

ARARAT

Written by

Jack Wibbe

Westminster MD 21157  
410-848-3795  
r3aaa@yahoo.com

FADE IN:

EXT. A HILLTOP -- DAY

Early 1945, Bavaria. Dawn. SOUNDS of an army on the march: trucks, shouts, the occasional mortar round or machinegun fire. Seven ragged, rail-thin, filthy children sleep on a hilltop, spread out like spokes of a wheel, heads to the center, feet pointed outward. MAJA, JANA and ANELIE are girls of sixteen. EWA, a girl of thirteen. Two girls, HANNA and tiny SALOMEA, and the boy MATEUSZ, are twelve. Hanna's hair is a foot long, six inches of black at the roots and six inches white at the ends; she has a few freckles.

SALOMEA VO.

A flood covered the earth. A tidal wave, killing the living things before and behind. And finally the waters receded. Seven of them washed ashore on the mountain. Still alive. Somewhere out there, a dove was looking for an olive branch. Here, of all places.

The boy, MATEUSZ, awakens and stands. He sniffs the air but doesn't look around. A girl stands up, and the boy puts his hand on her shoulder.

MATEUSZ.

I smell wood smoke. There might be a cabin. What can you see?

The girl says nothing, dazed, slack-jawed.

MATEUSZ.

Don't let them see you.

INT. OFFICER'S CLUB -- DAY

Officers club in London, 1943.

BILLIE KELLY, an American nurse, is dealing cards to an American COLONEL and two British OFFICERS. Quiet banter as they deal and play.

BILLIE.

Sir, the war's been going two years.

BRITISH OFFICER.

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

BILLIE.

Alright, sir, forget the Jews.

[points at the map on the wall]

Look over at the eastern front, fifty-sixty million people from Berlin to Moscow. The Germans rolled through like a tidal wave, three million soldiers, death squads, burning down entire villages, burning crops. Hitler said he was gonna strip the land clean so Germans could go live there - like the locals were insects that needed killing.

BRITISH OFFICER.

Mein Kampf. Top marks.

BILLIE.

[waves her arm]

Then the Russians marched back the other way, tidal wave, four million men, destroying everything in their way and stealing everything that isn't nailed down. Must be ten, twenty million dead.

COLONEL.

And we haven't even hit France yet.

BILLIE.

But what about the people who survive? Here, gimme the cards, I fold.

BRITISH OFFICER.

What the devil -

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

BILLIE.

[as she deals]

We already got Jewish kids here in England, running from the Nazis. No parents.

BRITISH OFFICER.

I'm afraid their parents are mostly dead.

BILLIE.

Already we're struggling to handle the refugees, it's only in the thousands. What if it was a million? No homes, no food? Parents looking for their kids, kids looking for...anyone to feed them?

COLONEL.

So you want to bring the New Deal for all of Europe?

BILLIE.

Ever play this game? Concentration. You take turns flipping over two cards,

until you find a pair - two black queens, two red tens. It takes forever.

COLONEL.

What's your point?

BILLIE.

This is Europe when the war ends.

[as she flips cards]

A child over here, parent way over here, can't find each other. Now imagine that instead of fifty cards on a table, there are ten million cards all across Europe. Millions of people in refugee camps, with no homes to go back to. How will these people even find each other?

BRITISH OFFICER.

You think all this is some sort of game?

COLONEL.

Okay, you have my attention.

BILLIE.

Let's ask the Red Cross about a tracing system. The Army won't do it. New kid in a refugee camp, put their name on a card, where they came from, where they are now, and then 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, til we match em all up.

COLONEL.

Like three by five cards? Millions of them?

BILLIE.

If we don't, that's millions of people lost out there, starvation, dysentery, rape... Leave a mess like that, then twenty years from now, we're back here to fight World War Three, a hundred million people who all want revenge. With bigger and bigger guns.

COLONEL.

They'll be begging us for money.

BILLIE.

It's cards and pencils. How much could it cost?

COLONEL.

End of the game, you're gonna have a lot of people without a match. Orphans.

BILLIE.

Only solution is to get into Mister Wells' time machine and go back shoot Hitler in the ass. Problem solved. Not like this could happen anywhere else.

COLONEL.

What's that book you're carrying around?

BILLIE.

Phrase book. Polish. A lot of the refugees will be from Poland.

COLONEL.

You're really sold on this...Have fun selling all 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. GI stands outside a camp, 1945; another  
SOLDIER sleeps. Maja comes out of the trees.

MAJA.

[her voice rough]  
Don't shoot!

SOLDIER.

Hello? Jimmy, wake up, for Christ sake.  
Go get the lieutenant.

MAJA.

Please, don't shoot!

SOLDIER.

Come out where I can see you.

MAJA.

You are a soldier?

SOLDIER.

Yes.

MAJA.

Give me a loaf of bread and I will keep  
you warm tonight. Just don't hurt me.

She undoes two buttons.

SOLDIER.

Keep me warm...How many more of you out  
there? Come inside my shack.

[waves his hand]

No, don't take off your clothes. My  
wife would bust my head.

Billie arrives.

BILLIE.

How many more of you are out there?

MAJA.

[becoming more disoriented as she  
collapses on a bench]

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.

MAJA.

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.

MAJA.

[crying with relief]

Oh God...

BILLIE.

How many of the others are sick?

MAJA.

All of us. The Nazis marched us west, away from our camp, and then they ran. So we kept walking until we got here.

