

Ararat
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

MONTAGE. Images in quick flashes.

Russian troops hunt ragged children who run in the woods.

Six rail-thin, filthy kids sleep on a hilltop, spread out like spokes of a wheel, heads to the center, feet out. JANA and ANELIE, girls of 17. EWA, a girl of 13. Freckled 12-year-old HANNA has hair six inches black at the roots and six inches blond at the ends. Two 12-year-olds sleep in each other's arms, a boy named MATEUSZ and a tiny girl, SALOMEA.

The children hiding, one tending a sick girl.

Salomea killing and eating a rat.

The children sleeping in a circle again.

Germans and Russians skirmish as children hide in a hedgerow.

Salomea running from a farm with potatoes, chased by a dog.

The kids sleep in their circle. SALOMEA has a nightmare.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

Bavaria. SOUNDS of an army moving: trucks, shouts, mortar rounds, gunfire. Children sleep.

SALOMEA (V.O.)

A tidal wave covered the earth. It killed everything alive, before and behind, and the waters receded.

Children asleep.

SALOMEA (V.O.)

Six of them washed ashore on the mountain. Still alive. Somewhere, a dove was looking for an olive branch. Here, of all places.

A mortar lands a mile off, and then two more. At each explosion, Salomea becomes more agitated, until finally she curls up in a ball moaning. Mateusz, who has done this dozens of times, wraps his arms around her.

MATEUSZ

I've always got you. It's a mortar,
it's a mile away. You're not going
to stab me again, are you? Deep
breath. You're okay now?

He helps her up and sniffs the air. He puts his hand on her
shoulder. She smiles and shrugs, embarrassed.

MATEUSZ (CONT'D)

I smell smoke. There might be a
cabin. Can you see the Russians?

The girl says nothing, dazed, slack-jawed.

MATEUSZ (CONT'D)

Don't let them see you. Long night.

The girl shivers and pulls his arm around her.

MATEUSZ (CONT'D)

We can't stay here. What are we
supposed to do, carry her?

Salomea walks to a sick girl, and then looks back at him.

INT. ARMY TENT - DAY

England, late 1944. BILLIE KELLY, a U.S. nurse, deals cards
to a U.S. COLONEL and two British OFFICERS.

BILLIE

Sir, war's been going three years.

BRITISH OFFICER

Five years actually.

BILLIE

I stand corrected.

BRITISH OFFICER

You people are five hours behind
us. Must be why you're always late
for wars.

BILLIE

We must have learned the trick from
Neville Chamberlain.

COLONEL

Mind your manners, Lieutenant. And
I don't need to hear any fairy
tales about death camps.

(MORE)

COLONEL (CONT'D)

We heard all that crap in the first war. ...You want a career in the Army? Take some friendly advice.

Billie points to the map on the wall.

BILLIE

Alright, we're not allowed to talk about the Jews. Eastern front, sixty million people. The Germans rolled in like a tidal wave, three million soldiers, death squads, burn down villages.

BRITISH OFFICER

Mein Kampf. Top marks. Hitler said to strip the land clean so Germans could live there - like the locals were insects that needed killing.

BILLIE

Russians march the other way, tidal wave, destroy everything they didn't steal. Twenty million dead.

COLONEL

We haven't finished with France.

BILLIE

What about the people who survive? I fold, gimme the cards.

BRITISH OFFICER

What the devil -

Billie scoops up the cards, lays them out in four rows of thirteen.

BILLIE

This is gonna be my job. Already we can't feed refugees in England, it's in the thousands. What do I do when it's a million? No homes, no food? Kids with no parents?

COLONEL

You want to bring in the New Deal for all of Europe?

BILLIE

Ever play this? Concentration. You take turns, flip over cards, until you find a pair - two black queens, two red tens. Takes forever.

COLONEL
What's your point?

Billie begins flipping cards.

BILLIE
This is Europe. Imagine instead of fifty cards, it's ten million. Kids and parents can't find each other, they come to me for help, what do I tell em?

BRITISH OFFICER
Think this is some sort of game?

BILLIE
Ask the Red Cross about a tracing system. Kid in a refugee camp, put their name on a card, where they came from, and the camp they were in, the concentration camp that you still don't believe in.

COLONEL
I didn't say I didn't believe it.

BILLIE
Kid gets a card, parent gets a card, we match em all up. If we don't, that's millions of people lost, starvation, dysentery, rape...

BRITISH OFFICER
Leave that sort of chaos behind, twenty years on we fight World War Three, a hundred million people with bigger guns.

COLONEL
It will only work if all the camps do the cards. And you'll have a lot of people without a match. Orphans. You think you're ready to manage a refugee camp? Way down in Bavaria?

BILLIE
Let you know in a few weeks.

COLONEL
What's that book?

BILLIE

Phrase book. Polish. A lot of the refugees will be from Poland. Please let me try the Red Cross...

COLONEL

You're really sold on this...Have fun selling this to our general.

BILLIE

You aren't coming with me?

COLONEL

Oh, I'll be behind you. Way, way, way behind you.

EXT. OUTSIDE A GERMAN REFUGEE CAMP - NIGHT

U.S. SOLDIER stands at the entrance to a camp, 1945, slowly tearing a loaf to bits. Another SOLDIER sleeps on a bench. Anelie comes out of the trees. Her voice is rough.

ANELIE

Don't shoot!

SOLDIER

Hello? Joe, wake up. Get the lieutenant.

ANELIE

Please, don't shoot!

SOLDIER

Come out where I can see you.

ANELIE

You are a soldier? Give me a loaf of bread and I keep you warm tonight. Don't hurt me.

She undoes two buttons.

SOLDIER

Keep me warm. How many of you out there? No, put your shirt on. My wife would bust my head.

Billie arrives. Anelie, disoriented, sits on a bench.

BILLIE

How many more of you are out there?

ANELIE

Six. Now.

BILLIE

This is not that kind of camp.
Okay? In the morning you'll see -
no chimneys. So stop trying to
sleep with my soldiers.

SOLDIER

The bread is free.

ANELIE

All the bread I want?

BILLIE

No, not all you want, we're short
of everything. But enough to stay
alive. And you'll be safe.

Billie takes her pulse, Anelie begins to cry with relief.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

How many of the others are sick?

ANELIE

All of us. The Nazis marched us
west, and then they ran. So we
walked until we got here.

BILLIE

You walked from..

ANELIE

I thought it was from Poland but it
might have been Czechoslovakia.

BILLIE

Good God. This is Germany.

ANELIE

We couldn't tell, we mostly walk in
the dark. There were more, but they
couldn't...I had to leave them
behind. I couldn't save them all.

BILLIE

Corporal, two jeeps.

SOLDIER

They'll just panic and run away.

BILLIE

Run away? I don't think they could
crawl away. Bring chocolate. Tell
the medic to start with their feet.
Come on. No rifle. Just the Colt.

SOLDIER

You're sure?

They find five kids on the ground as in the first scene.
Hanna, Ewa, Jana, Mateusz pointed north-south-east-west;
Salomea nestled in the boy's arms. They get to their feet,
Salomea warily waving a knife. A MEDIC arrives.

MEDIC

Which one do I take first?

As more MEDICS arrive, Jana falls to the ground.

BILLIE

After her, take the little one, she
smells like a latrine.

MEDIC

God. Disgusting.

The medic eyes Salomea, who slowly puts away her knife.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

Billie tucking children into beds.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A bit of sunlight on the horizon. Billie joins the soldier on
patrol on the camp perimeter.

BILLIE

What are we doing out here?

They find the kids from the earlier scene (minus Jana), same
positions as before, in the woods.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

We had beds for them. What are they
doing out here?

SOLDIER

Third night now. We put them to
bed, round midnight they hop out of
bed and come here.

(MORE)

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

They only want our food - they're afraid to stay inside. They all face in different directions. And one of them is always awake.

He tosses a rock. Salomea leaps up instantly with a knife. For the first half of the script, Salomea moves like an animal when she's in the woods, almost feline. The soldier shines a flashlight on his hand, revealing a slice wound.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

That kid with the knife? Don't try to sneak up on her in the dark.

BILLIE

Come back to your beds. It really is safe. No need to be afraid.

Salomea recognizes Billie.

SOLDIER

Weren't there six of them?

BILLIE

Girl last night. Pneumonia.

Salomea stares at Billie. And then at the row of graves next to Jana's.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Billie is calling on an Army telephone.

BILLIE

Colonel. All these kids are sick. I need doctors. What do you mean, make do? So I'll the truck drivers doing diagnoses?...Yes sir. ...Yes sir.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

A dozen children in bed. Billie approaches Ewa, drinking water, with a splinted arm, and Anelie.

BILLIE

The wards are safe, you don't need to run into the woods every night. But we're short food, drugs, nurses. I need help.

ANELIE

What do you want?

BILLIE

Adults are at a camp down the road -
-they've been overrun with disease.
They were supposed to help here...
You kids are all I have. We need to
put up some tents, dining hall.

EWA

I told you. They're putting us to
work, just like the Germans.

ANELIE

Ewa!

BILLIE

No, it's not like the Germans. Lay
in bed all day, you still get three
hots and a cot. But if you help me,
we can take care of all these kids.
Maybe find their parents.

EWA

How do you find them, exactly?

BILLIE

I have medics, drivers - they don't
know what happened in those camps,
not like you do. I need to get the
kids settled, and do our cards.

ANELIE

Cards?

BILLIE

Each person comes in, gets a card.
Name, the camp they were in. Then
somewhere else there's another card
with the parents... With a little
luck, we match parents and kids.

EWA

Like Black Peter.

BILLIE

Black - yes! The card game.

EWA

Black Peter. Match up the cards.

BILLIE

It's chaos: some children, I don't
even know their names. I want to
start with girls from the hospital.

ANELIE

Why us?

BILLIE

You're still sick. The healthy girls can do laundry, dig potatoes.

ANELIE

So the camp is for children?

BILLIE

They built a camp for adults first, they got hit with typhus. They sent me here to set up this camp for the children, to protect you.

She points to three dazed BOYS in bed, staring into space.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

These kids don't have families, some of them...you can see, staring at the ceiling, wetting the bed. ...Who here knows German and English?

ANELIE

Me. Anelie. And Ewa with the big mouth.

BILLIE

Okay, so how are all of you, anyway? Ewa, the hand...?

EWA

Arm. The Nazis broke my arm. I really do have a big mouth.

Billie, concerned, steps toward Anelie.

BILLIE

And Anelie...

ANELIE

Syphilis and gonorrhoea.

BILLIE

Syphilis AND gonorrhoea? How on earth did a girl your age --

She pulls back in shock.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Oh God --

ANELIE

How do you think a fourteen-year-old girl survives a place like Treblinka 1? Then the road here, all those soldiers?

Billie, overwhelmed, reaches for Anelie, eyes Ewa.

BILLIE

Sorry, I'm sorry - and she knows?

ANELIE

I did it so she wouldn't have to. Your medic gave me penicillin. You think I should be ashamed?

BILLIE

You got these kids here alive....So are you girls going to keep sleeping in the woods?

EWA

There's the one girl, the one who doesn't speak...

BILLIE

I know. She pops up every few days and then disappears. I don't know how to help her if she won't stay.

ANELIE

Are you ready for...everything you're going to see and hear in this camp?

BILLIE

This war was my ticket to see the world. Got captured in the Philippines. Lost twenty pounds and a couple of teeth, how do I look?

ANELIE

This is not the Philippines. And it's not a card game. You haven't got a clue.

Ewa pulls Billie aside.

EWA

Anelie thinks she's protecting me from the big bad world. I was owned, shall we say, by a Nazi colonel. He took me to half the death camps in Europe. Quite an education. Don't tell Anelie.

Billie opens a door and finds Salomea hiding and watching. She runs.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Billie, Anelie and Ewa sort out kids who don't know which camp they came from: Jozka, a girl of 10; ROCHA, a girl of 7; and TREBLINKA PAWEL, a small boy of 12. LEON, a giant boy of 14, arrives with JAKUB, a tough boy of 12. Hanna with the two-tone hair enters.

BILLIE

What happened to your hair?

HANNA

The Catholics.

She laughs at Billie's confusion. Anelie reads a card.

ANELIE

Okay, you're a total mystery. Come here, little criminal. We'll have to take you to...the witch.

JAKUB

What?

ANELIE

She's a good witch. She can sort you out in a few minutes. Take your card and stand in that line.

JAKUB

She's not going to turn me into a rat, or something?

ANELIE

Not unless you misbehave.

EWA

Next! Hello. Let's see the card.

Go to Ewa meeting Leon. Adam manages the cards. Ewa, easily the cleverest child in camp, points across the room at a pile of cards.

EWA (CONT'D)

Anelie, you have a stack for Lvov and a stack for Lemberg, it's the same place!

(to Leon)

Hey, it's okay. You're not sure which camp you were in?

LEON

Sorry.

EWA

It's okay. Munich. Can you read?

LEON

Of course.

EWA

Did the camp have a big sign on the gate? German? Arbeit macht frei?

LEON

Arbeit -- yes.

EWA

Hmm... Sachsenhausen, Flossenburg, Oswiecim, Terezin...The camp had lots of shaygetz, or was it all our people?

[Oswiecim, the local name for Auschwitz, is pronounced osh-VYEN-chim]

LEON

Shaygetz. Goyim.

EWA

Adam, this one's Dachau. Hugs! Alright, you're safe now.

She hugs Leon.

EWA (CONT'D)

Next! Let's see the card.

Cutting to another Ewa interview.

EWA (CONT'D)

Lots of typhus in your camp?

JAKUB

Yes, how did you know?

She touches his face; he's nervous.

EWA

You're okay?

JAKUB

Yes.

EWA
Lots of Russians there?

JAKUB
(smiles)
You really are a witch.

EWA
Adam -- Bergen-Belsen.

Adam writes. Ewa kisses Jakub who recoils.

EWA (CONT'D)
Relax, you're home now. You need
the doctor. Next! Give me the card.

Ewa interviewing another child.

