirty?

OLD MAN
(dabbing his chin)
Sir?

The Group Leader unholsters his side-arm and shoots the old man in the head. The old man falls to the ground.

GROUP LEADER
Take him away.

Micha sways from the pain, biting his lip, eyes focused on his feet.

The Group Leader steps in front of him.

GROUP LEADER (CONT'D)
Well, look who is up today...

Eli is confused. Micha looks up, and is staring directly into HANS' eyes.

HANS
It seems like we keep running into
each other.

Micha can barely keep it together.

HANS (CONT'D)
Fit to work?

MICHA
Sir...

Micha takes a painful breath.

MICHA (CONT'D)
 (gathering himself)
 I am.

Hans is amused.

HANS
 I'm glad to hear it, my old friend.
 It looks like a position just
 opened up in the laundry.

Hans puts a hand on Micha's shoulder. Micha winces.

HANS (CONT'D)
 I'm looking forward to seeing more
 of you, Micha.

Hans walks on.

After he is gone, Micha weakens. Eli catches him before he collapses.

ELI
 You know the new Group Leader?

MICHA
 (quietly)
 He was at Blechhammer.

Eli throws Micha's arm over his shoulder before dragging him away.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

The long room rattles and hisses. The walls hold long metal pipes. The center of the room is a long, divided container reserved for washing. One wall is lined with tables designated for sorting. The other is lined with giant metal containers.

Eli gives Micha the tour.

ELI
 The clothes are sorted over there
 and rinsed in the center. Over
 there on that wall are the
 disinfecting tanks. Afterward, they
 are hung and dried there. Officer's
 uniforms go over there. They are
 not to be mixed with the others.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

On the bright side, at least you'll get to wash your arms and your face working here. The men in the stacks don't see clean water for months at a time.

MICHA

I don't understand. Why are they washing these? They're not military issue.

Eli stops.

ELI

Who's clothes do you think these are?

MICHA

They look like prisoner's clothes.

Eli grabs a handful of discarded garments.

ELI

They are. Clothes of the dead. Or soon to be.

Micha is embarrassed.

ELI (CONT'D)

The Germans are scavengers. They take anything they can and send it back to Berlin. No matter how little the value.

(beat)

This place is a punishment, my friend. They send those they want to humiliate to work here. To rub our noses in it. Its a constant reminder of how powerless we are.

Micha walks to the sorting table. He picks up a few garments. Inside one of the pockets he finds a locket. It has ornate inlaid carving.

He opens it. On the left, a picture of an elderly man dressed to the nines. On the right, a family photo with a father, mother, and two children.

Micha rubs his thumb over the pictures. A LAUNDRY WORKER next to him takes notice.

LAUNDRY WORKER

Don't keep that.

MICHA

What?

LAUNDRY WORKER

The locket. The guards will find it on you. All valuables are to be put aside for assessing value.

The laundry worker grabs a bucket from the floor. It is full of necklaces, combs, pictures, and children's toys.

LAUNDRY WORKER (CONT'D)

Here. Put it in this.

A SS Guard blows his whistle.

SS GUARD #11

Jew! What are you doing over there?

ELI

I'm just showing him his new job, sir.

SS GUARD #11

Very well. Be quick about it.

Eli grabs Micha's arm. Micha continues to stare at the pile of prisoners' personal affects.

Finally, when Micha turns to Eli, he's on the verge of tears, but he cannot cry.

Eli nods in understanding.

ELI

Come on, Micha.

Eli drags him out of the laundry room.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - MORNING

The men rise in the morning. They are thin and emaciated. Most are unshaven. One of the older men stands on his bed. This is GABRIEL. His shirt is so large he looks like a scarecrow.

GABRIEL

Come men, let us worship. It is the Sabbath.

Quietly, the men gather close to Gabriel. Micha continues to dress. His wounds are mostly healed now.

Eli joins in the worship.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 Micha, please, join us today.

Micha doesn't respond.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 Micha...

Gabriel motions for Eli to assist. Eli walks to his friend's side. Micha, now fully dressed, is facing the door.

ELI
 Join us, Micha. I know you're struggling.

MICHA
 (angry)
 What do you know about my struggle?
 What do you know about what I've lost?

Micha walks to the door.

ELI
 (calling after)
 Look around.
 (beat)
 You're not the only one that is suffering.
 (beat)
 We've all lost people.

Micha continues toward the door.

ELI (CONT'D)
 It's the Sabbath.

Micha pauses at the door.

MICHA
 (turning)
 No. It's another day of work.

Micha walks out the door.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Micha mindlessly shoves piles of laundry into the large steel washing chamber.

He turns to grab more laundry.