BILLIE.

You walked from...

MAJA.

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

BILLIE.

Good God. This is Germany.

MAJA.

We couldn't tell, we usually walk in the dark. There were more of us, but they couldn't...We had to leave them behind.

BILLIE.

Corporal, two jeeps.

SOLDIER.

They'll just panic and run away.

BILLIE.

Run away? I don't think they could  
crawl away. Bring some chocolate. Tell  
the medic to start with their feet.

MAJA.

[steps to the door, calls out]  
Ewa. It's okay. Help Jana.

BILLIE.

[to the soldier]  
Come on. No rifle. Just the Colt.

SOLDIER.

You're sure?

They find six more children, on the ground in the  
woods, as in the first scene. Hanna, Ewa, Anelie  
and Mateusz are pointed north-south-east-west;  
Salomea is nestled in the boy's arms. Jana lies  
in the fetal position. They all rise to their  
feet and come into the clearing. 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.

INT. HOSPITAL -- NIGHT

Billie tucking three children into hospital beds.

EXT. THE WOODS - NIGHT

Just a bare bit of sunlight on the horizon.

BILLIE.

What the hell are we doing out here?

SOLDIER.

Look.

They find six of the seven children who arrived in the earlier scene (minus Jana), in the same positions as before, relative to each other, in the woods near their camp. Billie and the soldier observe from higher ground a short distance away.

BILLIE.

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

SOLDIER.

Third night in a row they've done this. No matter where we put them to bed, round midnight they all hop out of bed and come out here. 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, and Salomea leaps up instantly with a knife. The soldier shines a flashlight on his hand, revealing a slice wound.

SOLDIER.

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

BILLIE.

Hey. You can come back to your beds. It really is safe here.

Salomea recognizes Billie and relaxes.

SOLDIER.

Weren't there seven of them?

BILLIE.

One of them died last night. Pneumonia.

Salomea stares at Billie.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD -- DAY

Billie approaches a group of girls including Ewa and Anelie whose arm is splinted.

BILLIE.

Okay, I want to talk to you. The wards are safe, you don't need to keep running out into the woods every night. ...But we're short of everything. Food, drugs, nurses. Some folks forgot we're here. So I'm asking for some help.

MAJA.

What do you want?

BILLIE.

The adults are mostly at the camp down the road, to keep you kids safe -- they've been overrun with disease anyway. They were supposed to help us here, but... Anyway, you kids are all I have right now. We need to put up some more tents, maybe even a dining hall. I'm going to ask the boys to help.

ANELIE.

I told you. Just like the Germans.

MAJA.

Anka!

BILLIE.

No, it's not like the Germans. You can lay in bed all day, for all I care. Be bored to death in a few days, but you still get three hots and a cot. But if you help me, we can take care of all these kids keep coming through. Maybe even find their parents.

EWA.

Ours too?

BILLIE.

We can try. I need a few girls to help get the new kids settled, help the

medic with the sick kids, and do our cards.

ANELIE.

Cards?

BILLIE.

We got camps like this all over Europe. Each person comes in, gets a card. Name, hometown, the camp they were in, relatives, the works. Then somewhere else there's another card with their parents...Then with a little luck, we match the parents and children.

EWA.

Like Black Peter.

BILLIE.

Black - yes! The card game.

EWA.

Black Peter. Match up the cards.

BILLIE.

But it's not fifty cards, it's millions. I want to start with three smart girls. Girls from the hospital tent.

ANELIE.

Why us?

BILLIE.

You're still sick. The healthy girls can go do laundry, dig potatoes...Who here knows German and Polish?

MAJA.

Me. Maja. And Ewa, and Anelie with the big mouth.

BILLIE.

You know a little English? Got good handwriting?...Okay, so how are all of you, anyway? Ewa, I know, almost come

back from the typhus. Anelie, the hand...?

ANELIE.

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

BILLIE.

[concerned, steps closer]  
And Maja...

MAJA.

Syphilis and gonorrhoea.

BILLIE.

Syphilis AND gonorrhoea? How on earth did a girl your age --  
[pulls back in shock]  
Oh God --

MAJA.

How do you think a fourteen-year-old girl survives a place like Treblinka 2? Then the road here, all those soldiers?

BILLIE.

[reaching for Maja, eyeing Ewa]  
Sorry, I'm sorry - and they know?

MAJA.

We tell each other everything. Almost. Thanks for the penicillin. You think I should be ashamed?

BILLIE.

You're alive, beat the odds. Ashamed? Hell no.

MAJA.

Once we're better, we're can go into the woods and chop wood with the boys.

BILLIE.

None of you girls is allowed out of the compound. Ever. God knows who's out there looking for trouble.

MAJA.

What about you, then? We were surprised to see a woman running this camp. Are you ready for...everything you're going to see and hear in this place?

BILLIE.

My colonel asked me the same thing. This war was my ticket to see the world. I worked in the States, then the Pacific. Got captured by the Japanese in the Philippines. Lost forty 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.

EXT. COMPOUND -- DAY

MATEUSZ, now with aviator sunglasses, lies in the sun. Two kids arrive: LEON, a giant boy of fourteen, and JAKUB, a tough young boy of twelve.

LEON.

See, there he is again.

JAKUB.

Every day he's in that same spot.

LEON.

Wearing those sunglasses.

JAKUB.

[to Mateusz]

Hey, what's your name?

LEON.

Where did you get the glasses?

JAKUB.