EWA (CONT'D)
You came into the camp by train?

JOZKA
No. No train tracks. We were in
trucks.

EWA
Chelmno camp! And you're alive!

JOZKA
I was lucky. The Germans heard the
Russians coming and drove all the
trucks into the woods. They were
ordered to shoot us but the guards
in my truck ran away. The rest of
my family...they were in a different
truck.
(a stricken look)
Lucky me.

EWA
Well, we got you, safe and sound.
Hugs!

She sees Salomea behind a door.

EWA (CONT'D)
I have your card. "That girl in the
forest with the scary SS knife"...?

Salomea gives her a look and watches the other kids.

Ewa interviewing another child.

EWA (CONT'D)

Okay, separated from your family in winter '43. You were in Treblinka 2, not Treblinka 1?

TREBLINKA PAWEL

I don't know.

EWA

Did you see two fences, one behind the other, with pine branches stuck in it?

TREBLINKA PAWEL

No.

EWA

You see the zoo for the officers' kids, with foxes and a peacock?

TREBLINKA PAWEL

No!

EWA

Did your parents work in a quarry, turn big stones into little ones -

Pawel, who had been getting more upset at the lack of progress, brightens.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Stones, yes!

EWA

Thank God. Treblinka 1. One of your parents may be alive.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Not both of them?

EWA

(cautious)

It's possible. Hugs! Next - your card?

Ewa meeting SONYA, a terrified blond girl of 17, blue eyes. Sonya is practically shaking.

EWA (CONT'D)

It's okay. Hmm...Outside the fence, there's a minefield? Achtung minen?

SONYA

Yes.

Ewa is suddenly alert.

EWA

And - wait, how old are you? Let me look at you.

She stops, horrified.

EWA (CONT'D)

...Landmines. Come here. Closer. Whisper to me. You were in Sobibor.

SONYA

Sobibor. I think so.

EWA

You were raped. By those guards in that SS building.

The girl's look says it all. Ewa hugs her tight.

EWA (CONT'D)

Adam. Go get Anelie - no wait, get Billie, not that Kraut doctor!

(to the girl)

It's okay. It's not your fault. And you have lots of company.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

From Salomea's point of view in the trees we see a typical army post, although this one has a wooden frame which was used as a gallows. The sergeant lifts a corpse out of a jeep, lays it near a newly dug grave in the camp graveyard. Billie, Hanna, Mateusz, Anelie and Ewa follow on foot.

EWA

Jana. We got her here alive! I thought the Americans could fix anything.

ANELIE

Pneumonia. Without us she wouldn't have gotten this far.

EWA

She saved us all. Billie, we'd like to say goodbye to her. Just us. We came a long way together.

Billie walks to the jeep. The children move Jana's body closer to the grave. Salomea appears at the edge of the trees. The others see her.

MATEUSZ

It's Jana.

Salomea looks at the body, stunned; she nods and watches as the others kneel by the body. Then she sees the long line of graves next to Jana's.

In a moment, Mateusz heads toward the tents and Billie crosses to him.

BILLIE

It's okay. Mateusz?

MATEUSZ

Mati.

BILLIE

You're okay?

MATEUSZ

Got food and a toilet, we got you instead of the SS.

BILLIE

The girl with the knife, where did you find her?

MATEUSZ

She found us one day in the woods, I was asleep, she was beating me with a stick.

BILLIE

What?

MATEUSZ

She woke us up, Germans coming. Every night she watched over us. I started watching with her.

BILLIE

Because you see well in the dark?

MATEUSZ

At night, she has attacks.

BILLIE

Do you know why?

MATEUSZ

She never speaks. Don't know if she can.

BILLIE

Should I be worried about her?

MATEUSZ

She killed wild animals and ate them. You saw her scars, the bites?

BILLIE

Don't remind me. But who is she?

MATEUSZ

Wonder who she was before the war. What's going to happen to her?

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Salomea is on the watch again, looking at the compound. MATEUSZ, with aviator sunglasses, lies in the sun, his head against a building. Leon and Jakub arrive.

LEON

See, there he is again.

JAKUB

Every day he's in that same spot.

LEON

Wearing those sunglasses.

Jakob walks over, taps Mateusz' foot with his own.

JAKUB

Hey, what's your name?

LEON

Where did you get the glasses?

JAKUB

You know the rules, everybody shares.

SALOMEA approaches with candy bars. She examines the new arrivals, snaps her fingers at them, waves at them to back up as she walks around Mateusz' feet. She drops a candy bar on his chest. Without looking he gropes until he finds it.

MATEUSZ

Ah. You're fantastic.

She returns her gaze to the new arrivals.

JAKUB
 (to the girl)
 Who are you?

Leon adjusts his jaw with his hand.

LEON
 We've met...We just wanted to talk
 to him.

She looks down at Mateusz, then back at them. And slowly
 shakes her head.

JAKUB
 So what's the story with this kid -

LEON
 Hey. Let's get soup in the dining
 hall.

Her face relaxes; she gives Leon a tiny nod. She sees the
 soldier whose hand she cut, takes him by his good hand, and
 leads him to the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Salomea looks up at the soldier. She takes a look at his gun.
 She leads him into an exam room. She uses her knife to slice
 off his bandage, examines his hand and re-bandages it. She
 looks him in the eye and nods. Disappears.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

The hall is crowded with kids playing. Billie buttons a boy's
 shirt. Anelie enters, carrying a baby and a piece of paper.

A fight erupts at a table, an aggressive teenage boy named
 DANIEL and a teenage girl named RUTA.

RUTA
 Keep your stupid coal miner fingers
 to yourself!

Daniel moves toward her but Billie intervenes.

BILLIE
 Daniel! Why don't you go to the
 boys' dorm for now.

DANIEL
 I'm not going anywhere.

ANELIE

Daniel!

He glares at Anelie and leaves.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

One of them explodes like that every day. This baby only shuts up when I hold her. Can you find these people? The medic wants to see them.

BILLIE

(takes Anelie's paper)

Elka Piechowiak.

Throughout the scene, Billie's Polish pronunciation is terrible; Anelie's is perfect.

ANELIE

Govno. Piechowiak! Chodz tutaj.
(Shit. Piechowiak! Come here.)

The children begin to listen, puzzled.

BILLIE

Judita Lewkowicz.

ANELIE

Lewkowicz.

BILLIE

Sala Przybyl.

ANELIE

Przybyl.

BILLIE

Maria Niewiadomski.

Anelie hands off the squawking baby, points to the list.

ANELIE

Niewiadomski. I think the baby could read them better. Give me that!

BILLIE

No wait, I've got it, here's a short one! Leja Zale.

ANELIE

Zale.

BILLIE
Rachela Skrzypczak.

ANELIE
Skrzypczak.

BILLIE
Skrzypczak.

ANELIE
Skrzypczak! O Moj Boze!
(Oh my God!)

Anelie puts her hands on her head, appalled.

BILLIE
I'm sorry.

Billie looks in her phrase book.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Przepraszam.
(I'm sorry)

ANELIE
Przepraszam. Przepraszam!

The kids nearby are laughing.

BILLIE
And more kids from ...Czechoslovakia.

Billie shows Anelie the list; Anelie breaks up laughing.

ANELIE
Let me read these. You tormented
these children enough for one
morning.

She looks up and is shocked to see Salomea smiling.

EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT

Salomea, holding a rifle, wakes the sleeping guard. He leaps to his feet. She hands him his rifle.

SOLDIER
We keep meeting like this. Could we
have some kinda signal so I don't
shoot you?

She swats his arm and points. A truck is coming.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
Thanks, kid. Danke? Spasiba?

A girl is rounding the corner of a tent, heading toward the compound, when Salomea grabs her and pulls her back.

The truck stops. Russian soldiers hop out. Two other girls scream when they see the Russians, who smile at the girls.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

GALINA, a female Russian army major, enters with KOLYA, a male Russian lieutenant age 19, and YURI, an officer. Behind them, armed Russian soldiers are visible. Billie is working; she stands. Anelie works with cards. Billie and Galina survey each other for a moment.

GALINA
Lieutenant.

BILLIE
Major. What does the Red Army want here? You're a long way from home. It's got to be close to midnight.

GALINA
I have a list of people in your camp. You turn them over to me.

ANELIE
We will do no such thing. Is this why you showed up at midnight?

GALINA
Yalta agreement. All citizens of Soviet sectors will be turned over to the Red Army. Your president agreed.

BILLIE
I don't understand -

GALINA
People from Ukraine, Byelorussia...

ANELIE
Just load them up on trucks and make them disappear?

GALINA
If you interfere, my general will call your general, and either way, I come back with my truck.

(MORE)

GALINA (CONT'D)

I arranged for Kolya here to stay
and keep an eye on things. Kolya,
you report in to Yuri every night.

She leaves. Kolya, insolent, lights a cigarette.

BILLIE

No smoking. Hospital, off limits.
Girls' dorm, off limits. You piss
me off, you're on a truck back to
Russia, general or no general.

ANELIE

We can't give these children to the
Russians. You know what will happen
to them?

BILLIE

What am I supposed to do? If the
Russians don't take them, you all
may be back out in the woods again.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Colonel enters as Billie does paperwork. Billie is surrounded
with child-related flotsam, including comic books.

COLONEL

Good news. Red Cross got the camps
to play along with your card game.

BILLIE

It only works if they all do it.

COLONEL

We have a new problem. Roosevelt
told the Russians they can take
their refugees. Russian army is
running all over Germany looking
for Russians, Ukrainians.

BILLIE

What if these people don't want to
go back?

COLONEL

Too bad. If you see any Russian
troops, hide the Russian kids.

BILLIE

That's dozens of kids! As it is I have these -- little cadavers, sit in a corner, staring, peeing themselves. How do I help them?

COLONEL

I have a possible solution, but you may not like it.

MP enters with SOMMER, a German doctor in his 50s. Billie eyes the MP and is suspicious.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

This is Doctor Sommer. MD. German.

BILLIE

You better tell me the rest.

COLONEL

Sommer had orders for certain kids. Orders from a Doctor Mengele. For example, he sent pairs of twins to Mengele. In Oswiecim.

BILLIE

Let me guess. You didn't know a thing.

SOMMER

It wasn't hard to guess -

COLONEL

Mengele wanted to prove Hitler's breeding theory, increase the Aryan race by creating more twins. He'd infect twins with germs to see who died first. Chopped off healthy limbs. Inject dyes into their eyes.

BILLIE

You're serious.

COLONEL

In his spare time Mengele taught the SS how to use the cyanide chambers. That's your pal Mengele. You're an easy conviction, abetting mass murder. But I'm just one lawyer, and I have a hundred Nazis worse than you on my shit list.

BILLIE

So why are you here?

COLONEL

You said you need a doctor.

BILLIE

I need a real doctor!

SOMMER

I am a real doctor. I treated women and then pediatrics.

COLONEL

Pediatrics. Perfect fit.

BILLIE

Perfect fit??

COLONEL

We're short of doctors! Army sent em all home. This is all I can give you, until winter.

BILLIE

He's practically a murderer. He should have done something.

COLONEL

I think he's just stupid. Or gutless.

SOMMER

I will confess to gutless. A lot of that going around in those days.

BILLIE

Well, thank God I'm an American. Part of me is itching to get back home, forget this awful place. Turn on the shower and wash it all away. ...Christ. Germany.

SOMMER

Yes, go back to America, nice and safe. I studied surgery in California. Pretend that you're not in a German camp, you're in a camp in California, filled with those Japanese farmers who were interned. Americans hate the Japanese.

BILLIE

Yes, and -

SOMMER

The speeches in Congress - nasty brown people invaded our land, kill them all! It would have been the easiest thing for Roosevelt to give the order. Very popular. And there you are in an army uniform, with orders to kill.

BILLIE

No American officer would ever give those orders.

SOMMER

(smiles, ironic)

Really? What a relief. Say they do give you the order. You refuse. Good for you! Run from California to Arizona, barbed wire on the border, protect you from the Mexicans after your army stole their land. New Mexico, more barbed wire, cages for the few Navajo and Apache your soldiers didn't exterminate.

BILLIE

Now wait a minute --

SOMMER

Next stop, Texas. Hot place. Good thing you're not a Negro, or there is no toilet for you, or drinking water. Up to Tennessee, where your soldiers built that clever bomb that killed them all at Nagasaki. Colonel, you must know the Liberty League. Shall I tell her...

COLONEL

A bunch of army vets and bankers tried to overthrow FDR and set up a dictator.

SOMMER

Third Reich West! Tell her who the new Fuehrer was going to be.

COLONEL

Douglas MacArthur.

SOMMER

Fraulein, your point is well taken - right now, I would rather be anything, than a German. But if you think your country could never do these things, you may be too naïve to do this job.

COLONEL

Okay, this was a mistake.

SOMMER

(leafs through comic book)
Your army is doing amazing things - feeding your enemies, the world has never seen conquerors like you. You are a great people, but you didn't just come down from Mount Olympus. Or Planet Krypton.

COLONEL

You can give that speech at your trial. Be glad you weren't caught by the Russians. You'd be dead already.

SOMMER

Fraulein. The longer you let me live free and work, the more damage I can undo. You want to treat all these dying children by yourself?

Outside, the MP sees Salomea staring at his gun. He looks at his gun, sets it aside, and smiles at her. She's suspicious: she's used to German and Russian soldiers.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Salomea is moaning in a bed, waving here knife. She's asleep.

Anelie, Ewa, Mati and Hanna rush in.

MATEUSZ

You need to come get me faster. Three nights in a row. Come on, I've got you. Shh....

ANELIE

You've got a real knack for it.

MATEUSZ

I've done it a hundred times. Got the bruises to prove it.

Anelie, Ewa, Mati and Hanna open Cokes.

ANELIE

How can we help her? What do we know about that girl?

HANNA

She has an SS knife.

MATEUSZ

Not afraid of the dark.

HANNA

She's a thief.

EWA

She hates leaving people behind. Bet there's a reason for that. And the most obvious bit. Mati...

MATEUSZ

What?