Hans waltzes into the laundry room. All the prisoners, except Micha, notice, working quieter and quicker. He moves to arrange another pile of clothes.

Hans watches Micha. Eli spots Hans.

After a moment, Hans inches himself closer to Micha until they are about a foot apart.

Micha keeps his head down, fully invested in his work, and carries a load of laundry to the washer.

Hans is irritated. More, he's angry.

HANS

Stop.

Micha is in a daze, and continues to work.

HANS (CONT'D)

Jew! You will stop at once.

Every worker in the laundry is petrified.

Micha stops. He looks around and sees Hans, a handful of guards, and the rest of the laundry workers staring at him.

HANS (CONT'D)

Come here.

Micha does as he's told.

MICHA

I'm sorry, sir. I didn't see you.

HANS

You what?

MICHA

I mean, I didn't notice you standing there, sir.

HANS

Fredrick.

An old guard comes to attention. He seems far too old to be a soldier. His hair is greying and he wears spectacles. This is FREDRICK.

HANS (CONT'D)

This man can't seem to notice what's right in front of his face.

FREDRICK

Sir?

HANS

We can't have him doing German
laundry now, can we?

Hans walks away from Micha. Fredrick follows closely at his side.

HANS (CONT'D)

If we are lax in our uniforms, then
the prisoners will think we are lax
in our rules.

(beat)

You see where this leads now, don't
you, Fredrick?

FREDRICK

I'm sorry, sir. We can assign him
to the wash line.

HANS

Yes, we could.

Hans stops and looks at his elder subordinate.

HANS (CONT'D)

But we must teach him. It's our
obligation to better those beneath
us, don't you agree?

FREDRICK

Yes, sir. Of course.

HANS

I have a better assignment. His
friend can come, too.

Hans strolls out of laundry room with Fredrick close at his heels.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ SORTING YARD - DAY

Micha and Eli are about 100 meters behind the bath house in a large field, what the prisoners call Canada. They walk toward a large pile of clothes and belongings.

Eli pushes a wheel barrow.

ELI

Micha, this is not going to be easy
for either of us.

They reach the pile of clothes. Micha doesn't respond. He bends down and picks up a jacket. He tosses it aside.

Eli circles the pile and sifts through it across from Micha.

ELI (CONT'D)
You're selfish, Micha.

Micha finds a hairbrush in the pile. He tosses it into the wheel barrow. Eli stops what he's doing.

ELI (CONT'D)
I took care of you. I helped you survive. And now I'm here because of you.

Micha digs through the clothes and finds a baby rattle. He looks at Eli.

ELI (CONT'D)
You think you're the only person who's hurting? You think you're the only person here who's suffering? How long have you been here? How many of your friends have you seen sent to the gas chamber?
(indignant)
How many people have you seen collapse in the dirt? How many people have you seen wither away into nothing? We are surrounded by death and you still think of nothing but yourself.
(beat)
How many people have you killed with your ill-conceived plans?

Eli's voice drowns out. He's speaking, but Micha can't hear.

A woman drifts behind Eli. It's Chana, cradling a small child in her arms. Micha GASPS, and slowly begins walking away.

ELI (CONT'D)
(muffled)
Micha? Where are you going?

Chana smiles at Micha and walks ahead. He follows.

Micha struts ahead toward the fence in the distance, carrying the baby rattle. Eli watches in amazement.

ELI (CONT'D)
Micha, stop! What are you doing?

Micha follows close behind Chana's apparition. She turns back to make sure he's following.

Chana floats like a cloud further and further ahead.

Micha can't contain his smile. His mouth is agape.

Eli notices he is walking straight toward the fence. A sign reads: WARNING. ELECTRIFIED FENCE.

ELI (CONT'D)
Micha, the fence.

Micha can't hear him. He keeps following the wisp in front of him.

Eli stops gathering belongings. He starts running.

ELI (CONT'D)
Micha!

Chana pauses in front of the fence. She turns back to Micha, baby cradled in his arms, and fades through to the other side of the fence.

Micha reaches the fence and stops. Chana stands on the other side, just out of reach.

MICHA
(softly)
Chana...

Micha closes his eyes and steps into the fence.

ELI
No!

The electricity jolts through Micha. At first, he is smiling, but quickly the shock brings him back to reality. Chana is gone, and there's nothing there but the pain and the metal fence. Micha SCREAMS.

ELI (CONT'D)
Oh God.

Eli continues sprinting toward the fence. So do the SS Guards watching over Canada. Micha falls, and squirms on the ground.

Eli approaches his friend, takes a knee to examine Micha. His hands are burnt red and sizzling. Micha shakes but is still SCREAMING.

SS GUARD #12
What the hell is going on?