You know the rules, everybody shares.

SALOMEA arrives with chocolate bars. She examines the new arrivals, snaps her fingers at them, and

waves at them to back up as she walks around the feet of Mateusz. She drops a chocolate bar on his chest and it slides to the ground. Without using his eyes, he gropes around 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.

We've met.

[with his hand he adjusts his jaw  
left and right]

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 up with this guy -

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, walks up to him, looks at his bandaged hand, takes him by his good hand, and leads him to the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

Without a word Salomea uses her knife to slice off the soldier's bandage, examines his hand and re-bandages it. She looks him in the eye and nods. Disappears. Billie watches in amazement.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

The hall is crowded. Maja, carrying a baby and a piece of paper, needs to round up kids for exams.

MAJA.

Lieutenant, this baby will only shut up when I hold her. Can you find these people? The medic wants to see them.

BILLIE.

[reads paper, pronouncing wrong]  
Elka Piechowiak.

MAJA.

Govno.

[shit]

[calls out, pronouncing correctly]

Piechowiak! Chodz tutaj.

[come here].

BILLIE.

[off-target again]

Judita Lewkowicz.

MAJA.

[correctly]

Lewkowicz.

BILLIE.

Sala Przybyl.

MAJA.

[correctly]

Przybyl.

BILLIE.

Maria Niewiadomski.

MAJA.

[correctly]

Niewiadomski.

[as she hands off the baby]

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.

MAJA.

[correctly]  
Zale.

BILLIE.  
Rachela Skrzypczak.

MAJA.  
[correctly]  
Skrzypczak.

BILLIE.  
Skrzypczak.

MAJA.  
[correctly]  
Skrzypczak. O Moj Boze!  
[Oh my God! bangs her head once  
against the wall]

BILLIE.  
I'm sorry.  
[looks in her phrase book]  
Przepraszam.  
[I'm sorry]

MAJA.  
Przepraszam. Przepraszam!

The kids nearby are laughing.

BILLIE.  
And more kids from ...Czechoslovakia.  
[handing her the list]

MAJA.  
[sees the names, eyeroll]  
Let me read these, okay? You tormented  
these children enough for one morning.

INT. DINING HALL -- DAY

Billie teaching kids English, and then the kids  
teaching Billie English from kid books,  
explaining the Ws and the Ls, placenames too.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Colonel enters Billie's office.

COLONEL.

Lieutenant? Got a proposition for you.

BILLIE.

Yes, sir.

COLONEL.

Okay, son, bring him in.

MP enters with SOMMER, a German doctor in his 40s.

COLONEL.

This is Doctor Sommer. He worked in a hospital. German.

BILLIE.

[eyes the MP, suspicious]  
You better tell me the rest.

COLONEL.

Sommer had special orders for certain children. Orders from a Doctor Mengele.

BILLIE.

Orders?

COLONEL.

For example, he sent pairs of Jewish twins to Mengele. In Auschwitz.

BILLIE.

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

SOMMER.

I didn't know, but it wasn't difficult to guess. After a while, when so many Jews disappeared -

COLONEL.

Well, let me fill you in, doctor. Mengele wanted to prove Hitler's breeding theories, and increase the

Aryan population by creating more twins. So he experimented. He'd infect the twins with different diseases to see which died first. Chopped off healthy limbs. Injected dyes into their eyes. He also tested gypsies, dwarves and pregnant women.

BILLIE.

You're serious.

COLONEL.

In his spare time Mengele taught the SS how to use the gas in the gas chambers. That's your pal Mengele. I got you red-handed for 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.

Headquarters says you need a doctor.

BILLIE.

I need a real doctor!

SOMMER.

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

COLONEL.

Pediatrics. It's a perfect fit.

BILLIE.

A perfect fit??

COLONEL.

We're short of doctors all across Europe. Army's sending too many of em home. You can have this guy now, or another doctor six months from now.

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. With Hitler around it was common among the Germans.

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.

[calmly]

Yes, go back to America, nice and safe. I studied surgery in California, I have friends there. Had, anyway. Let's pretend that you're not in a camp in Germany, you're in one of those camps in California, filled with those Japanese farmers who were interned. Nisei. Americans hate the Japanese, there are these horrible posters everywhere.

BILLIE.

Yes, and -

SOMMER.

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

BILLIE.

No American officer would ever give those orders.

SOMMER.

[ironic]

Really? What a relief...Say they do give you the order. You refuse. Good for you! You run from California. Drive across Arizona, look at the barbed wire along the border, protecting you from the Mexicans after your army officers 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.

Keep driving across Texas. Hot place, Texas. Good thing you're not a Negro, or there would be no toilet for you to use, or drinking water. Then turn north to Tennessee, where your soldiers built that bomb that killed all those women and children at Nagasaki... Colonel, you must know about the Liberty League. Shall I tell her, or...?

COLONEL.

Ten years ago, a bunch of army veterans and business people hatched this plot to overthrow FDR and set up a dictatorship.

SOMMER.

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

COLONEL.

Douglas MacArthur. It almost worked.

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, clearly this was a mistake.

SOMMER.

Your army is doing amazing things here - feeding and clothing your enemies, the world has never seen conquerors like you. You should be proud. You Americans 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 were captured by us, not the Russians. You'd be dead already.

SOMMER.

That's why I took my jeep and headed west... 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?