EWA

She's is madly in love with you. Head over heels. Even before you two stayed up night after night --

HANNA

Ewa!

MATEUSZ

She's not in love. She hasn't even said a word.

EWA

When a girl is in love, her words never say what she means anyway.

HANNA

I think she just loves lost puppies. When Mati was sick she never left his side.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

From the trees Salomea watches kids play and sing. Supply truck arrives. Anelie approaches with a list. SERGEANT gets out of the truck with paperwork. Daniel saws wood.

SERGEANT

You again. Last time, you took everything but my skivvies.

ANELIE

I'm trying to save lives.

SERGEANT

Here we go...

ANELIE

Please give us more bread and potatoes? We ran out this month.

He sees her distressed look.

SERGEANT

Army rules...See what I can do.

ANELIE

Thank you. Daniel, the beer hall, can we save the roof?

DANIEL

Most of it. I can't work miracles.

ANELIE

Haha! The roof - I need hammers, nails, saws. Soap, blankets, tents, coal. ...And penicillin.

SERGEANT

Anything else?

ANELIE

Vegetables. Ewa needs pencils. ...And, whose bright idea was it to send fifty pounds of ham to a camp full of Jewish kids?

SERGEANT

They don't eat ham?

Anelie eyeroll.

ANELIE

How about women's underwear? Or children's?

SERGEANT

I can get men's underwear real easy. General principle's the same.

Another tragic look from Anelie.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Sorry.

ANELIE

Fine. The smallest underwear you have. These girls are the size of plucked chickens...Can you find me clothes that aren't all army green?

SERGEANT

This is the Army, not Macys.

ANELIE

I'm not asking for diamonds and mink. These children, they're all in shock: I want them to forget the war, you want to dress them up like soldiers. What does the army have they can play with?

SERGEANT

We got baseball gear -

ANELIE

These kids never heard of - fine, they can just figure it out.

SERGEANT

Have you tried the black market?

ANELIE

I should go to those people, and sell...what?

Salomea looks into the truck and is in awe of the massive piles of food. She taps the back of the truck, intending to watch for the return of this miraculous vehicle.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

Hey. You can have one. Two if you tell me your name.

Salomea grabs a fat spud, gives Anelie a look, and runs. The truck backs up a foot but stops when Treblinka Pawel runs behind it. He is clutching a potato.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

Hey, stop!

The boy, still frightened from his near-miss with the truck, runs. Anelie runs after.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

Hey, stop! Come here!

TREBLINKA PAWEL
It's mine!

ANELIE
Yes, you can keep the potato.

TREBLINKA PAWEL
It's mine!

ANELIE
But if you give it to me, we'll
cook it for you. You don't have to
eat it raw.

TREBLINKA PAWEL
You can't have it!

ANELIE
We'll cook it and give it back, I
promise!

TREBLINKA PAWEL
The whole potato?

ANELIE
Yes!

TREBLINKA PAWEL
I don't have to share it?

ANELIE
It's all yours. I'll even find you
a bigger one.

TREBLINKA PAWEL
You will?

ANELIE
Yes. Now go to the hospital for
your blanket.

TREBLINKA PAWEL
My own blanket?

ANELIE
Yes, you don't have to share that
either. It's not that kind of camp.

TREBLINKA PAWEL
Promise?

ANELIE
Promise. You alright now?

Pawel hands over the potato, pokes her.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

I don't get it back, I'm coming for you.

Anelie goes to the door where the truck is being unloaded. ADAM, 16, is coming out.

ANELIE

Do me a favor. Find me the biggest potato we have.

ADAM

What??

ANELIE

Don't ask. Big potato.

INT. BOY'S DORM - DAY

Pawel marks his name on his blanket with a pencil.

EXT. A FIELD - DAY

Now Salomea's treeline perch offers the spectacle of sport. In the field, baseball, with four sacks for bases. Confused fielders stand right on the bases: Leon, Jakub, and Jozka. Adam is in the outfield. Anelie at the plate consulting a manual. The sergeant watches, appalled.

ANELIE

Ready to have some fun? Adam, you are the shoot stop. You stand right behind the second base.

ADAM

I can't see you.

ANELIE

Just do what you're told! We're here to have fun! Throw the ball!

The child on second throws the ball toward Anelie. She stands astride the plate, holding the bat as though she's chopping wood. She flinches but bats the ball down in front of her. It rolls to a stop.

ADAM

What happened?

ANELIE

Now you three chase the ball.

ADAM

Why?

The three infielders, still confused, run to the plate. Jozka picks the ball up, smiling.

JOZKA

Does this mean I won?

SERGEANT

Stop it. Stop it! Give me that bat!

He begins directing the kids and hitting grounders. The kids run and shout; more kids come to play. Anelie smiles.

A solid hit heads to the trees. Salomea pops out of the brush, fetches it, throws it badly. She watches the game.

Ruta approaches Anelie.

RUTA

Thank you for the underwear.

ANELIE

Sure.

RUTA

You know the underwear has this sort of hole in it? In the front? I think this is for a boy.

Clasps hands, looks up.

RUTA (CONT'D)

I ask God for underwear. GIRL'S underwear. I'm a girl! Is this another one of your little jokes?

New kids arrive in a truck and Ewa begins herding them. Some are calm, some afraid, a few are crying. One tries to run off. Salomea, at the edge of the woods, intercepts him with a whistle and a candy bar. She takes his hand and nods to Ewa.

EWA

Hey knife girl. Last night a boy ran off, headed toward the hill. Do you know where -

Salomea nods and runs.

ANELIE

You called her knife girl?

EWA

If she doesn't like it she can tell
me her bloody name.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

The sergeant walks the perimeter. He sees smoke in the trees. Salomea runs deep into the woods where a few possessions lay on a blanket. She proceeds to eat a potato which she has roasted on a small fire. Next she begins skinning a rabbit.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Billie is asleep at her desk, Anelie and Ewa sort paperwork. Sommer enters; Billie wakes.

BILLIE

Doctor?

SOMMER

The MPs follow me everywhere.

BILLIE

It's that or prison.

SOMMER

I watch the children. I've never
seen anything like it. I've had to
watch from a distance, mostly -

ANELIE

I told you, we can't have a German
doctor going into those wards every
day. The children are terrified.

SOMMER

But I can help them -

ANELIE

You do the surgery, leave the rest
to us.

SOMMER

You and the nurse, you're not even
supposed to be doing diagnoses.

ANELIE

Diagnosis is easy. Starvation,
typhus, rape and lice, broken
record.

SOMMER

You're a child!

ANELIE

(quietly, to him)

Stay away from the children. Tell
them about Mengele. Tell me about
those people, the women, the looks
on their faces when they knew.

BILLIE

Anelie.

SOMMER

Lieutenant, you've seen shell
shock?

BILLIE

Sure. It's all over the place.

SOMMER

The first war, I was a medic. We
thought shell shock was from the
actual shaking, the impact from the
artillery. But there were too many
patients for that. On the front
line, one man in ten had shell
shock. The boys who stayed for a
month or two, they all had it.

BILLIE

What did you do?

SOMMER

The generals called them cowards
and sent them back up. The doctors
have no clue, they try electric
shock, lobotomy, cocaine.

BILLIE

But our camp, it's mostly children.
They're not soldiers.

SOMMER

(takes Anelie's hand)

Yes they are. These children are
soldiers, they fought a war, but
they had no weapons.

(MORE)

SOMMER (CONT'D)

They saw things more terrible than most soldiers ever see, and they were children. They have shell shock. We try to turn them back into children - first we need to heal them.

ANELIE

So where is all this going?

SOMMER

You're building the new building?

EWA

Need a roof and then the stove.

BILLIE

We need a new hospital ward.

SOMMER

If my idea works, you won't need it. Instead of just shoving all these sick kids into hospital beds, let's try and help them.

BILLIE

I need the space!...What's your plan?

SOMMER

Anelie. Take the children who wet the bed. The night screamers. Put them in the new building.

ANELIE

The bedwetters?

SOMMER

The ones who have it bad. That's your shell shock ward. Then we...try some things until something works. It's never been done, there's no textbook, but let's try.

BILLIE

The Army wouldn't like it. Anelie?

ANELIE

The children in that ward might feel like they're being punished.

Anelie points at Sommer.

ANELIE (CONT'D)
 ...But I think the szkop may be
 right. Let's try it.

SOMMER
 And you stop chasing me away?

ANELIE
 You work daytime. The children with
 the night terrors - there's no way
 a German is going to talk them
 through nightmares like that.

SOMMER
 She's right... What's a szkop?

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Sommer walks outside and sees Treblinka Pawel.

SOMMER
 Hey, boy.

He has called out more harshly than he intended.

SOMMER (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry. Can you help me?

TREBLINKA PAWEL
 With what?

SOMMER
 What's a szkop?

TREBLINKA PAWEL
 It's a ram that's been castrated.

Pawel, smiling, looks him over.

TREBLINKA PAWEL (CONT'D)
 Baaaaah.

This exchange makes Pawel's day. Salomea comes over, watching
 the retreating Sommer.

SALOMEA
 Baaaaah.

They smile.

EXT. THE TREES AT THE EDGE OF THE CAMP - DAY

Anelie calls to Billie behind a building.

ANELIE

Lieutenant, come quick.

They approach the trees and find a dead man. A child follows them and screams.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

MPs arrive at the other camp, to collect people for the Red Army truck. These Russians begged me to hide them.

BILLIE

Hide them? What are they, crazy?

ANELIE

They can't go back to Russia. One of them begged the American to shoot him, one slit his throat. This one -

BILLIE

His neck?

ANELIE

Hanged himself from the tree. People on the list, they're terrified. We can't send them back.

BILLIE

I asked the colonel. He can't do a thing. Keep the kids away - they're all nervous wrecks as it is.

Billie walks behind the kitchen and sees Salomea. Billie half-hides. Salomea approaches a cook who hands her two small potatoes; she looks piteously at him and he returns with two big ones. She nods, sees Billie and runs into the trees.

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - DAY

From a corner Salomea watches Billie and Anelie enter the new ward, Anelie carrying slips of paper. Sitting in a circle are Rocha, Pawel, Ruta, Jozka, Jakub, Leon. At the other end are the three sleeping BOYS, about ten years old. We will later learn that two of their names are ISAAC and JOSHUA.

ANELIE

Who are these three here?

BILLIE

First one, catatonic. He finally started eating. Second one, talked to Ewa once. Third one is very violent, he's sedated.

ANELIE

You sure you're ready to put them in this ward of ours?

BILLIE

Two of them are Russian. Have you seen an insane asylum, the smells, screaming, the violence. You know what's worse than throwing a child in a cage for the rest of his life? Throwing him in a cage for life, in Russia. This ward may be our only chance to save some of these kids.

Anelie approaches the kids who are awake. Mateusz listens, holding his aviator shades. The kids bring cards and Anelie flips through them.

ANELIE

Take a card, write down the best hiding place you ever had. Hiding from the Nazis. I saw you play hide and seek, you're all very good at it. Who hid in a potato sack?

ROCHA

My mother smuggled me out of town that way. I was smaller.

ANELIE

Hiding in the attic - you had to be quiet all day?

RUTA

It was awful.

ANELIE

Hid under a woman's dress, how big was this woman? Hiding in a garbage cart, hole in the ground, a hollowed-out couch...Jozka?

JOZKA

I hid in the quarantine ward. They didn't think anyone would be crazy enough to hide there.

ANELIE

You had our doctor test you?

JOZKA

(smiles)

I'm okay.

ANELIE

Jakub?

JAKUB

Gestapo trapped us by the river. We hid in the reeds, in the water. They shot my sister. I hid behind her body.

ANELIE

If you're afraid you don't have to tell your story, okay? Rocha again?

She rubs her back.

ROCHA

I hid in a haystack. They stabbed me with a pitchfork. But I didn't scream. It's still infected.

ANELIE

Mateusz? The pilot glasses work?

MATEUSZ

(waves the glasses)

They're great.

ANELIE

So you hid in a sewer.

Salomea comes closer to listen.

JOZKA

Oh my God! Ew!

MATEUSZ

I'm not stupid, it was the rain sewer, not the toilet sewer. But when it rained, the toilet tunnel backed up into my tunnel and I had to climb up into a manhole. The water workers brought me bread.

JOZKA

You couldn't get out?

MATEUSZ

The SS was obsessed with finding me, called my name on the radio truck every night. I was trapped.

JOZKA

How many days were you down there?

MATEUSZ

A year. I had no light for a year. I can't see well in the sunlight.

He holds up glasses. Salomea's jaw is on the floor.

JOZKA

We thought you were a movie star.

RUTA

I thought I was the hide-and-seek champion. I have to give the award to Hollywood here. Let's see the glasses!

He puts them on. Hanna watches intently.

KIDS

Hollywood!

ANELIE

Okay, another question. What's the bravest thing you ever saw?

RUTA

Boarding the train - Papa pretended he didn't know me, to keep me safe.

JAKUB

A woman threw a baby into a stranger's baby carriage, to save her son.

HANNA

I knew a priest who forged birth certificates. He persuaded Catholic families to take us. He taught us prayers, the rosary. He even dyed my hair blonde, Aryan-like.

Hanna holds up the ends of her hair.

HANNA (CONT'D)

The latest fashion from Paris.

ANELIE

When you found us, you were a blonde.

Mateusz is watching Hanna.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Gestapo chased me to an apartment house. I opened a door and a woman was there, stranger. I said Mama. Gestapo came round the corner.

(smiles)

And she put her arms around me. Kept me for six months.

ANELIE

Alright, enough for today.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Hey.

Anelie sits next to Pawel.

TREBLINKA PAWEL (CONT'D)

Ewa tries to find our parents. You can tell us the truth, you know.

ANELIE

Most of you...It's a waste of time. Your parents have passed away.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

I know.

ANELIE

But telling that to these children...

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Anelie. They already know.

Billie enters.

BILLIE

They did it! The war is over!

ANELIE

What do you -

BILLIE

In Japan, they dropped this big bomb, they surrendered!