Eli looks up at the guard.

ELI
I don't know.

The guards gather Micha up and carry him away.

INT. - HANS' OFFICE - DAY

A young guard, JOSEPH, stands perfectly still while Hans is bent over a letter on his desk. He is short and thin. His face is smooth and clean.

HANS
Shit.

Hans crumbles up the letter and lights it on fire before throwing it in the metal waste basket.

HANS (CONT'D)
You. What's your name?

JOSEPH
Joseph, sir.

HANS
How old are you, son?

JOSEPH
16, sir.

Hans stands and circles his desk. He sits on the edge, and pulls out his cigarette case.

He offers the young German a cigarette. Joseph accepts.

Hans lights his own cigarette, then, awkwardly, Joseph leans in for a light.

HANS
Why are you here, Joseph?

JOSEPH
There is something you have to come see.

HANS
That's not what I meant. I meant why are you in the Army? Why are you a guard at Auschwitz.

JOSEPH

I was part of the SS Youth. They said we were needed.

HANS

Indeed you are. Yet, most of the men they send here are old. The young, strapping lads are off in France, or headed to Moscow. I wonder...is there something command is keeping from us here?

Joseph doesn't have an answer. Hans stands and straightens Joseph's collar.

Joseph puts his head down, ashamed. Hans smiles.

HANS (CONT'D)

So what? You need a little work. Not to worry, son. We will make you into a proper soldier soon enough.
(beat)
Now, onto business, yes? What news have you brought me?

JOSEPH

It's the young Jew.

HANS

Again?

JOSEPH

Yes, sir.

Hans is infuriated. He throws his cigarette on the floor and storms out of the office.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAY

Hans strolls through the crowd of Jews. The prisoners stand aside, watching. Micha is a crumbled mess on the ground. Eli stands apart from the rest, looking on.

Hans smiles, kicks Micha with his boot.

HANS

Well, this is no fun.

He turns to Joseph.

HANS (CONT'D)

If he isn't fit to work by morning, schedule him for the bathhouse.

Eli steps forward.

ELI
He's fit.

HANS
And who are you?

Eli realizes he made a mistake.

Another PRISONER steps to Eli's side.

PRISONER
He can work.

A few other prisoners step out of the crowd, and pick Micha up. He is barely conscious.

PRISONER (CONT'D)
See, he is fit.

Hans is clearly getting angry. He scans the crowd. Something about the way the prisoners have gathered, and come to Micha's aid doesn't sit well with him.

He sees something in their eyes he hasn't seen for a long time.

Hope.

HANS
(to Joseph)
Watch him. If he doesn't report to the sorting yard tomorrow, shoot him like the dog he is.

JOSEPH
(beat)
Yes, sir.

Hans walks back toward his office.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ SORTING YARD - DAY

Eli and Micha walk again to a pile of clothes. Micha limps, his hands bandaged. The weather is cold, again. The sky is grey.

Quietly, Eli stops the wheelbarrow and digs into a pile.

ELI

I heard the Russians are fighting well. That the Germans are struggling.

Eli gathers some clothes and puts them in the wheelbarrow.

ELI (CONT'D)

It makes sense. The guards they send are getting younger and younger...

MICHA

Thank you, my friend.

Eli stops what he's doing.

ELI

For what?

MICHA

Helping me.

(beat)

I don't think I've ever properly thanked you.

Eli takes a breath.

ELI

You have to decide, Micha. Do you want to live, or do you want die? You can't keep going on like this.

Eli continues to sort clothes. Micha watches his friend.

MICHA

They're getting close?

ELI

Who?

MICHA

The British. French.

ELI

Yes. Some nights I think I can hear them in the woods. Before long we'll be drinking vodka and eating cold soup.

MICHA

Don't say that word, 'cold'.

(shivering)

(MORE)

MICHA (CONT'D)

I'm already freezing and it's early.

Both men laugh for a moment.

Close on an old, raggedy sweater. In the distance, two other prisoners can be seen wandering about, as if in a perpetual daze, bending down ever so often to gather the discarded items. In the foreground, an emaciated hand reaches down, tattooed numbers 080613 clearly visible on the exposed forearm, and grasps a garment.

Eli and Micha hear a faint cry.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Do you hear that?

ELI

What?

Micha digs in the clothes.

There, in the chaos, is a baby, dirty and crying, but a baby.

ELI (CONT'D)

Glory to God.

MICHA

How the hell did it get here?

ELI

Who knows? There is no logic in this place.

Micha reaches down and picks up the crying baby.

MICHA

(shushing the child)

There, there. It's ok.

ELI

His mother, she must have...

MICHA

(to the baby)

Hidden you.