EXT. CAMP COMPOUND - DAY

Quartermaster's truck rolls in and Maja meets it, carrying a list. Kids playing, other kids singing. SERGEANT gets out of the truck with paperwork. DANIEL, a boy of 17, prepares to saw some wood.

MAJA.

Sergeant.

SERGEANT.

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

MAJA.

I've got a hundred sick children here.

SERGEANT.

Here we go...

MAJA.

This is our coldest winter in years.

SERGEANT.

So what am I asking Santa Claus for this time?

MAJA.

Daniel, the beer hall, can we save the roof?

DANIEL.

Most of it.

MAJA.

Haha, got my new hospital! So the roof - I need hammers, nails, saws, axes. Soap, blankets, tents, coal. ...And penicillin.

SERGEANT.

Anything else?

MAJA.

Oh! Vegetables, these children barely remember what they are. Ewa needs pencils and cards. ...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?

MAJA.

[eyeroll]

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

SERGEANT.

I can get you men's underwear real easy. The general principle's the same.

[He sees her tragic look]

Sorry.

MAJA.

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? For the kids?

SERGEANT.

This is the Army, not Macys.

MAJA.

I'm not asking for diamonds and mink.  
It's all I can do to keep these people  
from dying. Look at the size of my  
graveyard! ...What does the army have  
that kids can play with?

SERGEANT.

We got baseball gear -

MAJA.

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

EXT. A FIELD - DAY

A field, with four potato sacks for bases.  
Confused fielders stand directly on the bases:  
Leon, Jakub, and JOZKA, a plucky girl of ten.  
ADAM, a boy of sixteen, is in the outfield. Maja  
at the plate. The quartermaster watches.

MAJA.

[consulting manual with pictures]  
Okay, Adam, you are the shoot stop. You  
stand right behind the second base.

ADAM.

I can't see you.

MAJA.

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

The child on second throws the ball toward Maja.  
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?

MAJA.

Now the three of you chase the ball.

ADAM.

Why?

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

JOZKA.

Does this mean I won?

SERGEANT.

Stop it. Stop it! Give me that bat!

And he begins directing traffic in the infield and hitting grounders. Maja smiles.

RUTA, an athletic girl of 16, approaching Maja.

RUTA.

Maja?

MAJA.

Hello, sweetie.

RUTA.

Thank you for the underwear.

MAJA.

Sure.

RUTA.

You know the underwear has this sort of hole in it? In the front?

[conspiratory]

I think this is for a boy.

[smiles, shouts at the sky]

I ask God for underwear. Another one of your little jokes?

INT. THE DINING HALL - DAY

Maja and Ewa sort out children who don't know which camp they came from: Leon, Jakub, Jozka, as

well as ROCHA, a girl of seven, and TREBLINKA PAWEL, a small boy of twelve. Hanna with the two-tone hair enters. Billie watches.

BILLIE.

What happened to your hair?

HANNA.

The Catholics.

The girl laughs at Billie's confused look, and moves on. Maja reads another child's card.

MAJA.

Okay, you're a total mystery to me. We'll have to take you to...the witch.

JAKUB.

I'm sorry - what?

MAJA.

I'm joking. She's a good witch. She can figure you out in a couple of minutes. Take your card and stand in that line.

JAKUB.

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

MAJA.

Not unless you misbehave.

EWA.

Okay, next! Hello. Let me see your card.

Go to Ewa meeting Leon. Adam manages the cards.

EWA.

[points across the room]

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

[to the child]

You're not sure which camp you were in?

LEON.

Sorry.

EWA.

It's okay. Hmm. Munich. Can you read?

LEON.

Of course.

EWA.

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

LEON.

Arbeit -- yes.

EWA.

Hmm... Auschwitz, Flossenburg, Terezin, Sachsenhausen...Did your camp have a lot of shaygetz, or was it all Jews?

LEON.

Lots of shaygetz. Goyim.

EWA.

Adam, this one's Dachau. Hugs!  
[hugging the child]  
Next! Let's see the card.

Cutting to another Ewa interview.

EWA.

Lots of typhus in your camp?

JAKUB.

Yes, how did you know?

EWA.

[touches his face]  
You're okay now?

JAKUB.

Yes.

EWA.

Lots of Russians there?

JAKUB.

[smiles]

You really are a witch.

EWA.

Adam -- Bergen-Belsen. ...Welcome home.

[kisses him]

Hugs! This one needs the doctor. Next!  
Give me the card.

Ewa interviewing another child.

EWA.

Did you come 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 were coming and drove us into  
the woods. They were ordered to execute  
us but they ran away. The rest of my  
family was in another truck... Lucky me.

EWA.

Well, we've got you now, safe and  
sound. Hugs!

Ewa interviewing another child.

EWA.

Lots of Russian prisoners in your camp?  
Big city nearby?

ROCHA.

Yes.

EWA.

Majdanek. Hugs! You okay, need to sit?  
Okay, then.

Ewa interviewing another child.

EWA.

Okay, separated from your family in winter '43. I want to know. Were you Treblinka 1 or Treblinka 2?

TREBINKA PAWEL.

I don't know.

EWA.

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

TREBINKA PAWEL.

No.

EWA.

Did you see the zoo for the officers' kids, with foxes and a big peacock?

TREBINKA PAWEL.

[getting upset]

No!

EWA.

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

TREBINKA PAWEL.

[brightens]

Stones, yes!

EWA.

Thank God. Treblinka 1. There's a chance one of your parents may be alive.

TREBINKA PAWEL.