ANELIE

Your husband made it through okay?

BILLIE

They don't know where he is.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Salomea from a distance watches kids play. Kolya approaches Anelie.

KOLYA

My commander gave me nothing to do but sit and spy on you. It's rather disappointing so far. Can I help?

Sounds of commotion from a building.

ANELIE

We're having a problem with fights.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Anelie and Kolya enter the hall. They see Leon grabbing Jakub's head and trying to punch him. Kolya grabs Leon while Anelie pulls Jakub away.

LEON

Let me go!

KOLYA

Hey! You sit.

ANELIE

Angry boys. Having a man in the dorm might help. Billie says you're a spy. See that girl? Go spy on her.

They watch Salomea, who has followed the Russian suspiciously.

KOLYA

That's the girl from the forest. I hear she doesn't speak to anybody.

Anelie unlocks drawer, pulls out knife.

ANELIE

She doesn't speak at all. We found her in the woods. She runs off for days at a time. She likes knives. Can you find out where she's from?

KOLYA

You tried talking to her?

ANELIE

We all did. She may be beyond help.

Sommer enters. Anelie sorts cards; he helps.

SOMMER

You know these cards are a waste of time? The parents are all dead. Once the Americans leave, the children are homeless.

SOMMER (CONT'D)

You've heard of a man called Jesus Christ? He tried to carry all the pain of the world on his shoulders. Not to spoil the ending of the book, but Jesus dies. All that pain from other people crushed him.

ANELIE

What in the world...??

SOMMER

Ewa. She listens to every child, horror stories, she lies to them, giving them hope, those cards. Who will crack first, her or you?

ANELIE

You never sleep. Are you crucifying yourself to atone for your sins? You push the shell shock so hard -- I admit it, you were right, you win.

SOMMER

Yes, I'm try to cut a few years off of my time in purgatory. ...Purgatory, it's a place where...

ANELIE

I know all about purgatory. First-hand experience. Hold yourself together, okay? If Ewa can't find their parents, you and I are going to try to cure them.

SOMMER

Cure them? I just want them to stop cowering when I walk in the room.

Ewa enters, slides her arm inside Anelie's, sighs.

EWA

These tiny babies. Arms and legs like mop handles. We're raising a species of scarecrows.

(distressed)

Just once I want to open the door and see fat children come in. Fat babies are happy babies. Then I want to find their parents. Just one.

Anelie and Sommer exchange a look. Adam rushes in.

ADAM

That girl with the knife, she's having another attack. Where's Mati?

They all run. In the distance they hear Salomea scream.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Salomea in a bed, totally coming apart. Mateusz approaches her warily, gently takes hold of her knife hand, and puts his other arm around her.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Salomea watches Mateusz draw on paper, glasses hanging from his shirt. His artistic personality is a total mismatch for the hard-nosed Hanna. Salomea is now close enough to listen.

HANNA

Hey Hollywood. We're not in the woods anymore. Why do you keep following me?

MATEUSZ

I'm not -

She sees his drawings.

HANNA

...Hey, that's me! What are you doing?

MATEUSZ

I'm making a comic book.

HANNA

A what?

MATEUSZ

Comic book. You know, like Spring-Heeled Jack, Desperate Dan?

Seeing her blank look.

MATEUSZ (CONT'D)

Lord Snooty, Dick Turpin, Varney the Vampire?

HANNA

What? I'm a vampire??

MATEUSZ

No! Those are comic books from London. It's how I learned English. This one's mine.

HANNA

Keep me out of your silly stories - wait, let me see.

MATEUSZ

I did a nice job on your hair, see?

HANNA

(a hand to her chest)
You made me a little bit curvy.

MATEUSZ

Sorry.

HANNA

No no, now I've got something to look forward to. Fatten up on this army food...What does this Russian word say? Dalmatian Girl?

MATEUSZ

Clever, right? Because your hair is in two colors. And you have a few freckles.

HANNA

You named me after a dog.

MATEUSZ

You're not a dog - it's only a --

HANNA

Turned me into a Dalmatian.

MATEUSZ

Look how beautiful I made you!

HANNA

Give me that thing so I can draw
YOU.

(glares, arms upraised)
Stupid Sewer Boy. Kills his enemies
with his toilet smell.

MATEUSZ

I'm already in there. Aviator Boy.

HANNA

What??

Intrigued, she looks.

HANNA (CONT'D)

With the dark glasses - clever.

MATEUSZ

You and I go on adventures. Fly
through outer space. Use our atom
bombs against the Nazis.

He raises his brows, takes her hand.

MATEUSZ (CONT'D)

There's a rumor we run off to get
married. Isn't that a delicious
idea?

HANNA

Not if Sewer Boy wants to keep
breathing.

Salomea creeps over to look; Mateusz notices, she flees.

MATEUSZ

I'm starting a new one tonight.

HANNA

Let me. I'll write it. You draw.

MATEUSZ

Ask Anelie for paper. She's
starting to get irritated with me.

HANNA

Pencils?

MATEUSZ

No, I draw all my pictures in
blooooood.

HANNA

You're crazy.

MATEUSZ

Of course I need pencils. Thanks,
Dalmatian -
(he stops abruptly)

HANNA

Go ahead, call me a Dalmatian, just
one time, I dare you. On this
planet my name is Hanna. ...I wish
you could make my eyes blue!

She takes a deep breath, without looking up.

HANNA (CONT'D)

Mati. That night by the river? We
were sure you were going to die.
They were arguing over who would
get your shoes and your shirt! When
you woke up the next day I almost -

Deep breath, composes herself.

HANNA (CONT'D)

When we found you, Anelie said "No
boys. Too much trouble."

MATEUSZ

What changed her mind about me?

HANNA

The little girl. She didn't say
anything but she refused to leave
without you. The girl is boss. I
just wish I knew what her voice
sounds like.

Hanna hides her eyes with his glasses. Salomea approaches,
afraid, croaking voice.

SALOMEA

Salomea. I'm Salomea.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

A truck arrives; children get out. One sees the old gallows frame and screams. Salomea follows the child's gaze and looks sadly at the frame, which she hadn't noticed before.

ANELIE

No, shh. Nobody uses that anymore.

EWA

Let's tear that damn thing down.

ANELIE

No. Get me some lumber and rope.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

The gallows, being converted into a swingset.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

NEW ARRIVALS stare, shocked, as kids play on the swings. Ewa and Anelie watch.

NEW KID

(smiles)

You let the boys play on the gallows? You people are crazy.

EWA

This was a prison camp. Children arrive, they think they're back with the Nazis. Can we make them feel safe again, like they're home?

Pawel approaches and hugs Anelie.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Anelie, thank you! You know how long it's been since I had my own toothbrush?

ANELIE

The Fritzes didn't think you'd be around long enough for cavities. So you like hugs now? From girls?

EWA

Does this look like a Nazi camp?

TREBLINKA PAWEL

It IS a Nazi camp.

ANELIE

Not now. What scares you when you look at this place?

TREBLINKA PAWEL

German signs, anything with "Jude" in it. Don't do sirens or roll calls, haircuts and delousing on the first day. And the German doctor, just hearing him -

ANELIE

We need a doctor and he's all I've got. Okay, what else?

INT. GIRL'S DORM - DAY

The girl's dorm is painted pink and red; Ruta and other girls paint pictures on one of the walls.

BILLIE

Pink and red. You've got our girls in a building that looks like a whorehouse.

ANELIE

And it doesn't look like Treblinka. They wake up, see the pictures, they know they're not with the Nazis.

(points, whispers)

I think that's Valentino. It's terrible.

RUTA

(irritated)

Hey! That's mine! One thing terrifies them - dogs. Can we find some puppies? Little ones, the ones that don't grow up into monsters.

ANELIE

Yes, little yappers, not the woof-woof.

Salomea enters and is delighted with the pictures and colors.

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - DAY

A scarecrow/dummy with a Hitler mustache lays on a bed. Children beat it with sticks; Anelie watches. Feathers fly.

KIDS
Hitler is dead! Hitler is dead!

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Anelie walks in with a black eye.

BILLIE
My God, what happened?

ANELIE
We had a skit. The children dressed
a scarecrow like Hitler and beat
the hell out of him with sticks.
One boy hit me on the back swing.

BILLIE
Oh no.

ANELIE
His apologies were totally heart-
rending, he made me cry. In my good
eye.

BILLIE
Let me see.

ANELIE
The children needed it. We were
short of food, everyone was jumpy.
Mateusz is putting on a play, cheer
them all up.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Billie working, Salomea enters with a watch.

SALOMEA
Somebody was in my bag.

BILLIE
Well. You can talk.

SALOMEA
You get your watch back, when I get
my knife back.

After a year's silence Salomea sounds like Vito Corleone, to the end of the script. Billie puts her hand on the drawer holding the knife.

BILLIE

You sit.

Kolya enters and blocks Salomea's escape.

KOLYA

Ah, yes, your card just says "girl found in the forest". You can talk. You speak any Russian...?

SALOMEA

(withering look, perfect French)

Enchante.

KOLYA

Anyone comes near you, you push them away. Anyone comes near while you're sleeping, you punch them in the face, you never even wake up - I hope you outgrow that before you get married! You want everyone to think you're tough.

SALOMEA

And I mind my own business. I don't need your help.

KOLYA

Yes, you don't care about anybody. Except that's not true. The little boys, if anybody picks on them, you attack like a wolverine. I think the little one likes you.

He ignores her murderous glare.

KOLYA (CONT'D)

And that girl who was sick, you carried messages to her boyfriend, rain or snow.

SALOMEA

You're a spy!

KOLYA

And you're a romantic under that ferocious disguise. So tomorrow, you give back her watch, we'll talk. ...How did you get an SS dagger away from an SS man?

She gives him a blank stare.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Billie sees her watch on her desk. She unlocks her drawer and finds it empty. She exits.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Continuation. Billie sees Salomea scrutinizing her from a distance, cleaning her nails with her knife. Billie crosses to her and sits.

BILLIE

You don't have to pee in the woods. We have a latrine. It's safer. But we're short of everything, we can't have thieves.

SALOMEA

Sorry.

BILLIE

There were six of you when you came, one girl died. We're making a gravestone. What was her name?

Salomea gives Billie a long look.

SALOMEA

Jana. When I was sick she refused to leave me. I would have died.

Kids chase puppies across the compound.

EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT

Mateusz comes out of the latrine and finds Salomea in front of him. She takes his hand.

SALOMEA

Mati. We're safe. We're really safe here. The Americans. I can't believe it. We're safe!

She starts to cry and can't stop. She hugs him hard. She puts her hands on her stomach.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

I'm like a big clenched fist that can't let go. We're safe!

He smiles and wipes away her tears.

MATEUSZ

We're safe for now. But the Russians want to take us. Watch that Kolya boy. You girls know what soldiers are like. You feel better?

SALOMEA

I don't remember what it's like, not being afraid. Thank you. Thanks for....just thank you.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

Sommer, Mateusz and Hanna stage a performance of one of their comic books for the bedwetters ward.

MATEUSZ

Dalmatian Girl, distract him while I fire the atomic bomb!

Hanna waggles her chest at Sommer.

HANNA

Come, liebchen, give us a kiss.

MATEUSZ

Save yourself, Myszko!
(my mouse)

Hanna looks at her audience and bites her knuckle in mock fear, diving to the ground. Mateusz pops a paper bag; Sommer staggers comically several times and falls to the ground.

HANNA

Aviator Boy! Come, let's escape to outer space, my love!

Wild applause. Hanna and Mateusz bow and take off bits of costume. Kids file out. Sommer sits up.

RUTA

(laughing)
That was amazing - you made water squirt out of my nose.

SOMMER

This is silly, I had to die in the last three episodes.

MATEUSZ

The whole thing is silly. Give the people what they want. Killing you is very popular.

Hanna helps Sommer up and holds his hand, as a child would do with her father.

HANNA

It's good for them, laugh at the SS man. Turn the monster into a clown. You want them to heal, right?

SOMMER

Am I a monster?

HANNA

You play one perfectly. The children laugh so we keep doing it.

Salomea gives Sommers' shoulder a reassuring pat, straightens his shirt, and laughs.

Ewa enters.

EWA

Hanna? ..We tracked down that card.

HANNA

My parents?

EWA

Same name, wrong family. I shouldn't have said anything --

Hanna shakes loose and runs off.

EWA (CONT'D)

Why am I even doing this?

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

SZYMON, late thirties, thin, with a sack; visits an exhausted Ewa. Daniel and Adam peel potatoes.

EWA

This Szymon. He came from Tel Aviv, he visits the camps.

SZYMON

Where are you children going to go, once the Americans leave? You boys want to go to Israel?

DANIEL

There's a new war coming. This time we get to fight back.

SZYMON

Another young lad wants revenge.
Son, the fighting in Israel, there
are no Nazis to kill. You want to
fight, you get your chance once the
British let us in...

(to Adam)

What about you? Another hothead?

ADAM

I don't want to go to Israel.

SZYMON

Well, I have another project. Nazis
are hiding in Germany. We put on
our detective hats, hunt them down.

DANIEL

You be a detective while I fight.
Some of us want to show what we're
made of.

SZYMON

Get your War Hero scouting badge?
Already got mine, thank you.
Mauthausen. Bottom of a pit, a
quarry. 186 steps go up, a man on
each step with a block of stone. He
gets to the top, he's tired, he
falls on the man behind him. We all
go down like dominos. The SS loved
it, like watching clowns at the
circus. I broke three toes and my
arm. So I'm a quiet detective now.
...Ewa, my offer stands. We're
building an Israeli intelligence
service, can you imagine?

EWA

I'm going to France. I'm going to
teach, and cook, and make babies.

He sees Salomea.

SZYMON

And you. In Israel our girls are
soldiers too.

Salomea, horrified, backs away.

SZYMON (CONT'D)

I forgot. We have a spy network
that runs from here to Jerusalem.
Soil from the Mount of Olives.

He points to the sack.

EWA
In Jerusalem?