Micha rocks the baby back and forth.

MICHA (CONT'D)

How could the mother have gone all this time and not been noticed?

ELI

I told you, things are getting lax
around here. The Germans are losing
the war.

Eli bends down and digs through the pile of clothes. He finds
a note attached to a bottle. It is written in blood. It
reads: PLEASE SAVE HER.

ELI (CONT'D)

(showing Micha the note)

Look.

Both men are amazed by the beautiful child. Eli puts his hand
on the baby's forehead.

MICHA

Put some clothes in there.

Micha points to the wheelbarrow. Eli grabs a pile of clothes
and constructs a make-shift bed. Micha lays the child down.
Eli puts the bottle to the child's lips.

MICHA (CONT'D)

We need to get her to the barracks.

ELI

We can't yet. We need to finish the
work day. That young guard is still
watching you.

(beat)

Hans really has it out for you,
doesn't he?

MICHA

We have a long history.

(beat)

I think he enjoys messing with me.

ELI

What should we do?

Micha thinks for a moment.

MICHA

We'll hide her in the wheelbarrow.

ELI

All day?

MICHA

Yes, all day.

The two men go about their duties, enlivened with their new-found purpose.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Eli pushes the wheelbarrow. Micha walks at his side. The baby squirms beneath the clothes.

Joseph and another guard walk by in the opposite direction. Per Hans, Joseph is always close by.

The baby cries. Micha coughs vigorously to cover the noise.

After the guards pass, Eli and Micah exchange looks of relief and breath deep.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAY

The windows of the barracks are dark, but the prisoners shove whatever they can find into them all the same. Protecting the baby is paramount.

The men gather around Micha's bunk. He cradles the baby, rocking her back and forth.

ELI
(to the group)
She was just laying right there in front of us.

GABRIEL
And you scooped her up. No one was watching?

ELI
Micha did. Look at him. He's a natural.

GABRIEL
It's a miracle...

The men are happy, smiling.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
We all must help this poor child of God.

ELI
We can each give a little of our soup to her.

The men agree and nod.

Micha stops and addresses the group.

MICHA

It's not enough.

ELI

Sure it is. Between all of us, we can feed her.

MICHA

No. I mean, we can't keep her here.

GABRIEL

Micha, we cannot give up on life, on hope.

MICHA

I know. Of course that's not what I mean. We need to get her out of this God-forsaken place. We need to make sure she survives. That's the hope we need. Together, we will give this innocent baby a chance.

Gabriel puts a hand on the child's forehead.

GABRIEL

We will. We will save this child. We must do it quickly, though, before she is discovered.

(beat)

Do you have a plan?

MICHA

As far as I know, there is only one way out of the camp: the laundry train. We can smuggle her out with the clothes being sent back to Berlin.

ELI

Very good, my friend. We'll need to gather supplies, of course.

GABRIEL

We will all help.

All the men look on the baby with adoration, their eyes filled with a new-found purpose.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ SORTING YARD - DAY

Eli and Micha are back in Canada. Micha is working fast, digging through clothes.

Eli stands over the wheelbarrow and smiles at the little face hidden beneath the garments.

Micha is looking for anything that could be useful for the baby. He finds a book, and stashes it quickly in his pocket.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAY

A boney hand pours the last drop of thin soup into a bottle.

The man is impossibly thin, but happy. He smiles at Eli, who smiles back.

The man steps away and another rail-thin man steps forward. He, too, smiles and empties his bowl into the bottle.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE - DAY

Gabriel passes the stopped train. This area is highly guarded because there is a break in the fence to load the discarded clothes onto the train.

Overhead, guards watch over with rifles.

Gabriel carefully observes prisoners loading goods on and off the train. He counts the guards.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ MAIL ROOM - DAY

Micha and Eli enter the mail room. Micha is holding a laundry basket.

Joseph is on guard by the door. He eyes Micha.

Eli sneaks into the back room.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ MAIL ROOM REAR - CONTINUOUS

Most of the packages are unopened, but on the table is a pile of knit clothes. A SS GUARD opens another package, ignoring Eli.

Eli does nothing.

Annoyed, the guard waves his hand.

SS GUARD #13
Take it and go away.

Eli scoops up the clothes exits the small room.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ MAIL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Back in the mail room Micha waits. Eli returns with arms full of clothing. He places the clothes in the basket.

JOSEPH
It takes two of you to do this now?

ELI
We didn't know how much there was.

Joseph rummages through the pile. He finds a pair of wool socks and keeps them.

ELI (CONT'D)
You don't want those washed first?

Joseph frowns and puts them back.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ MAIL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Micha carries the basket and Eli strolls next to him. Behind them, Joseph keeps a close eye.