Not both of them?

EWA.

[cautiously]

It's possible. Treblinka 2, though, big trouble. Hugs! ...Next - got your card?

Ewa interviewing SONYA, a terrified blond girl of seventeen.

EWA.

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

SONYA.

[practically shaking]

Yes.

EWA.

[suddenly alert]

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

[realization and dread]

...Landmines. Come here. Closer.

[pulls her close]

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.

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

[to the girl]

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

EXT. THE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Two girls come out of the latrine, and then scream when they see Russian soldiers crossing the compound. The soldiers smile at the girls.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

GALINA, a female Russian army major, enters with KOLYA, a male Russian lieutenant.

GALINA.

Lieutenant.

BILLIE.

[rising to her feet]

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

GALINA.

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

MAJA.

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

GALINA.

Lieutenant. This is the Yalta agreement. All citizens of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia will be turned over to the Red Army for processing. Your president agreed, and your army has ordered it.

BILLIE.

I don't understand -

GALINA.

People from Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia.

MAJA.

You've got to be kidding. Just load them up on trucks and make them disappear?

GALINA.

I have my orders. If you interfere, my general will call your general, and either way, I come back with my truck. Kolya, stay here, keep an eye on things.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Billie is asleep at her desk, Anelie and Maja sorting paperwork. Sommer enters.

BILLIE.

[waking]  
Doctor?

SOMMER.

The MPs follow me everywhere.

BILLIE.

[still sleepy]  
It's that or prison.

SOMMER.

I've been watching the kids for some time now. These children are nothing like anything I've seen. 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 me.

SOMMER.

You and the nurse can't do it all, you're not even supposed to be doing diagnoses.

ANELIE.

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

SOMMER.

You're not even a nurse. You're a child.

MAJA.

Anka, we've had this fight. Let's move on.

ANELIE.

[quietly, to him]

Just keep away from the kids. Tell them about your friend Mengele. Tell me about those people. The looks on their faces when they knew. Tell me about the women.

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. First we thought shell shock was from the actual shaking, the impact from the artillery. But there were too many patients for that. Our boys in the trenches, one man in ten had shell shock. The boys who were on the front lines for a month or two, they all had it. The generals just called them cowards and yelled at them to get back in the fight. The head doctors don't know what they're doing, drugs don't do anything.

BILLIE.

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

SOMMER.

Yes they are. These children are soldiers, they fought a war, but they had no weapons. They saw things more terrible than most soldiers ever see, and they were only children. These children have shell shock.

MAJA.

So where is all this going?

SOMMER.

You're Ewa? Building the new building?

EWA.

Just need a roof and a stove. What do we do when it's finished?

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 really bad. That's your shell shock ward. And then we...try some things out until something works.

MAJA.

Anelie?

ANELIE.

The children might feel like they're being punished.

[points at Sommer]

...But I think the szkop may be right. Let's try it.

SOMMER.

And you'll let me help?

ANELIE.

You work daytime only. The children with the night terrors - off limits. 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.  
 [harsher than he intended]  
 I'm sorry. Can you help me?

PAWEL.

With what?

SOMMER.

What's a szkop?

PAWEL.

It's a ram that's been castrated.  
 [looks him over]  
 Baaaaah.

INT. THE GIRLS' DORM - DAY

Maja talks to camp girls including MAGDA, a very big girl of 16, Ruta, and RIVKA, a big girl of 16.

MAJA.

We don't have that many soldiers protecting us anymore, so we need to take matters into our own hands.

MAGDA.

Just go over to the boys' tent, find a few big ugly lads...

MAJA.

You want boys to protect us? The one thing I will never allow, is those girls in here, afraid of being raped, again. That's why you girls are in this building -- a girl needs real walls at night. ...Magda. Ruta. Rywka.

Maja hands them three long, thick sticks.

MAJA.

You see any man, any boy near the girls' building...

MAGDA.

Bing bang boom.

MAJA.

And Magda, remind the other girls - you go out at night to pee, take a friend.

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

MAJA.

Lieutenant, come quick.

BILLIE.

What's the matter?

MAJA.

Back near the kitchen.

They go off near the trees and find a dead man. A child follows them and screams.

MAJA.

He's Russian. It started when the MPs arrived, to collect people for that Red Army truck. These Russians begged me to hide them from the Russian soldiers.

BILLIE.

Hide them? What are they, crazy?

MAJA.

They can't go back to Russia. One of them begged the American to shoot him and the other tried to cut his own throat. And then this one -

BILLIE.

His neck?

MAJA.

Hanged himself from the tree over there. All the people on that list, they're terrified. We can't send them to Russia.

BILLIE.

I have no choice.

This scene, near the girls' tent, is interrupted by the sound of Magda's frontier justice.

MAJA.

Score one for Magda. Bing bang boom.

INT. THE BEDWETTER'S CABIN -- DAY

Anelie works with the bedwetters -- Rocha, Pawel, Ruta, Jozka, Jakub, Leon. Mateusz listens. In a corner, observing, is Salomea, with her knife.

ANELIE.

Okay, everybody take a card, write down the best hiding place you ever had. Hiding from the Nazis.

[taking the cards from the kids]

I've seen you play in the compound, hide and seek, you're all very good at it. That one game lasted two days.

[reading the cards]

Let's see. Who hid in a potato sack?

ROCHA.

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

ANELIE.

And who was hidden in a suitcase?

TREBLINKA PAWEL.

Me.