SZYMON
When God comes to earth to raise
the dead, the people buried in this
soil will be raised first.

He points outside.

SZYMON (CONT'D)
Those people buried on your hill -
I say they deserve to go to the
head of the line. I'd sprinkle this
all over Treblinka if the Russians
would let me.

EWA
Magic Jehovah Dust? I stopped
believing all that about the time
they put me on the train.

SZYMON
We'll see what you believe when
you're old.

EWA
You mean when I'm looking Death in
the face? Me and Grim Reaper, we're
old friends.

SZYMON
In the war, so many dreams were
crushed - this one is too nice not
to hang onto.

Ewa holds some dirt. Looks at the ceiling.

EWA
Hey, Big Boss! Don't come get me
just yet, alright? You have enough
of us up there already.

Salomea puts her hand the dirt.

ANELIE
(points to Salomea)
You think this is going to work?
The girl from the forest?

KOLYA

You saw her with the shell shock
kids. Her name is Salomea.

They approach Salomea and find she's tearing up.

SALOMEA

Can I have some for Jana's grave?

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - NIGHT

Salomea consoles the bedwetters. Leon wakes a the nightmare.
Salomea crosses quickly to him.

LEON

Papa!

SALOMEA

Look at the room. You're here with
me now. There's no danger. Another
nightmare. This is all normal.

LEON

I'm not going to fall sleep.

SALOMEA

Take a deep breath, we'll go for a
walk. We can go to the latrine.

LEON

I think I did that already.

SALOMEA

The cook is up doing breakfast, we
can get some sugar cubes.

LEON

It's midnight. When do you sleep?

SALOMEA

Daytime. I work nights, nightmares
and bedwetters. ...It was good to
hear you laugh. Billie sang songs,
those terrible American jokes.

LEON

In America every farmer's daughter
must be pregnant! ...Where was God
when all this happened? The war.

SALOMEA

You're angry, afraid, you fight
with everybody.

(MORE)

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

You and me, two peas in a pod.
We're going to help you.

LEON

What about you? I can hear your
nightmares across the compound.

SALOMEA

I have a trick. Drink water before
I sleep, in my dreams I need to
pee, I wake up. First three times I
wet the bed. You're not the only
one.

LEON

So how do they cure us of this?

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - NIGHT

Continuation. A train WHISTLE sounds, and see Salomea
consoling a child, who wakes up screaming.

SALOMEA

Wake up. Come on now. It's me.
Salomea.

JAKUB

Sorry.

SALOMEA

You were doing so well.

JAKUB

The train whistle. Most people hear
that and they think, "A train, an
adventure!" In Lodz a train means
another family disappears.

SALOMEA

Tonight is the scary part. Think.
Worst day in the camps, the thing
that gives you nightmares... It's
okay, you're here with me, this is
how we do it. Tell me the story.

He's frightened. She has crayons and paper.

JAKUB

I can't. Not like this.

SALOMEA

Then draw a picture. Or write it
down... Now. Deep breath.

JAKUB

Sometimes I feel like a turtle,
hide in a shell so no one hurts me.

SALOMEA

Draw the monster. You want red and
black colors, blood, monster stuff?

He draws. Salomea is horrified.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

Get the monster out of your head
and on the paper, then put him in a
drawer. Then draw a nice picture,
sunshine, children, and nail it to
the wall, you see it every day.

JAKUB

Will you stay here?

SALOMEA

I'm here every night.

JAKUB

What if your family comes for you?

SALOMEA

This camp is my family. It's you.

JAKUB

Until the camp closes. You don't
worry about what comes next?

SALOMEA

The future? For us the past was the
ghettos and the ovens, and we
survived all that. How bad could
the future be?

JAKUB

Yeah.

SALOMEA

Don't be so worried about
nightmares that you forget how to
dream. ...Your drawing is lovely.
Like Picasso but with red instead
of blue. A lot of red.

She hears a cry.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

Here, keep drawing.

She rushes to Jozka who is crying. Two other children begin crying. Salomea looks piteously at Anelie.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
This is impossible.

Anelie goes to a kid, holds him, Kolya following.

Billie enters.

BILLIE
Where do you need me?

Salomea points to the three catatonic children.

SALOMEA
Keep them calm.

BILLIE
No change?

Salomea shakes her head. Billie sits by them.

SALOMEA
So when is the army sending help?

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

A young COUPLE runs down the road toward the camp. The sergeant steps out in the middle of the road.

MAN
Please, help us. Hide us.

SERGEANT
Hide you? Who are you hiding -

A Russian truck rounds the bend at high speed. The sergeant stands in the road, forces them to stop. Billie runs up.

BILLIE
What's going on?

Russian SOLDIERS dismount from the truck and aim at the fugitives. Galina emerges from the driver's seat and stands on the running board, a cheap Russian cigarette dangling from her lips. She surveys the scene.

RUSSIAN
You found our runaways.

WOMAN
Get away! This is an American camp!

RUSSIAN
Russians. They belong to us.

BILLIE
Yalta agreement.

MAN
We don't want to go!

BILLIE
I don't have any choice.

EWA
(angry)
You're not helping them!

BILLIE
Wish I could.

EWA
They're coming back to take some of
our children. Can we hide them?

BILLIE
Can't. If the army finds out,
they'll yank me out of here. The
Russians want Adam, Mati, Sonya...

EWA
You can't give them Adam!

The soldiers take the pair away; the woman screams. Kids
watch, terrified. Salomea takes the hand of a crying child.

INT. GIRLS' DORM - DAY

A girl leads Hanna, who is covering her eyes, into the dorm.
Salomea is at the doorway.

SALOMEA
Rapunzel with the magic hair. Okay,
bring her in.

Hanna opens her eyes. Mateusz painted a huge picture of her
on the wall, crazy hair and all.

HANNA
You gave me blue eyes!

MATEUSZ
(whispers)
You smile finally. They let me in
so I could paint. I love you Hanna.

HANNA
 Oh babisiu, babisiu...
 (baby)

She kisses him and he hugs her. Salomea looks at the painting.

SALOMEA
 Sacre merde.

Billie translates in her head, and laughs.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
 Jean Valjean has more panache than
 I thought... Hanna's a lucky girl.

Salomea looks at Mateusz.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Rocha hears crying. She stops at the latrine and Ewa emerges, her face a mess.

EWA
 Baby. Sorry, you need the latrine?

ROCHA
 Are you alright?

EWA
 One scary monster story after
 another. Let's see about lunch.

Ewa wipes her eyes. They head to the dining hall, hand in hand. A PLANE is heard overhead.

ROCHA
 Samolot!

She runs. Ewa chases her.

EWA
 It's the Americans. It's alright.

Rocha smiles sheepishly, looks at the sky.

ROCHA
 Sometimes I get scared.

EWA
 Me too.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Anelie and Billie at work. A cup of coffee appears in front of Billie. She looks up to see Salomea retreating.

BILLIE

Brace yourself. Remember we talked about the other camp? Ask the women there to come here, help out?

ANELIE

With luck we find a nurse.

BILLIE

They caught up to the typhus, now it's influenza.

ANELIE

We can't bring them here! The flu could wipe us out! No help is coming. I'm so tired. ...Some adults want to look at the children once it's safe...?

BILLIE

Sure. More adoptions. Otherwise, I don't know, they may be sleeping on the street.

ANELIE

What about the sisters from Latvia?

BILLIE

We can't separate them. They have no family. We need a solution.

ANELIE

You know what is hard on the girls? All those years in the camps, never had underwear....We managed to get a few children to graduate out of the shell shock ward, but it's only a few, and I can't tell what's working and what isn't.

Adam enters, holding cards.

BILLIE

Adam?

ADAM

Ewa knows every awful thing that happened to the children, carries it in her head.

(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

Ewa was yelling at the children -- they were shattered even before they came in.

ANELIE

You're joking.

ADAM

Ewa was in the latrine crying. Never takes a day off. I told her to take a break, she bit my head off. Wants to do it all herself.

ANELIE

So you think...

ADAM

She's going to splatter like an egg. She's going to end up in the shell shock ward, peeing the bed.

ANELIE

I tried talking to her. ...If she cracks, Sommer will take care of Ewa, just do your best to work through the children.

ADAM

I can't do what Ewa does. She's brilliant.

EXT. GIRLS' DORM - DAY

Billie and Anelie see Ewa sitting in the corner, drained. In a bed is Salomea, asleep, thrashing, clutching her knife.

BILLIE

What happened to Salomea? The war?

ANELIE

We didn't even know she could talk. She was so ragged and dirty, she must have been living in the woods like an animal, for months. We had to wash her, bruises, sores, animal bites, stab wounds. She cries in her sleep. Don't try to touch her.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Ewa doing intake, large group of children including OSWIECIM PAWEL, a small boy of twelve.

OSWIECIM PAWEL
I got to the camp, I lost track of
my parents and my brother -

EWA
Oh no no...

OSWIECIM PAWEL
SS pulled me out for special duty -

Ewa begins crying and can't stop.

EWA
I'm sorry, I'm so sorry...

ADAM
Kurwa. Pawel, get the doctor...
(to Ewa)
Deep breath. Just take a minute.

Adam takes her in his arms.

EWA
Adam, don't let me go.

Sommer enters.

SOMMER
Ewa. Come with me.

EWA
(sobbing)
Adam. I can't go, I've got to --

OSWIECIM PAWEL
It's alright.

EWA
The cards -

ADAM
Ewa. I've got them.

Sommer and Ewa leave. Adam reads a card nervously.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Wojciech? Parents, the ghetto,
Majdanek. You have a brother?

OSWIECIM PAWEL
Is that girl okay?

ADAM
She's one of us.

Anelie enters with new refugees. Adam walks over.

ADAM (CONT'D)

The doctor has Ewa at the hospital.
What am I going to do without Ewa?

ANELIE

Figure it out. We have fifteen new arrivals. Running from the Red army. There are more Russian units coming.

ADAM

It's not their sector.

ANELIE

They're seeing what they can get away with. The whole countryside is terrified.

ADAM

We've got to protect them.

ANELIE

But how?

He remembers a card in his hand.

ADAM

Oh. Anelie. You told Ewa to pull your card out of the stack. You don't want us to find your family?

Adam looks at the card, figures it out.

ADAM (CONT'D)

The Germans got your whole family?

ANELIE

(smiles)

My family? They got my whole town, everyone I ever knew. I was on a hill chasing a goat. I heard trucks and screams. I smelled smoke. I came down, the whole town was ash. The only living thing was the goat. Him running off, saved my life.

She touches his face.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

You're sweet. Look for someone else's family. You see why we can't tell Ewa?

He nods. She puts her hand on his shoulder.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

Ewa. How hard it must be, to love something so fragile. Just to watch her.

He nods again.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

You're ready for the next batch? I watched my first village burn down. We're going to save this one.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

Salomea and Mateusz walk in the woods; Salomea watches the road nearby.

MATEUSZ

What are we doing up here?

SALOMEA

We're on watch, just like when we were running from the Fritzes.

She hears trucks, throws him to the ground.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

The Russians are back.

MATEUSZ

Way out here? What do they want?

SALOMEA

They want you. Ukraine, right? I saved you once, I'm not letting the Russians take you.

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - NIGHT

Salomea sits by Jozka's bed.

SALOMEA

The ark came to rest on Mount Ararat. Noah sent a dove to see if the water had receded. When the dove returned, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf!

JOZKA

They were safe? And God promised never to destroy the world again.

SALOMEA

It's been a long time since I bothered with the Bible. Give me Moliere and I'm happy. ...Quiet in here, we got a few of you out to the regular dorms this week.

JOZKA

Back home I had so many friends. Here... I can't even talk to people in the ward.

SALOMEA

We need to help each other. Go make friends. I know it sounds silly -- you give love to someone, it costs you nothing --

JOZKA

Why did I live while they all died? My cousin was a nurse, kept people alive. She died and I lived. How did I get the lucky ticket?

SALOMEA

That's why they call it luck. You can't make sense of war, like making sense of a tornado. Surviving is not a sin. Maybe you go be a nurse too.

JOZKA

I don't know how those children can tell the scary stories in front of everyone. I don't know how to be... normal.

SALOMEA

Someday life will be normal. You'll have a home, meat in the kitchen, a bathtub.

JOZKA

So what happens to me? Am I going to be in a bed like this forever?

SALOMEA

First night with no nightmare. Soon you go to the girls' dorm. We painted it pink! Make friends.

(MORE)

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

New game: think of your best memories from before the war.

JOZKA

My mother braiding my hair, singing to me. Grandpa and his chocolate. The harvest festival, the dancing.

SALOMEA

Every night at bedtime. Say it over and over. Mama. Chocolate. Dancing. No more nightmares.

JOZKA

Mama. Chocolate. Does that work?

SALOMEA

Who knows, you're my first one. Focus on the chocolate - nobody ever had a nightmare about chocolate.

Crosses to Kolya who is reading a newspaper.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

New kids get here, they're scared, angry, sit in a corner. Then a few weeks with food and a bed and they settle down. Really it's love that cures them, making friends.

KOLYA

But every one is different.

SALOMEA

Ghetto children, afraid to starve, steal bread. The ones who hid - terrified of getting caught. The ones from the death camps. I had my own nightmares - now I see everyone else's. So when is it my turn to crack up?

KOLYA

The girl who isn't afraid of anything?

SALOMEA

Who else do you know, sleeps with a knife? I'm afraid of everything. I'm going to crack up like Ewa.

She points to three children asleep at one end of the ward, the same hard-core patients who were there in Act 1.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

Boy cries all night. Second one, no change. Third one kicked me. We tried talking to them. They may be in that corner a long time. That could be me in that bed. I used to be a child. What am I now?

KOLYA

Take a night off, before you end up like Ewa.

A boy wakes and cries. Salomea heads toward him, weary, but Leon raises his hand.

LEON

Let me help.

They sit near the crying boy; Leon mops the boy's forehead with a cloth.

LEON (CONT'D)

Champion bedwetter. It's embarrassing when a girl takes him to the latrine and gives him his underwear.