MICHA
You shouldn't talk back to them.

ELI
He's watching either way, thanks to your friend Hans. Besides, he's just a kid. It's time for us to have a little fun.

Eli pats Micha on the back and the two men continue walking.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE - CONTINUOUS

Micha is still carrying the laundry. The two men stop by the break in the fence. The guards are in the process of changing shifts.

ELI
Let's take some clothes.

MICHA
I don't know.

ELI
Listen, winter is coming. We'll
freeze.

Micha sets down the basket.

ELI (CONT'D)
Trust me. Look, the guards are
changing shifts. I'd say we have
about ten minutes.

Micha eyes the woolen clothes in the basket.

ELI (CONT'D)
You first.

Micha grabs a pair of wool socks and a wool shirt. He ducks
into the gate house close by, throwing the shirt over his
uniform and pulls on the fresh pair of socks.

Micha exits the gate house, and Eli takes his turn,
disappearing into the house.

After a few moments Micha can hear the sound of a large
truck. The breaks SQUEAL. He can hear soldiers' boots hitting
the dirt.

Micha looks to the gate house.

MICHA
Oh no.

Micha starts to walk toward the gate house, leaving the
basket on the ground. Just then, he sees Joseph round the
corner to the gate house.

SS GUARD #14
Open the gate.

Micha ducks behind a corner. He does nothing.

Joseph opens the gate house.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Eli is crouched in the corner, wearing a wool sweater with
his jacket over it. Joseph spots him.

JOSEPH
Dirty, filthy Jew.

Joseph attacks Eli, but Eli easily overpowers him. He runs
from the gate house.

Outside, the SS Guards can see what's happening, and scream.

SS GUARD #14
He's running. Let us in.

Joseph pulls the gate lever.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE - CONTINUOUS

Eli makes a run for it. The gate rumbles open.

Micha can only watch.

The guards run at full speed behind Eli who is just passing the gate. They tackle him. Fists start flying.

Joseph jogs over. One guard sits on Eli's chest. Another kicks in the head.

JOSEPH
Pick him up. Take him to Hans.

The guards comply, dragging away Eli. Joseph looks around, but does not spot Micha.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAY

The prisoners approach the yard from different directions.

Most talk to each other, expressing their confusion.

Micha is carrying the basket of new clothes.

Gabriel approaches.

GABRIEL
Micha, what happened?

MICHA
They caught us.

GABRIEL
Us?

MICHA
Eli. They caught Eli. We were stealing warmer clothes.

GABRIEL
Micha, stop.

The two men pause. Prisoners pass them.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 Micha, this is important. Did they
 see you?

Gabriel takes the basket from Micha's hands and sets it on
 the floor. He looks deep into Micha's eyes.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 Did they see you?

MICHA
 No, I hid.

GABRIEL
 Good.

MICHA
 But they took Eli away.
 (beat)
 How is any of this good?

GABRIEL
 Micha, whatever happens next...you
 need to stay alive.
 (beat)
 You need to save that little girl
 hiding in there.

Gabriel points to the barracks.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 Tell me, son. Are you ready for
 this?

MICHA
 I don't know.

GABRIEL
 Let's go.

The pair walk to the lines of men and fall in. The guards are
 already counting them.

JOSEPH
 (to Hans)
 Everyone is accounted for, sir.
 Sans the thief.

Hans paces through the ranks.

HANS
 Discipline is a tricky thing,
 Joseph.

(MORE)

HANS (CONT'D)

If you are too relaxed, then your subjects think they have an easy job.

Joseph follows close on Hans' heels.

JOSEPH

Because they are lazy.

HANS

No, in fact, they are not. They are diligent, and without the proper motivation they will turn on you.

(beat)

You are the dominant animal. We set the rules, and enforce them. That is the order of the natural world.

Hans stops. In the third row, he spots Micha but remains fixated on Joseph.

HANS (CONT'D)

It's not that I enjoy discipline. In fact, I despise it.

JOSEPH

But sir, I thought you would want to know about this incident.

HANS

Yes, yes. I do. Good work, boy.

(beat)

I hate punishment. In fact, I despise it. It means we aren't living up to our potential.

Hans turns, facing Micha, and looks him in the eye.

HANS (CONT'D)

But, if you must punish, you must do it swiftly. Disobedience is a sickness, and it must be rooted out quickly.

Hans turns to Joseph.

HANS (CONT'D)

Do you understand?

JOSEPH

Yes sir. I think I do.

Hans breaks his gaze with Micha and strolls down the line.

A moment later two of the guards from the truck drag Eli to the center of the yard and throw him down between the ranks of prisoners, right in front of Micha and Gabriel's view.

Hans nods to the guards.