ANELIE.

Got some good ones here! Hid in the attic - you had to be quiet all day?

RUTA.

It was awful.

ANELIE.

[flipping through the cards]

Hid under a woman's dress, how big was this woman? Hiding in a barn, garbage

cart, hole in the ground, a hollowed-out couch? Wood bin, outhouse - you must have smelled like a skunk! Wow, four of you hid in the forest.

[glances at Salomea]

So many stories here.

[grabs four cards]

Here are four good ones. Jozka?

JOZKA.

I hid in the isolation ward in a hospital, with the typhus patients. No one would ever believe someone was hiding there, because of the disease.

ANELIE.

You had our doctor test you?

JOZKA.

[smiles]

I'm okay.

ANELIE.

Good girl. Jakub?

JAKUB.

Gestapo had us trapped by the river. We hid in the reeds, in the water. They fired shots over our heads. They got my sister but they missed me.

ANELIE.

How long were you in the water?

JAKUB.

Four days. I hid behind my sister's body.

ANELIE.

Rocha?

ROCHA.

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

[rubs her back]

It's still infected.

ANELIE.

Mateusz? The pilot glasses are working?

MATEUSZ.

[holding aviator shades]

They're great.

ANELIE.

So you hid in a sewer.

JOZKA.

Oh my God! Ew!

MATEUSZ.

I'm not stupid, it was the rain sewer, not the one for the toilets. All that was in another drain. Except when it rained, then the toilet tunnel backed up and I had to climb up into a manhole. The water workers brought me bread. The SS knew I was out there, I couldn't go into town. I was trapped.

JOZKA.

So how many days were you in the sewer?

MATEUSZ.

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

[holds up glasses]

JOZKA.

We thought you were a Hollywood star.

RUTA.

[she and Rocha approach him]

I thought I was the hide-and-seek champ. 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, here's another question. What's the bravest thing you ever saw?

RUTA.

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

JAKUB.

I saw a woman throw her baby into another woman's baby carriage, to save her son.

LEON.

The train in Poland - we pulled into a city, a crowded platform, a man threw a baby out the window into a crowd.

ANELIE.

Probably saved its life. Somebody brave?

HANNA.

I knew a priest who forged a hundred birth certificates for kids, he kept some in his orphanage. He persuaded Catholic families to take Jewish kids. He taught us prayers, the rosary. He even dyed my hair blonde, Aryan-like.

ANELIE.

Your hair was mostly white. Now you're salt and pepper.

Mateusz is watching Hanna.

PAWEL.

I escaped a roundup, the Gestapo chased me into an apartment building. I opened a door and a woman was there, total stranger. And I just said "Mama". The Gestapo came round the corner.

[smiles]

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

ANELIE.

Okay, enough for today.

PAWEL.

Hey.

ANELIE.

[sitting by the boy]

Hey, sweetie.

PAWEL.

You and Ewa are trying to find our parents. You can tell us the truth.

ANELIE.

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

PAWEL.

[stares vacantly at other chairs  
where the kids had been sitting]

I know. I was there.

ANELIE.

But telling that to these children...

PAWEL.

Anelie. They already know.

Kolya enters.

KOLYA.

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

ANELIE.

I have an idea. Two ideas! In the boys' tent, we're having a big problem with fights. You know the camps where those boys came from, right?

KOLYA.

Yeah.

ANELIE.

Angry boys. Want to fight the war all over again. The boys are taking it out

on each other. Having a man over there might help.

KOLYA.

I'll move my gear over there.

ANELIE.

Thanks. Second idea. You're a spy, right? ...See that girl? Go spy on her.

They watch Salomea, who stares back.

KOLYA.

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

ANELIE.

She doesn't speak at all. We found her in the woods, even Ewa couldn't get anywhere with her. She disappears for days at a time. I think she's Roma. A gypsy.

[unlocks drawer, pulls out knife]

She likes knives. Can you figure out where she's from?

KOLYA.

I should take off the uniform.

ANELIE.

Good luck. And thanks. Keep you out of trouble.

Sommer enters.

SOMMER.

Fraulein. Who are they?

They see a pair of twin girls, who stare at Sommer, shocked. Sommer freezes.

ANELIE.

[hand on his shoulder]

Are you alright?

SOMMER.

I'm fine. Am I giving them exams?

ANELIE.

If you insist.

She sorts cards; he helps.

SOMMER.

I still need to examine Ewa.

ANELIE.

What the hell do you want with Ewa?

SOMMER.

You're a Jew, right?

ANELIE.

[taken aback]

Yes, the SS was very firm about that.

SOMMER.

Let me tell you about a man called  
Jesus Christ.

ANELIE.

You want to convert me?

SOMMER.

Of course not, Billie would kill me.

ANELIE.

Jesus was one of us you know.

SOMMER.

Quite right! A rabbi. My Bible is quite  
a bit longer than your Bible. Jesus  
Christ tried to carry all the pain of  
the world on his shoulders. Not to  
spoil the ending of the book, but Jesus  
dies. He dies young. He dies bloody. He  
had the power to raise people from the  
dead, right? But still, all that pain  
from other people crushed him.

ANELIE.

So?

SOMMER.

Ewa is opening her heart to every child in camp, and wallowing in all that pain. She knows this game we're playing with the cards is a mirage. She knows she's lying to these children, giving them hope. She's got the shell shock herself, all this is going to crush her.

ANELIE.

You may be right.

SOMMER.