SALOMEA

You want to help me?

LEON

Somehow I feel better helping people than beating them up.

SALOMEA

(smiles)

Some tough guy you are. You ready to move back in with the boys?

Anelie enters.

ANELIE

Kolya. Have you heard from your army?

KOLYA

Not a thing.

Anelie pulls Salomea into a corner.

ANELIE

Careful with the Russian. Something is up. Lots of trucks out there. I don't want people to panic.

(MORE)

ANELIE (CONT'D)

Quietly pass the word, curfew every night. Sundown. It's dangerous to wander around at night.

They look outside and see a platoon of GIs.

ANELIE (CONT'D)

Americans watching the Russians. The children are nervous, they can smell trouble.

SALOMEA

Let's distract them. What if we had a dance?

Salomea crosses to the three catatonic boys and sits between two of them with a book.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

Shakespeare last night. And now Rostand. Cyrano de Bergerac and the beautiful Roxanne!

She strokes the hair of one of the boys.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

And someday you are going to tell me a story. You will. I'm more stubborn than you. You may be on your own soon.

She opens the book.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

We begin at the Hotel du Bourgogne. Musketeers, pickpockets, Spaniards and nuns come to see a play...

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Sommer is giving a shot when Salomea enters.

SALOMEA

Okay, I surrender.

SOMMER

What?

SALOMEA

The more I read, the worse my headaches get.

Next we see Sommer fitting Salomea with granny glasses. She looks at her book. She smiles.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
They're perfect.

They walk through the hospital and see Ewa asleep.

SOMMER
I've had her sedated for days.

INT. GIRLS' DORM - DAY

Salomea sits by a stove, reading with her glasses low on her nose. Her cool schoolteacher demeanor is a long way from the wildcat she was in Act 1: she is becoming the girl she was before the war. She waits for the morning rush to end so she can sleep. Four girls stand at the other end of the dorm.

OLDER GIRL
God, not again.

SECOND OLDER GIRL
What on earth -

OLDER GIRL
She peed the bed.

YOUNG GIRL
I'm sorry.

OLDER GIRL
God, how old are you?

SECOND OLDER GIRL
Why don't you go back to the bedwetters?

YOUNG GIRL
I'm sorry.

OLDER GIRL
And you smell.

SECOND OLDER GIRL
Let's just take her stuff to the -

YOUNG GIRL
No!

The girls jump when they hear four loud BANGS. Salomea has whacked the stove with her book to get their attention.

She glares at them, looking over the rims of her glasses.
They look at her and then at each other.

SECOND OLDER GIRL
Let me help you change your sheets.
We have any extra underwear?

OLDER GIRL
Here are some of those boy pants
with the hole.

YOUNG GIRL
That's fine.

SECOND OLDER GIRL
You were doing so well. What
happened?

YOUNG GIRL
I haven't had a nightmare in four,
five days. I don't know.

INT. GIRLS' DORM - DAY

Rain. Hanna and Ruta stand by Salomea who sleeps, thrashing,
on the floor, Hanna with a long stick.

RUTA
Good thing she sleeps during the
day. I've never seen nightmares
like hers. Not even in the shell
shock ward.

HANNA
I'll give you my dinner, if someone
else does it.

RUTA
You lost the bet fair and square.
It's your turn.

HANNA
Alright, back up.

She pokes Salomea twice. The first has no effect; the second
causes Salomea to leap up as though she's been electrocuted,
looking for a fight. Ruta retreats swiftly to the wall.

HANNA (CONT'D)
Hey hey hey! Sally Salami! You told
us to wake you up!

Salomea rubs her face.

HANNA (CONT'D)

Did you pee the bed again?

SALOMEA

No. What did they make for dinner?

HANNA

No more meat. Just potatoes. Those two boys ran away again. They're in the woods. It's raining.

SALOMEA

Let's go find them. Ask Anelie and Leon to keep an eye on the ward.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Salomea and two BOYS, wet, stand before Billie who puts blankets over them. Anelie arrives.

BILLIE

I told the Colonel about the underwear. He went to the officer's wives in London, brought us this.

She pulls out a huge pair of underwear out of a box. Anelie, 95 pounds, collapses in hysterics. The two boys are shocked.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

You and Ewa could both get in here. The colonel had problems explaining this at the checkpoint.

ANELIE

We need to be nicer to him.

BILLIE

Never heard you laugh like that.
(to Salomea)
We need food. You still have connections to the black market?

SALOMEA

Who, me? Give me the silk underwear, stockings. I can sell them.

Salomea pulls a giant bra from the box, holds it to her chest, sighs.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

A girl can dream. ...If only we had more cigarettes to sell.

BILLIE

Sell my husband's watch. And that spam.

SALOMEA

What do you need?

BILLIE

Children's shoes. No more turnips!

SALOMEA

It's turnip season. If I don't buy them, we run out of food.

Mateusz enters.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

There's a man who forges papers for refugees so the Russians can't take them. We need an artist, to draw seals and letterheads. He pays well.

MATEUSZ

I'll do it for free. It's the right thing to do.

SALOMEA

(incensed)

Take the money so we can buy medicine and shoes. If it makes you feel better, give him a discount.

MATEUSZ

What's a fair price on the market?

SALOMEA

I'll go with you. Let me do the talking. ...Billie. There's a burned out bookstore, I spent a nickel on a copy of Rimbaud. The poet. My favorite since I was little.

BILLIE

French poetry?

SALOMEA

That's me. Even during the war. Nose in a book.

A truck backfires and Salomea whirls around, knocking the contents of the box across the room. Mati grabs her.

MATEUSZ

It's a truck! A truck! Sally!

SALOMEA

(irritated)

Bozhe moi!

By this time, everyone has backed away from her. Sweating, she begins picking things up off the floor.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Ewa braids a girl's hair and Billie sorts cards.

BILLIE

Ewa, I'm so sorry, I should have pulled you out sooner --

EWA

You remember Monsieur Rosenzweig from the other camp? I'm helping him take care of his girl? He wants to adopt me. Take me to France.

BILLIE

What about your own parents?

EWA

This is Ewa the witch. My parents got on a train. We know where the train went. I talked to the other camps. No sign anywhere.

BILLIE

You're giving up?

EWA

I'm letting go. Saying goodbye.

BILLIE

I'm sorry.

EWA

I've already shed all those tears. ...Well, maybe a few more.

BILLIE

Once you get to France, write a letter to your children.

EWA

My children?

BILLIE

Write your story, your parents. So they're never forgotten.

EWA

That's brilliant.

BILLIE

Write about us. We're your family too. Everyone says you're magical.

EWA

They say I'm a witch. It's not the same. Is Adam doing his job, the children?

BILLIE

Relax, it's not your job now. Got a dozen kids helping. Leon, Pawel.

Anelie and Sommer enter.

ANELIE

Hey. You really frightened me.

Anelie touches Ewa's face. Ewa smiles.

EWA

We made it through alive. I stole a beer, come on.

The girls leave. Billie tosses cards on a table, pulls out a bottle of whisky and sits in a chair.

BILLIE

Grab a chair... Getting cold.

He sits next to her, coat in his lap, and drinks.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

I've lost Ewa. My little witch. You know how long it's been since I had an adult conversation, no children?

SOMMER

You have children at home?

BILLIE

My husband and I, we've had a month together, total. So, instead of my own kids, I watch these kids roll by, like broken cars I want to fix. I'm a nurse and I can't fix em. Somebody broke their hearts.

(MORE)

BILLIE (CONT'D)

On purpose. Explain that to me,
Sommer. You were there.

The emotions of four terrible years catch up to her. She trembles; he drapes a jacket around her.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Thought I had it bad when I was a
POW. This has been a long war.
(gesturing with the cards)
Had this stupid magic card game
that was going to put the world
back together.

She gives him a despairing look. His hand is on her shoulder.

SOMMER

Your optimism is a sweet thing. You
didn't find parents, but you healed
so many children... Your husband is
a soldier?

BILLIE

Yes. I have no idea where he is.
They should have heard by now.

SOMMER

Let's hope he didn't use up all of
his luck marrying you.

BILLIE

Dammit, now I'm going to cry.

She puts her hand on his. She hears a distant truck HORN. She touches his shoulder.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

The Russians are here. Find Anelie!
And you stay out sight!

Billie wipes her eyes, rushes out.

EXT. TREES NEXT TO A LATRINE - NIGHT

Salomea, Mateusz and Hanna prepare to go to the dorms.
Mateusz points to the dining hall.

MATEUSZ

So what are those people doing out
of bed? The older kids?...Trouble?

Salomea suddenly stops, looks at him, wary.

SALOMEA
Ukraine, right?

A truck rolls into the compound. Salomea grabs a little girl.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
Mati, go hide! Hanna, help him!

Russian soldiers exit the truck: Galina leads them swiftly across the camp. Kids scurry away.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

Anelie assembles refugees Galina wants to take, Daniel and a robed Sonya among them. U.S. MPs protect them. Galina arrives with soldiers led by Yuri, and nods to Kolya. Billie holds a stack of documents.

The American and Russian soldiers eye each other. A tense silence descends.

BILLIE
Everybody stay calm....Major.
Another night visit.

GALINA
I see you have some friends.

ANELIE
I have the people you wanted here.
Make sure no one disappears
mysteriously.

GALINA
Is there some trouble?

ANELIE
We have all the MPs on duty. We
were on the radio with American
judge advocates for three days.

GALINA
We have orders. I need to be on my
way, it's late -

ANELIE
(gesturing with a file)
You have no control over the Poles,
so the lads from the Polish Home
Army, we can take them out of your
stack. Lighten your load.
(MORE)

ANELIE (CONT'D)

The allies don't recognize Russia's seizure of the Baltics, so those Latvian girls, leave them off too.

GALINA

I have my orders -

BILLIE

I don't work for the Red Army.

ANELIE

(holding up papers)
These four here, mistaken identity.

GALINA

I was told to take them.

ANELIE

Can you prove who they are?

GALINA

Seems like half the people in Europe have fake papers...

ANELIE

Isn't it awful? You'd think they had a reason to hide from the Red Army. ...These two, there's a dispute as to where they were born -

GALINA

They were born east of the bend in the river. Byelorussia!

ANELIE

The border is under dispute. Could be a long time to determine if they're yours. These two ran off.

GALINA

Either you find them or we will.

BILLIE

How many men you bring? I can have an armored company here lickety-split. You are out of your sector. And we have always runaways when your truck rolls into the area.

GALINA

I'll be calling my general.

BILLIE

You do that...Once we corrected your paperwork, the only name left was this girl in the corner.

GALINA

Young Sonya. Raised in Poland, but born in Russia.

Sonya clings to a U.S. MP; another MP steps forward and looks over the Russian troops.

ANELIE

She has pneumonia, the doctor can't release Sonya for quite some time.

GALINA

I don't believe you.

ANELIE

And I don't care. Are you a doctor? She's contagious. It's for your own safety. We're all allies.

GALINA

So I only get one, and I have to wait until she's cured? And you talked to the lawyers?

ANELIE

Sorry you wasted a trip. Oh, wait. Not a total waste. Got ten cans of ham I can't use. Help yourself.

Galina looks at the ham. She looks at the American MPs, who stare right back, ready for trouble.

GALINA

You have paperwork on these people?

ANELIE

Took all night. We knew you were coming.

She glances at Kolya -- just long enough.

GALINA

Kolya - you told them we were coming?

KOLYA

I didn't know it was a secret. We're allies.

Yuri glares at Kolya. Galina sits and puts her head in her hands. A horrified laugh.

GALINA

Oh God. ...Yuri, take our boys to their kitchen and feed them.

YURI

But the Colonel said -

GALINA

Go! Eat!

Russian guards leave, glaring at the U.S. MP's.

GALINA (CONT'D)

Yuri has big flapping ears...Kolya, I should shoot you right now. You people thank this boy. Most of you would go to in the gulag. Boy, you were in the resistance?

Daniel steps forward, proud.

DANIEL

We destroyed trains, bridges -

GALINA

You cut the power lines in the capital?

DANIEL

We burned gas tankers, sabotage.

GALINA

Yes, you launched an uprising. Stalin doesn't like uprisings. If you get on my truck, tomorrow Yuri shoots you in the head. My advice, don't get on the truck.

And Daniel steps back again.

DANIEL

I thought we were on the same side?

GALINA

We had the same enemy, he's dead. And you Polish children, don't go home - locals took your houses. A lot of your people being killed now. Still.

Galina points to the female refugees.

GALINA (CONT'D)

...And you girls? You see Red Army truck, get off the street. Get inside, away from the windows, never let them see you. I spent three years in the field, slept with a pistol in my hand. So you, with the pneumonia, take your time recovering. ...And you, boy.

She gestures for Kolya to approach.

GALINA (CONT'D)

That man Yuri? Political officer. He tells Moscow it's your fault the truck is coming back empty. What do you think happens to you?

KOLYA

You mean...

GALINA

(indicates Sonya)

Take this girl, steal a jeep, and run. You have the soul of a poet. Be a taxi driver in Brooklyn, or grow wheat in Kansas. And make babies with blond hair and blue eyes.

Sonya is embarrassed by the baby idea but she likes the run-away part. She shakes Kolya's hand.

SONYA

My name's Sonya. Get us out of Germany and we'll manage the rest.

ANELIE

So you're letting Kolya go? Is this some sort of trick?

GALINA

You were from a starvation ghetto? Leningrad was a starvation city. Hitler issued an order - "Leningrad must be erased from the face of the Earth. Die of starvation."

ANELIE

You're joking.

GALINA

The invading army was told not to accept our surrender, because they would have to feed us. I'll never understand it.

ANELIE

What do you mean?

GALINA

The effort Hitler put into killing my city up north. And killing you people. The soldiers, railroads, guns? Just to kill unarmed people. If he had put all that effort into fighting the war, he could have conquered the world. In the end, you and I killed Hitler. It was us.

ANELIE

So Hitler came to Leningrad.