They begin to kick Eli. He moans. His face is already caked with dried blood.

The group of prisoners watching collectively moan. Some cry out for mercy.

The guards don't stop. They kick him repeatedly, beating him senseless. Eli is coughing up blood.

Gabriel has a firm grip on Micha's forearm. He begins praying.

GABRIEL

Please God, make this stop. Please God please.

PRISONER (O.C.)

Have mercy.

ANOTHER PRISONER (O.C.)

Please stop this.

Joseph paces back and forth, watching.

JOSEPH

Don't stop. He is a thief!

Joseph paces back and forth. He stops in front of Micha. Micha stares him down, his eyes full of rage.

GABRIEL

(crying)

Please! Have mercy!

Slowly, Eli's weak gaze falls on Micha. There's less noise now. Some dull shouting, some thuds from the beating.

What Micha hears is his breathing, and the birds overhead.

Eli smiles. He hears the birds too. Micha looks to the sky and can see a flock of birds migrating south.

A guard kicks Eli square in the jaw.

HANS

Enough!

The guards stop. Joseph watches. Hans walks toward Eli, unholstering his sidearm.

He hands the gun to Joseph.

HANS (CONT'D)
 Respect isn't earned, Joseph. It is taken. Show them.

Joseph hesitates for a moment, holding the gun. Hans nods. Joseph steps forward and shoots Eli in the head.

The CRACK of the gunshot rings out through the yard.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - EVENING

Micha sits alone while the group of prisoners gather behind him. He mouths German words as he writes a note.

When he's finished, he carries it to the group and hands it to Gabriel.

GABRIEL
 You speak German?

MICHA
 I studied a little when I was in school.

GABRIEL
 Even in this mess, the almighty finds a way to make use of a man.

Gabriel hands Micha the note. Another prisoner hands him a pin. Micha approaches the baby and pins the note to her shirt.

Micha's hands are shaking. He turns to Gabriel.

Gabriel approaches and hugs Micha.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
 Are you sure you want to do this, now?

Gabriel is crying.

MICHA
 We must do this. For all of us, for Eli, but more importantly...
 (looking at the girl)
 For her.

GABRIEL
 Well said, my boy.
 (beat)
 Ok. We know the guards change
 shifts at dawn. The laundry car
 will be open. We will have a short
 window, but it will be enough time.

Gabriel nods to Micha. Micha lays down, trying to sleep, but it doesn't come.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - DAWN

The prisoners all wake quietly. They gather around Micha, placing hands on his shoulders, back, hair. They mutter a prayer.

He sits on the edge of his bed, holding the baby.

GABRIEL
 God be with you.
 (beat)
 Ready?

Micha looks to Gabriel and nods.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE HOUSE - MORNING

The gate house is quiet. Micha approaches, carrying a basket of clothes. Inside is the baby.

Gabriel and the other prisoners walk in the distance, keeping an eye on Micha.

Micha takes a deep breath, looks around, and opens the door.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Micha sets the basket down on a table and glances out the window at the gate. It's quiet, with very few guards in sight.

He turns his attention to the basket, removing an article of clothing. The baby lays quietly.

MICHA
 We're going to get you out of here.

Micha carefully undresses the girl.

MICHA (CONT'D)

My pretty girl. We are going to get
you out of here.

He changes her clothes, covering her with stolen German wool. Micha swaddles her, then lifts her. Rocking her back and forth, he sings her a lullaby.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Numi, numi, nim. Numi numi
k'tananti.

The baby's eyes are fixated on Micha.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Aba halach la'avoda. Halach,
halach, aba.

The baby closes her eyes. Micha sings quietly. He sets her back in the basket, where he begins to bundle her in the laundry. He pins the note on her shirt.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Yashuv im tzeit halevana. Yavi lach
matana. Numi, numi.

Soon the bundle of laundry is a large square. Micha makes sure there is a gap to allow the baby to breathe. He ties it gently with twine. With one last sigh, he grabs the basket and exits the gate house.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GATE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Outside, a prisoner nods to Micha before walking off. After a few paces, Micha and Gabriel meet.

GABRIEL

Is she asleep?

MICHA

Sound.

GABRIEL

Good.

MICHA

Do you know where the train is
headed?

GABRIEL

The garments go back to Berlin.

From the barracks, Joseph and two other guards walk toward them.

JOSEPH
What is this?

GABRIEL
Laundry for the train, sir.

Gabriel looks at his feet. Micha stares into Joseph's eyes, defiant.

JOSEPH
Check him.

MICHA
What?

JOSEPH
(to the guards)
You heard me. Check him.

Micha places the basket on the ground.