And it's going to get you too.

ANELIE.

What do I do, give up?...And what about you, out there with these children? Are you crucifying yourself to atone for your sins? Why are you pushing this shell shock thing so hard? I admit it, you were right, you win.

SOMMER.

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

ANELIE.

[stacks cards, stands]

I know all about purgatory.

[hand to her chest]

First-hand experience. ...Sommer. You're not Mengele. Just his idiot stooge.

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

EWA.

God, look at these children, how tiny. Arms and legs like mop handles. We're raising a new species of scarecrows.

[distressed]

You know what I want to see, just once?

ANELIE.

Hmm...?

EWA.

I want to open the door and see fat kids coming in. Fat babies are happy babies.

Anelie and Sommer exchange a look.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Mateusz is drawing on paper. His aviators are hanging from the collar of his shirt.

HANNA.

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

MATEUSZ.

I'm not -

HANNA.

[sees his drawings]

...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.

Lord Snooty, Dick Turpin, Varney the Vampire?

HANNA.

What? I'm a vampire??

MATEUSZ.

No! Those are comic books from England.  
It's how my brother taught me English.  
This one is all mine.

HANNA.

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

MATEUSZ.

I did a nice job on your hair, see?

HANNA.

[glances at her scrawny body]  
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 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.

Look, I don't - it's only a --

HANNA.

Turned me into a Dalmatian.

MATEUSZ.

But look how beautiful I made you!

HANNA.

[reaches for the pictures]  
Give me that thing, I'm going to draw  
YOU. Stupid Sewer Boy. Kills his  
enemies with his toilet smell.

MATEUSZ.

I'm already in there. Aviator Boy.

HANNA.

What??

[intrigued, looks]

With the glasses for the sun - clever.

MATEUSZ.

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

[raises his brows, takes her hand]

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.

MATEUSZ.

I'm starting a new one tonight.

HANNA.

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

MATEUSZ.

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

HANNA.

And pencils?

MATEUSZ.

No, I draw all my pictures in bloooood.

HANNA.

You're crazy.

MATEUSZ.

Of course I need pencils. Thanks, Dal -

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!...I'm thinking of cutting my hair soon. All black again.

MATEUSZ.

Go ahead, break my heart. I'll have to kill off Dalmatian Girl. Your hair is where you get your magical powers from.

HANNA.

[holding the tips of her hair]  
Maybe a tiny white fringe at the bottom. Just for you.

[without looking up from the page]  
...You remember that night by the riverbank? ...I was so glad you didn't die. When we found you, Maja said "No boys. Too much trouble."

MATEUSZ.

What changed her mind about me?

HANNA.

The little forest girl. She didn't say anything. But she refused to leave without you. The little girl is boss. She leads and we follow. I just wish I knew what her voice sounds like.

EXT. THE COMPOUND -- DAY

A truck arrives and children get out. A CHILD sees the old gallows [frame only] and screams.

ANELIE.

No, no, shh. Nobody uses that anymore.

MAJA.

Let's tear that damn thing down.

ANELIE.

No. Get me some lumber and rope.

EXT. THE COMPOUND -- DAY

The gallows, being converted into a swingset.

EXT. THE COMPOUND -- DAY

New arrivals stare, shocked, as kids play on the swings. Maja and Anelie watch.

MAJA.

Anelie, this place was a prison camp. The kids arrive here and they think they're back with the Nazis.

ANELIE.

Hey, you two, come over here.

PAWEL.

[hugs her]

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

MAJA.

The Fritzes didn't think you'd be around long enough for cavities.

ANELIE.

Does this place look like a Nazi camp?

PAWEL.

It IS a Nazi camp.

ANELIE.

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

PAWEL.

Take down the German signs. Anything with "Jude" in it.

ANELIE.

Clever boy.

PAWEL.

That German doctor. Just hearing him -

ANELIE.

Yes, I warned him to stay away from the new kids. But 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. First thing when these girls wake up, they see the pictures and they know they're not with the Nazis anymore. With pictures they painted - horses...

[points, whispers]

I think that is supposed to be Rudolph Valentino. It's really terrible.

RUTA.

[irritated]

Hey! That one's mine!

MAJA.

Now that the fences are down, some kids are running away.

ANELIE.

We can't have fences. The children are terrified as it is. Also, can you hold off on the haircuts and delousing for a few days? If you do that when they first arrive, it says "Nazi" to them.

BILLIE.

These bugs are eating us up.

ANELIE.

One thing terrifies all of them - dogs. Can we go to the local farmers, find a litter of puppies? Little ones, the ones that don't grow up into monsters.

MAJA.

Yes, little yappers, not the woof-woof.

ANELIE.

And the soldiers. Is there any way to show the kids that these soldiers are different?

The dorm again. Two girls putting makeup on a soldier. Who then sings a song.

EXT. THE COMPOUND -- DAY

A soldier patrols in a wig; an officer pulls up in a jeep wondering what the hell is going on.

EXT. THE COMPOUND -- DAY

Kids chasing puppies across the compound.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - -DAY

Anelie walks in with a black eye.

BILLIE.  
My God, what happened?

ANELIE.  
We had a skit in the ward. We dressed a scarecrow like Hitler and the kids beat the shit out of him, with sticks. One kid 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.  
Here, come on in, let me see it.

ANELIE.  
You just haven't lived until you've seen a hundred kids screaming...