GALINA

The blockade. Two years. Some nights we had hundreds of fires. In one night Hitler managed to bomb five hospitals. Millions of people with no running water or fuel.

ANELIE

How did you stay warm?

GALINA

We burned my piano, the furniture, slept on the floor. We burned the house and slept in a shed. Then Hitler bombed the food warehouses.

ANELIE

How did you feed all those people?

GALINA

We brought food across the lake -- boats in summer, trucks when it froze. Imagine driving a truck across ice, with artillery coming down -- forget braking, you couldn't steer. Americans sent food through the Arctic, feeding an elephant with a teaspoon.

ANELIE

What did you do?

GALINA

The ration was four ounces of bread a day, half of that was sawdust. Didn't know whether to eat it or burn it. And it was at the depot, a long walk when it was twenty below.

BILLIE

Twenty below. Fahrenheit? Celsius?

GALINA

Twenty below, does it matter?... We ate horses, dogs, cats. We learned to sleep with our children, so the rats wouldn't bite them. And eat the corpses....

ANELIE

Was it only the rats who ate the corpses?

GALINA

On a bad day we'd pray for that fat war profiteer to catch a bullet. Being fat was a capital offense.

ANELIE

So did you....

GALINA

It tastes like stringy pork. To this day I can't eat pork. And the men. Imagine being surrounded by a million Russian men with no vodka to drink? No vodka, no food, only one thing on their mind, watching the women like wolves....

EXT. A RUSSIAN CHURCHYARD - DAY

Galina shovels snow, then use a lump of coal to draw a flower on the wall of the church above the burial site.

GALINA (V.O.)

Winter, a hundred thousand starve each month. Bodies stacked like logs til summer. I buried my daughter in the snow, the ground was too hard. I like to think she wasn't eaten by animals. Or anything else. If you live to be a hundred, you never see anything like watching your child starve.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

Continuation, Galina, troops, and the people from the camp.

ANELIE

All those people starved to death?

Galina points toward the tree line.

GALINA

More Jews died there than in Dachau. Lost more people than Oswiecim. This is why I'm not afraid about letting Kolya off and lying to my boss. After Leningrad, the gulag would be a holiday! I will never be afraid again.

(to Anelie)

My daughter would have grown up like you. ...If all else fails, I'll blame it all on you, Kolya. Hide before Yuri finishes his soup.

SONYA

Come with me.

Sonya looks at Kolya and leads him to a door.

GALINA

(calls out)

Yuri. Get my ham. Give it to the general, maybe it keeps me out of the gulag. I'm not eating it. Ham.

Galina and Anelie share a look. Galina exits, then returns and speaks from the doorway.

GALINA (CONT'D)

I forgot. Anyone here from Oswiecim?

ANELIE

Me. I'm Polish, I'm not on your list.

GALINA

You're still alive. Come with me. I have something in the truck.

ANELIE

Do I look stupid?

GALINA

I won't throw you into my truck.
It's worse than that. It's a box.

EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT

Galina, Anelie, an MP and Billie go to the truck which is surrounded by Russians. Ewa, Adam and Salomea arrive, wary.

GALINA

Back up, boys. No funny business
this time.

Yuri brings a crate. The MP watches the Russians.

GALINA (CONT'D)

We found twenty crates like this at
Oswiecim. The SS left it behind.

Yuri opens it, and Anelie looks in, pulling out a tiny dress.
Ewa and Adam come to look also.

ANELIE

Children's clothes.

GALINA

I heard your children are wearing
rags.

Anelie smiles, then sees what the clothes mean.

ANELIE

These came from Oswiecim?

GALINA

We found clothes. Toys. Glasses...
And teeth. The gold fillings.

ANELIE

There's a name written in the
collar. Leah Greenspan. Adam!

EWA

Abraham Duberstein. Adam, write
down the names. Tell the Red Cross
what happened to these children.

BILLIE

So all these children are...

Anelie holds up a dress.

ANELIE

Oswiecim. Leah Greenspan is not coming back for her clothes.

YURI

Hey! Medved!

Ewa and Adam look up, startled.

ADAM

Medved? My name is Lieberman.

YURI

Medved. A bear. Look in the corner. Must be in there by mistake.

Adam plucks out a teddy bear.

SALOMEA

I'll take that.

She looks at the bear, horrified. She looks at Yuri.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

We have a boy who sucks his thumb, needs a pal like this one.

GALINA

Yuri, put the men on the truck. I'll just be a minute.

The soldiers leave. Galina holds a dress like a child; all the emotions of Leningrad hit her at once.

GALINA (CONT'D)

Bozhe! Bozhe moi!
(God!)

She looks at Billie. Wipes her eyes. Pats her belly.

GALINA (CONT'D)

Take good care of your children. Fill their bellies.

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - NIGHT

Salomea takes the bear to a child's bed and slides it into a sleeping boy's arms. Anelie enters.

SALOMEA

Where's Mati?

Anelie looks puzzled.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
Is that truck gone? Where is he?

Runs out in a sudden panic.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

We hear "SOMEONE IN LOVE", the Bjork version. Mateusz and Hanna hold hands, climb their old hill. Mati looks at the sky; Hanna kisses him. Mati lays down with his head against a tree; Hanna curls up on top of him. They talk, but we can't hear them. Hanna falls asleep, and then Mati too.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The song still playing, Mati and Hanna come down the hill. Salomea sees them and hits Mateusz like a bullet, throwing her arms around him, crying.

SALOMEA
Mati! I thought the Russians took
you, you weren't with the boys!

HANNA
Sorry. He was with me. My fault.

Salomea slaps his arm hard, three times.

SALOMEA
You scared me to death!

Salomea has never consciously thought about how much she loves Mati or what kind of love it is, but it's all there in the look she gives Hanna.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
You take care of him!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Dawn breaking. Sonya and Kolya hug Salomea, climb onto a horse cart. He puts a coat over her.

SALOMEA
Wait. I'll grab some food for you.

She runs off. Nervous silence. They share a look.

KOLYA
You speak any Russian?

SONYA

No. You speak any Polish?

KOLYA

No. We're going to Belgium. Do you speak any...? What is it, Belgian?

She laughs, and he does too.

KOLYA (CONT'D)

English then. They can't take us once we get to Bastogne. It's safer if we tell people we are married. If they take me away and ask me what my wife's favorite color is...

SONYA

(smiles at him)

Yellow.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

A dozen ADULTS file into the hall during lunch.

BILLIE

They're here.

SALOMEA

Who are those people? Are we getting more grownups to help us?

BILLIE

Some of them lost children in the war, they may want to adopt our kids. You can't tell the children.

The children figured it out. Rocha is surrounded by five adults, smiling, chatting. Along a wall Jakub and Leon watch.

JAKUB

Goodbye to Rocha. She's adorable.

LEON

Let's play some baseball. This is a waste of time. Shopping for babies.

He kicks a chair on the way out.

ANELIE

Billie, the army will send you home soon, close the camp, what do we do with the kids with no families, the ones who are still sick?

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

Billie drinking coffee, Salomea sharpening her knife on a stone. The sergeant enters.

SERGEANT

I'm back. Two days away from getting my boat to New York, Colonel yanks me out. Because I speak Polish. Why am I here?

The GI watches Salomea's knife work, fascinated.

SALOMEA

Take him on the Pee Watch tonight.
...Finally they send more grownups.
Did they forget we're here?

Hanna and Mateusz kiss in a doorway. Anelie enters.

ANELIE

Hey, Superman, I catch you at it again, you really will fly through outer space!...Pawel is having trouble with the big kids.

SALOMEA

Treblinka Pawel or Oswiecim Pawel?

ANELIE

Oswiecim.

SALOMEA

You're serious.

She marches off.

ANELIE

That's the boys' ward, no girls --

INT. BOY'S DORM - DAY

Salomea enters the ward like John Wayne. OSWIECIM PAWEL sits in the corner, eyes watering. Leon stands with other boys in a circle. He sees Salomea and gestures around the room.

LEON

Sally Salami. What are you doing here? Boys only.

SALOMEA

You see that boy in the corner? You know where he came from?

LEON
 (beginning to deflate)
 Just having a little fun.

Salomea lowers glasses, stares, same soft voice.

SALOMEA
 I thought you stopped this. I try
 to help these children and you make
 it worse. You're on the Pee Watch
 tonight. Nine o'clock.

She begins to leave.

LEON
 I'm not going on the Pee Watch.

Salomea turns, amazed he had the nerve to speak. Examines him
 top to bottom. Holds up nine fingers.

SALOMEA
 Nine o'clock. Don't make me come
 find you.

JAKUB
 You better just do what she says.

SALOMEA
 Sunday there's a dance. We need
 boys. Bring your friends... And
 Pawel too.

Treblinka Pawel glares at Leon and walks over to Oswiecim
 Pawel, holding his blanket.

TREBLINKA PAWEL
 Your name is Pawel?

The newcomer expects another attack.

TREBLINKA PAWEL (CONT'D)
 I'm Pawel too. Here, take it. It's
 not so bad here.

The newcomer sees that the blanket has his name on it.

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - NIGHT

Almost dawn. Salomea hands the ward off to Anelie.

ANELIE

You know what you can do for me?
The knife? Throw it in the latrine.
You'll sleep like a baby.

Mateusz enters.

MATEUSZ

Couldn't sleep.

ANELIE

You know what you need to do? Paint
this ward. Like you did with
Hanna's picture in the girls' dorm.

Sergeant approaches.

SERGEANT

I was here last night. I had no
clue. What do you need me to do?

ANELIE

Teaching the kids, Polish and
English. Help with the boys.

SERGEANT

Panna - sorry - what's your name --

SALOMEA

Salomea.

SERGEANT

Pretty name.

She beams.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Let me know if you have another
wild night like last night.

SALOMEA

Last night was easy. Wait til three
children go off like a fire alarm
all at once. They set each other
off, like barking dogs.

SERGEANT

So come get me then.

SALOMEA

Do soldiers adopt children? There
are three boys, they won't even
talk. If we can't find -- never
mind. It's hopeless. Hey. Souvenir.

She hands him her knife.

SERGEANT

I know guys collect these, show em off to the folks back home. I figure you should only have one if you actually killed an SS guy.

Salomea thinks, takes it back. They share a look. Salomea crosses to where the three catatonic boys sleep.

SALOMEA

What will to happen to you? The camp will shut down. I can't take you, Billie can't take you, I won't let the Russians take you. I need you to talk to me. Please. Babisiu.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Anelie and Salomea try to convince the Colonel to let Sommer stay; Sommer listens.

COLONEL

You're telling me to keep this Fritz out of jail? There's no way.

ANELIE

We need Sommer. We're overwhelmed. Some children take weeks before they even talk. Some won't be fixed for years. They don't remember their lives, all they know is fear.

SALOMEA

Every day a setback, someone raises a hand, a boy thinks he's going to be hit.

COLONEL

You're doing so well with that shell shock ward, there are only a few kids over there right now.

SOMMER

Colonel, the thing that drives a soldier insane isn't bombs, it's fear. Day after day his platoon doesn't get hit, but he waits for it to happen, and after a month the fear makes him crack.

COLONEL

I don't follow you.

SOMMER

With these children it wasn't a month or two, they lived in fear for years. Seeing friends arrested, beaten, shot, knowing they're next. And a soldier can run away. These children were trapped in camps, in ghettos, in attics. We could be at this with the children for years.

COLONEL

We wrote charges for war crimes, read Hitler's papers. He drew a line down the middle of Europe and said everybody east of the line, kill em. He ordered the buildings in Paris blown up -

SALOMEA

Paris??

COLONEL

His general refused to do it. Forty million homeless, just in Europe. My point is, you see your room with shell-shock kids. The whole world has shell shock. So...I can't let you stay - you can practice in the jail, treat prisoners for shell shock. It really is everywhere.

Anelie, distraught, pulls Sommer aside.

SOMMER

You and Salomea know the children. The other kids are helping.

ANELIE

I want one more thing. It's embarrassing. You hover over me, make sure I don't crack up. I have a goal. I want to be a mother someday.

SOMMER

So you pulled me over here to propose marriage.

Anelie smiles for a moment.

ANELIE

Some terrible things happened in Poland. Some injuries. I need to know whether I can have children. I need you to look me over.

SOMMER

Last month you didn't want me near the children, now you want to show me your...

He vaguely gestures at her middle.

ANELIE

It's more embarrassing than that. I'm wearing men's underwear.

SOMMER

In that camp. ...Jesus, what did they do to you?...Where were you?

ANELIE

It's not important.

SOMMER

Anka.

ANELIE

Oswiecim. Josef Mengele. I think you know him.

SOMMER

Anka.

ANELIE

I didn't want to throw that in your face. But if you had no idea what Mengele was up to, you're going to find out. I'm afraid. I need to know the answer.

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - DAY

Mateusz has finished sketching outlines of a mural depicting kids playing. He begins to paint. One of the catatonic boys begins to watch. Salomea watches the boy, and then Mateusz.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

Sergeant and Salomea carry a girl in; she cries and screams nonstop. Sommer, Billie and Hanna are in the ward.

BILLIE

What happened?

HANNA

Nobody knows. She went off like an air raid siren.

BILLIE

Can't have that noise in the shell shock ward. Take her to my tent.

SOMMER

I'll give her a sedative.

BILLIE

Got room for me in the girls' dorm?

HANNA

We're doing our hair. For the dance.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

A dance fueled mostly by singing, stamping, clapping. The girls have prettied up as well as they can. Leon, Jakub and Pawel enter; Pawel beams at Salomea who is transformed, a total girly girl. Salomea smiles at Pawel.

SALOMEA

(to Leon)

Thank you. Come dance with me.

LEON

I don't know how.

SALOMEA

First, hold my hand. Second, jump around like an idiot. I know you can do that.

JAKUB

Sally, he's afraid of girls.

She stands on a box to match Leon's height, kisses him.

SALOMEA

Problem solved. He's not afraid anymore. Let's dance.

A phonograph plays. Mateusz and Hanna dance, in their own world; Salomea watches. Other couples join them.