The guards grab Micha's arms. Joseph steps in close.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
I know you were helping your French
friend steal clothes. And now--

Joseph rips open Micha's dirty work shirt. There's nothing underneath but ribs and thin flesh. Joseph bends down and lifts Micha's trousers at the ankles. There's no socks, just tattered shoes.

MICHA
I haven't stolen a thing.

Joseph is flustered. He brushes the hair out of his face.

JOSEPH
No matter. The truth is what I say
it is.

The guards let go of Micha. He stands still until Joseph and the guards walk away.

Gabriel picks up the basket and hands it to Micha.

GABRIEL
Almost there, son.

Micha takes the basket and makes for the train.

EXT. - TRAIN CAR - DAY

Several cars are being loaded by groups of Jewish prisoners. Guards pace and supervise.

At the door of the train car, men toss up laundry bundles, and the other prisoners toss them into the car. Micha gets in line and waits.

From a distance, Joseph and Hans watch.

JOSEPH

He didn't have anything on him, sir. But I am certain he and the French Jew were up to something.

Hans takes in Micha.

HANS

This one is stronger than I thought. It might be time to end our little game.

When it's Micha's turn to toss up his bundle, he steps close to the car and gently lifts it up to the man.

Hans notices.

HANS (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Stop! Search the car.

JOSEPH

For what?

HANS

That's what I want to find out.

Hans walks toward the train. Joseph follows.

INT. - TRAIN CAR - CONTINUOUS

Two inmates are arranging bundles of laundry in the dark car. One takes the bundle from Micha and sets it gently on the ground.

The inmate peers down and smiles with joy at the sight of a sleeping baby tightly snuggled in soft wool. Hans and Joseph approach.

JOSEPH

Stop what you're doing. We need to inspect this car.

Guards board the train and begin examining the bundles.

EXT. - TRAIN CAR - CONTINUOUS

Micha sits softly on a bundle of laundry. He props a bundle behind his back. Hans sits down next to Micha and lights a cigarette.

The guards have finished examining the train.

JOSEPH

(to Hans)

We can't find anything, sir. All appears to be normal.

Hans is shoulder to shoulder with Micha. He looks over to him.

HANS

Well, it appears you've learned how to do some work properly, for once.

Hans pats Micha's knee.

HANS (CONT'D)

You're finally fitting in nicely here. I'm proud that my guidance has finally made an impression on you.

MICHA

Thank you, sir.

(beat)

Is it true what they say about the Russians? That the camp might not be safe for much longer?

Hans smiles and snubs out his cigarette.

HANS

Careful, boy. You worry about the laundry. I'll worry about the camp.

Hans stands and heads back toward his office.

HANS (CONT'D)

Enjoy your small victory. I'll be seeing you soon.

Joseph and the other guards follow.

As soon as they're gone, all the Jews in the car turn to Micha. He smiles and stands.

Beneath him, in the bundle that was behind Micha's back, the baby girl is still sleeping.

GABRIEL

Time to go. You did well.

(beat)

She's in God's hands now.

Micha looks around at all the prisoners.

MICHA

We all did.

The prisoners nod in agreement.

EXT. - TRAIN CAR - CONTINUOUS

Micha stands on the other side of the fence, in snowfall, watching the train pull away. Behind him, the other prisoners get back to work.

The train hisses and the steam engines wane. Micha smiles.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - NIGHT

Micha, Gabriel, and the rest of the prisoners sleep soundly.

SS Guards BURST through the door. Micha is startled.

Above him, he can see Hans and Joseph's faces.

HANS

Game's over.

Joseph bashes Micha in the face with the butt of his gun and drags him out of the barracks.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER - MORNING

Micha wakes up in the back of a truck outside of the bathhouse. The old and the emaciated surround him.

Outside, they are ordered to undress. All comply, including Micha. The fear is gone; the only thing that remains is acceptance.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER - MORNING

The group is led down a flight of stairs to an open room. Tile covers the floor and walls.

Everyone is pressed shoulder to shoulder. Micha finds a place against the wall and lays down.

BEGIN FLASHBACK - A SERIES OF SHOTS

--Micha remembers the time he spent with Chana on the beach, when they hadn't a care in the world. Her laugh is contagious.

--Micha and Chana walking hand in hand through the streets of Amsterdam.

--Micha and Chana sitting on a bridge crossing one of the many channels that cut across Amsterdam. Their legs dangle off the edge.

--Micha and Chana laying under the blanket in the snow at Blechhammer.

--Chana being led into the same gas chamber Micha lays in now.

INT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER - AFTERNOON

Micha wakes up, surprised to be alive. The room is empty. He stands and walks up the stairs.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Micha gathers some clothes and puts them on.

There is a thick layer of snow in the yard. Micha shivers. A loud siren wails. In the distance, one of the other bath houses explodes. Flames rise above the building.

Men are running in every direction. Micha heads toward the barracks.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - CONTINUOUS

Micha approaches the barracks and sees Gabriel directing his flock.

GABRIEL

Come on! Run. To the gate.

Prisoners are running in every direction. Guards all around are panicked, shooting indiscriminately at anything that moves.

Gabriel spots Micha.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Micha. Micha! Come here!

Micha is knocked down by the mass of people flooding toward the entrance. He labors to stand. He fights his way to Gabriel.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
(surprised)
You're alive!

MICHA
By God's grace.

Micha can barely stand.

MICHA (CONT'D)
What's happening?

GABRIEL
They're destroying the bath houses.

MICHA
All of them?

GABRIEL
Three have gone up in flames. I expect the other two will follow shortly.

Micha breathes a sigh of relief.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
The Russians have invaded the camp.

Gabriel grabs Micha's face in ecstasy.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Do you understand, Micha? God has saved us. He has saved all of us.

MICHA
No, Gabriel. He's saved some of us.
Not all of us.

Micha watches the pandemonium as fire blazes all around.

EXT. - AUSCHWITZ BARRACKS - LATER

The yard is full of Russian soldiers. They round up the Germans, and take pity on the Jews.

Micha and Gabriel walk through the chaos.

A Russian soldier walks up to the pair and speaks in poor German.

RUSSIAN SOLDIER
Take my coat, please.

The Russian soldier throws his coat over Gabriel's shoulders.

RUSSIAN SOLDIER (CONT'D)
(to Micha)
Come. We will get you a coat. And
food. Follow me.

The Russian soldier leads them through the crowd. Micha can see a group of Jews sitting, sipping hot cups of water, weeping in joy.

As they walk, Micha notices a group of German soldiers rounded up near a fence. They all sit with their hands bound behind their back.

Toward the back, Micha can see Hans and Joseph.

MICHA
(to the Russian soldier)
What will happen to them?

RUSSIAN SOLDIER
They will get what's coming to
them.

Micha and Gabriel walk through the carnage toward the train. Toward freedom.

EXT. - TEL AVIV HOSPITAL - DAY

Micha stands outside of the hospital, waiting. He is healthy, although still a bit wobbly.

Gita pulls up in her car.

GITA
Micha!

Micha struts slowly toward the car. He opens the door and gets inside.

GITA (CONT'D)
How are you?

MICHA

I'm ok.

Gita looks at him for a moment. Micha puts his hand on hers.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Gita smiles.

GITA

Of course.

Gita presses her foot on the clutch, shifts the car into gear, the two drive off.

EXT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT - DUSK

Micha gets out of Gita's car. Small beads of sweat have accumulated on his forehead.

GITA

Sir, I hope you don't mind, but
I've rescheduled all your
appointments for the rest of the
week.

Gita looks ahead.

GITA (CONT'D)

Please. For once, take care of
yourself.

Micha nods and closes the door.

EXT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT - A SERIES OF SHOTS

--Micha walks up the stairs, wiping the sweat off his brow.

--Micha stops to look at the beach below. It's deserted.

--Micha puts his key into the lock.

--Micha opens the door.

INT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT - DUSK

Micha closes the door. Inside, his plants have started to wilt.

Walking to the kitchen, he pours a pitcher of water for the plants. Then he pours a glass of water for himself.

Micha walks to the living room, wiping the sweat off his forehead again.

His hand shakes.

From below, his face can be seen through the glass, distorted. Micha breathes hard.

The glass slips from his grip and it falls, shattering on the floor.

Micha drops to his knees, SOBBING. Spurred by the memories of his former life -- all the memories he's tucked deep away -- he SOBS. For the first time in decades, he's able to cry.

INT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT - LATER

Micha digs through the stack of legal papers and finds Dr. Flusscher's card.

He picks up the phone and dials the number.

It rings. Once, twice, three times.

MICHA

Yes. Dr. Flusscher?

Micha listens to the voice on the other end of the line.

MICHA (CONT'D)

Hello. It's Micha Leviet.

(beat)

Yes. I'd like to come in and talk.

(beat)

Yes. About everything.

(beat)

Tomorrow? Yes, that will work.

(beat)

Thank you. I will see you then.

Micha hangs up the phone.

EXT. - TEL AVIV APARTMENT BALCONY - DUSK

The sun is setting over the beach. Golden light reflects off the water. Micha leans on the railing.

Below, a family has taken claim to a small section of the beach. Their children are building a sand castle.

Micha smiles, a single tear running down his cheek.

FADE OUT.

THE END