LEON

What do I do now? It's a slow one.

SALOMEA

Leon, just hold me.

He does. Billie enters with a man in his late thirties; she turns off the music.

BILLIE

Good night for a party. Boys and girls, I'd like you to meet -

Ruta shrieks and runs to meet the man.

RUTA

Papa!

The other kids watch, a few tears. Ewa pulls Billie aside.

EWA

First time the cards actually worked.

A bit later Salomea approaches Hannah.

HANNA

No glasses tonight? So...Leon?

SALOMEA

(guilty smile)

Leon was picking on Pawel. We fix Pawel, then we fix Leon.

HANNA

You're never happy unless you're rescuing somebody.

SALOMEA

Leon is like every bully, he's afraid. A shame Anelie couldn't be here, if there's anyone who needs a boy's arms around her....Any signs of that Russian truck?

HANNA

No, thank God.

Jozka approaches, smiling.

JOZKA

I don't want the shell shock ward anymore. Can I move to the dorm with the girls?

Salomea nods.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Jozka, you promised me a dance!

Jozka beams. Dinah Shore's "SOMEONE IN LOVE" is playing.

EXT. BY THE LATRINE - NIGHT

DINAH still sings in the distance. Mateusz stands by the latrine; Salomea comes and takes his hand. He is wary.

SALOMEA

You're a mystery. A million people
kill each other, run for their
lives, in the middle of a war you
draw magic outer space pictures.

He shrugs.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

You and Hanna look so sweet
together. You be gentle, Hanna's
not a tough old boot like me.

She leaves. Hanna exits the latrine.

HANNA

Sally Salami. It's no surprise that
tough old boot saved your life in
the woods. She'd rather die than
admit she loves anybody.

MATEUSZ

She saved me because I can see in
the dark. Didn't want to stand
watch alone at night. That's what
she says anyway.

Mateusz walks toward the music a bit. From 50 feet off, Salomea turns and looks at him. The light is dim but from experience they can read each other's faces. She smiles and nods at him.

She turns; a look of shock crosses her face.

SALOMEA

Mati. Mati!

She runs back to Mateusz, drags him away from Hanna.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)

Come here. I must be going crazy.

They run to the dance and see two boys outside the hall, listening to the music. It's two of the catatonic boys from the bedwetters ward. They hold hands. One sucks his thumb.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
You'll frighten them. Me first.

She approaches slowly. They notice her. The thumb-sucker clings to the other boy, named Isaac.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
Hello. I'm Salomea. It's alright.
You want to go back to bed?

Isaac shakes his head. Salomea kneels by them.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
Want something to eat?

Isaac shakes his head, points at the dining hall.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
The dance. Lots of children. You sure?

He smiles and nods.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
I'll stay with you.

She turns to Mati.

SALOMEA (CONT'D)
(overjoyed)
I don't believe it. I read to him
night after night...

Mati hugs her hard. The boy pulls on her hand.

ISAAC
The other boy. Needs a toilet.

Mati kneels in front of the thumbsucker.

MATEUSZ
I got this one. Mocz? Mocha?

The thumbsucker grabs his crotch and nods.

MATEUSZ (CONT'D)
Let's go pee.

Mati takes his hand and they go pee.

Salomea takes the other boy by the hand and they enter the dance. Billie sees the boy. Shocked, she bulls her way through the dancers. Salomea holds up a hand.

SALOMEA

Nice and easy.

The boy points at Billie.

ISAAC

You brought me chocolate. You're a doctor.

Billie touches the boy's face; he smiles.

BILLIE

I'm just a nurse. Can't believe it!

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Anelie sits on a bed in a robe. Sommer approaches.

ANELIE

I didn't think you were going to put me under.

SOMMER

Salomea is covering for you. You missed the dance.

ANELIE

(impatient)
Sommer. Babies?

SOMMER

Well, you've got a chance.

ANELIE

(relieved)
Thank you.

SOMMER

Mengele was no surgeon. I wouldn't trust him to slice ham. He sliced a piece of your uterus, there was scarring, infection, I did some repair work. There is a risk of complications...

ANELIE

Like any other girl. I feel so much better.

SOMMER

I think those babies are coming. You had a nasty reaction when you woke up. Did you have a reaction to the anesthetic when Mengele did it?

ANELIE

What anesthetic? Mengele didn't even wash his hands. I was a specimen, a piece of bad meat, heading for the oven. The only reason he kept me alive was...well, you saw. ...I'm afraid. I have hope now. Babies. Hope can kill you.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Salomea and Leon sit under a tree. She curls up in his lap.

SALOMEA

I'm drunk. Need a nap. Keep your fingers to yourself.

LEON

They say you try to kill people in your sleep.

SALOMEA

I don't try, I succeed. Man from Israel wants me to be a soldier, kill Arabs. I'm going to teach children. Dumas, Queen Margot. I won't teach them about the queen's lover.

LEON

You're missing a toe. Frostbite?

SALOMEA

Rather lose a toe than let the Russian boys find me. My body is a map of the war.

(points to her calf)

I survive when all of Warsaw burns around me, next day a wild dog eats me for lunch.

(points to her thigh)

This one - no peeking! Bullet. A hundred people in the woods. I could only save one.

LEON

You saved one in the woods?

SALOMEA

Her name was Jana. She was in my dream last night.

He sees she's becoming sad and tugs down her dress.

LEON

Let's fold up the map for the night. You want to be a teacher?

She smiles.

SALOMEA

Lesson One. When a girl drags a boy into the woods, she doesn't want a chat. I already showed you once.

A quick hard kiss.

LEON

In movies they do those short hard kisses. Like birds peck at seeds.

SALOMEA

Well, try the other way, then.

He does. It's long and sweet. She approves.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Ewa prepares to board a truck.

EWA

We swore to stay together.

ANELIE

War's over. Go to France.

Ewa hugs Anelie, Billie, and Salomea. Adam runs to the truck and shares a long look with Ewa.

EWA

Now listen carefully.

She takes his face in her hands, kisses him, the real thing.

EWA (CONT'D)

Dijon. It's in France. Come find me in summer. Want me to say it again?

ADAM

I missed that first part...

Ewa laughs and kisses him again.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Great to see you smile again.

EWA
You know how many of these children found their parents? Almost none.

ADAM
Salomea rejoined the human race. Anelie became queen of the camp. Hanna and Mati fell in love. And you found a family.

EWA
And you.

She boards the truck with her new father.

EXT. A BELGIAN COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Kolya and Sonya roll toward an MP post, Belgian flag on top. Soldiers observe them. Kolya helps her down from the cart.

KOLYA
Belgium. We need to convince them we're a married couple, so what we should do is --

She takes his face and kisses him.

KOLYA (CONT'D)
Actually we should be arguing. If we're fighting, then they'll really know we're married.

She laughs.

KOLYA (CONT'D)
But the kiss was nice too. Here's a rude question. Have you ever been kissed by a boy?

She keeps Sobibor a secret for now.

SONYA
Kissed? No. Not a single kiss.

KOLYA
A young innocent. Why don't I just hold your hand.

They approach the MPs hand in hand.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Billie, Anelie and Sommer work, Colonel drinks coffee.
Salomea enters.

SALOMEA

Good news. The old man who ran the market is in jail. His wife is in charge, I get food half price. Our food problems are over!

BILLIE

How did he get arrested?

SALOMEA

(guilty smile)

Never you mind. ...I even got beef!

COLONEL

More good news. Only reason we let the Russians load people onto trucks, is we needed them to give back our POWs from the east. They just sent the last batch of our guys. Now you can stall em all you want. We're not helping em hunt people anymore.

Billie, Anelie and Salomea applaud.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Did you really buy the life of a Jewish girl for ten cans of ham?

BILLIE

Wartime is loaded with irony, sir.

COLONEL

U.S. Army ham. We're gonna end up in the stockade. ...Well, doctor, the other lawyers are done with you.

SOMMER

So quick?

COLONEL

You do two years with the other POWs... Miss Anelie wrote a statement for you, got your sentence cut in half.

Anelie has an embarrassed smile.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

You were right. Hitler got ideas from us. He wanted to get rid of his enemies, he read about the Indians: forced marches, starvation, disease, prison camps. He called the Russians "Redskins".

Exit; MPs enter.

ANELIE

You're going to jail! If they -

SOMMER

The guards will push me around, yell at me. You did that to me for months.

ANELIE

(smiles)

Sorry. We have no fences, most of the MPs left. Why didn't you run?

He points to kids playing. He departs with the MP. Anelie surprises herself by getting emotional.

HANNA

You're okay?

ANELIE

I'm being silly.

HANNA

You're like all these other kids. You need a good cry. Got an idea.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

Hanna and Mateusz perform Romeo and Juliet. Kids cry, Anelie most of all. Hanna kneels next to a "dead" Mateusz.

HANNA

O comfortable friar! where is my lord?
I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am. Where is my Romeo?
Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.
What's here? a cup, closed in my true love's hand?

(MORE)

HANNA (CONT'D)

Poison I see hath been his timeless
end
O churl! drunk all and left no
friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy
lips;
Haply some poison yet doth hang on
them,
To make me die with a restorative.

She kisses him.

HANNA (CONT'D)

Thy lips are warm.

Hanna pulls out Salomea's knife; two kids flinch. She pretends to stab herself.

HANNA (CONT'D)

O happy dagger! This is thy sheath;
there rust, and let me die.

She falls lifeless on Mateusz. The kids, almost as one, take deep breaths. Then huge applause and wiping of eyes.

MATEUSZ

You silly girls, I'm not really
dead!

They laugh. Salomea wipes her eyes too.

SALOMEA

Crying makes me feel better. What
on earth is wrong with me?

HANNA

Sally Salami, want your knife back?

Still smiling, Salomea looks at the knife, shakes her head.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Anelie and Billie watch Sommer heading for an MP jeep. Anelie and Billie hug Sommer.

Anelie sees the colonel's driver - a CORPORAL in a motorcycle with a sidecar.

ANELIE

I'm a genius. Colonel, can you stay
an extra day? Your driver too.

COLONEL

Sure, but why?

Next the corporal is giving the kids rides in the sidecar, as they scream with delight.

OSWIECIM PAWEL

We're going to outer space!

On his final return, Anelie takes the colonel's hand, shyly, and smiles.

ANELIE

Thanks.

INT. GIRLS' DORM - DAY

Most of the staff has been gathered.

MATEUSZ

They said come to the girls' dorm!

HANNA

I've got my eye on you.

MATEUSZ

Nobody naked in there...?

BILLIE

My husband is coming to London.
They found him. Bad leg and all.

ANELIE

We can give you a honeymoon break,
keep the kids out of your hair -

BILLIE

Anelie. I'm going to Washington.

ANELIE

Who will take care of the children?

BILLIE

Anka, you've been doing it for
months. I've been at the hospital
nonstop since the doctor left.

ANELIE

But I'm only -

BILLIE

The army is sending doctors. But the kids, the shell shock, it's your show, show the new guys the ropes. And next year they open the German colleges. My colonel got you on the list.

ANELIE

A university? What do I study?

BILLIE

It's your dream. You follow it. I think you can do anything.

ANELIE

Haven't really had time for dreams.

BILLIE

Dream of being a nurse.

ANELIE

And make babies...So what do we do once you're gone?

BILLIE

Just love these kids. I don't think there's a problem in the world that love can't fix. I'm a sentimental idiot. ...These kids with no homes. The thought of leaving them..

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - NIGHT

Bedtime. Billie and Salomea survey the ward. Mateusz' mural is coming along spectacularly.

SALOMEA

Look at the new faces. The children who came to the shell shock ward when we began - gone. They got better, they're in the dorms. Except these three.

Billie looks at the three patients who have been in the ward since Act 2. They go to the third catatonic boy.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

He'll be the last one.

The thumbsucker plays with blocks on the floor.

ISAAC

When I got here, the camp was dark
and sad. They brought me here,
every day they talk more, laugh.
Salomea reads to me, she's funny.

TREBLINKA PAWEL

Funny? Salomea?

ISAAC

I heard the dance, the clapping and
singing. I sat up and went for a
walk.

Isaac points to the thumbsucker.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

He talked to me. His name's Joshua.
Salomea, come teach me some more.

Salomea grabs a book. He curls up next to her.

SALOMEA

This is the scene where they kill
each other with swords. See if you
can make out the letters.

Billie sits on the floor next to the thumbsucker; he curls up
against her, still sucking his thumb.

BILLIE

Joshua. I wanted to say goodbye.
I'm looking for my husband. I would
love to talk to you, just once,
before I go.

He looks at her, and goes back to his blocks.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Everyone comes out for Billie's departure. Billie hugs Hanna,
Mateusz, Anelie.

BILLIE

One more stop.

She walks to the graves with Salomea who kneels, crying. They
sprinkle dirt on a grave together.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Jana. You see? I remembered.

SALOMEA

Jana. Thank you.

They share a long hug. Joshua and Isaac give Billie hugs. Joshua says the one thing guaranteed to make Billie lose it.

JOSHUA

I hope you find your family.

Joshua takes Salomea's hand, smiling. Billie gets into the jeep and looks at the children.

BILLIE

Who will take care of you? Where on earth are you all going to?

KIDS

To outer space! We love you, Billie!

The jeep rolls out. Young kids take off their coats and run after, trailing their coats behind them like capes.

KIDS (CONT'D)

Aviator Boy! Dalmatian Girl!

SALOMEA (V.O.)

The waters receded. Three years on, they were still waiting in their camps and their tents. A hundred thousand children. Waiting.

INT. SHELL SHOCK WARD - DAY

Isaac and Joshua sit on a bed playing cards; Salomea and Leon sit in two chairs, Salomea sleeping calmly as she leans on Leon's shoulder. Salomea wakes up and leaps to her feet.

The third catatonic boy, still in his bed, smiles.

BOY

Roxanne, Roxanne, Roxanne...

On the third "Roxanne" the boy turns to see Salomea. Look of joy on Salomea's face.

FADE OUT.

THE END.