INT. BEDWETTER'S WARD - DAY

Feathers fly everywhere as kids scream -

KIDS.

Hitler is dead! Hitler is dead!

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Billie working, Salomea enters with a watch.

SALOMEA.

Hey. Somebody was in my stuff.

BILLIE.

And?

SALOMEA.

This is your watch? You can have your watch back, when I get my knife back.

Billie puts her hand near the drawer where the knife is.

BILLIE.

You sit.

KOLYA.

[blocking the girl's escape]  
Ah, yes. The blank card. There is no name on your card. It just says "girl found in the forest". Well now we know you can talk. Know any German...?

SALOMEA.

[a withering look]  
Enchante.

KOLYA.

If anyone goes near you, you push them away. If anyone goes near you while you're sleeping, you punch them in the face, you never even wake up - I hope you outgrow that before you get married! We've seen you sneak out to

scavenge for food, like an animal. You want everyone to think you're so tough.

SALOMEA.

I am tough. Nobody bothers me. I mind my own business.

KOLYA.

Yes, I know, you don't care about anybody. Except that's not really true. The three little boys, you're never far from them, and if anybody picks on them, you attack like a little wolverine. I think the little one likes you.

He ignores her murderous glare.

KOLYA.

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. And you don't want to be alone all the time. So tomorrow morning, you're going to give back her watch, and then 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 has reappeared. She unlocks her drawer and finds it empty. Outside her office she sees Salomea scrutinizing her from a distance, curled up in a corner, cleaning her nails with her knife. Billie walks over to her and sits.

BILLIE.

You don't have to pee in the woods anymore. We have a latrine. It's safer. ...There were seven of you when you came here, but one girl died. We're making a gravestone for her. What was her name?

SALOMEA.

[giving Billie a long look]  
Jana. When I was sick she refused to leave me behind. I would have died.

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.

[to Sommer, wagging her chest]  
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, and Sommer, after staggering comically several times, falls to the ground.

HANNA.

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

Wild applause.

SOMMER.

[sitting up]  
Come on, I had to die in the last three episodes. It's silly.

MATEUSZ.

The whole thing is silly, that's the point. Give the people what they want. Killing you is very popular.

HANNA.

[helps him up]

Can you see why it's good for these kids? They can laugh at the SS man. Turn the monster into a clown. You want them to heal, right?

SOMMER.

I'm not a monster.

HANNA.

[still holding his hand]

But you play one perfectly.

Ewa enters. Mateusz has a hand on Hanna's shoulder.

EWA.

Hanna? ...We tracked down that card.

HANNA.

My parents?

EWA.

False alarm. Wrong family. ...Sorry. I shouldn't have said anything --

Hanna shakes loose and runs off.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

SZYMON, in his late thirties, thin, with a sack; with an exhausted Ewa, and Daniel and Adam.

SZYMON.

So you two boys want to go to Israel? Given up on finding any relatives alive?

DANIEL.

There's a new war coming, and this time the Jews get to fight back.

SZYMON.

Another angry man who wants revenge. Son, the fighting in Israel, there are no Nazis to kill. But if you want to fight, you'll get your chance, once we persuade the British to let us in...

[to the other boy]

You're his brother? You're not another hothead, are you? I work with Jewish groups to send fighters to Israel.

ADAM.

I don't want to go to Israel.

SZYMON.

Well, I have another project. Nazis are hiding right here in Germany. So we put on our detective hats and go hunt them down. But we need cool-headed people.

DANIEL.

You go be a detective. I'm going to Israel. Some of us want to show what we're really made of.

SZYMON.

Ah. Get your Jewish Hero scouting badge. Already got mine, thank you. Mauthausen. Stairs of Death. Bottom of a pit, a rock quarry. 186 steps going up, a man on each step, carries fifty pounds of stone. A man gets to the top, he's tired, he falls, knocks over the man behind him. We all go down like dominos. The Nazis loved it, like watching the clowns at the circus. I broke three toes and once my arm. I weighed ninety pounds when we were liberated. So I'm going to be a quiet detective now. ...Ewa, my offer stands. We're building a Jewish intelligence service, can you imagine?

EWA.

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

SZYMON.

You're just going to forget all this?

EWA.

I'm going to do my best.

SZYMON.

I'm a jackass, forgot what I'm here for. My friends have a gift for Maja.  
[points to the sack]

EWA.

What's in the sack?

SZYMON.

It's soil from the Mount of Olives.

EWA.

In Jerusalem?

SZYMON.

They say that when God comes to earth to raise the dead, the people buried in this soil will be raised first.

[points]

Those people buried on your hill there - God knows they deserve to go to the head of the line. I'd sprinkle this all over Auschwitz if the Russians would let me.

EWA.

Magic Jehovah Dust? I stopped believing all that about the time they put me on the train. God is sleeping on the job.

SZYMON.

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

EWA.

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

SZYMON.

In the last ten years, so many dreams  
have been crushed - this one is too  
nice not to hang onto. You sure you  
don't want a handful for yourself?

She smiles and takes a handful.

EWA.

[looks up]

Death...Hey, Big Boss! Don't come get me  
just yet, okay? You've got enough of us  
up there already.

In another corner.

KOLYA.

What was that commotion in the girls'  
tent? Magda find another peeping Tom?

ANELIE.

The girls managed to get hold of some  
lipstick and makeup. They're in heaven.

[points to Salomea]

You think this is going to work? The  
girl from the forest?

KOLYA.

You saw her with the shell shock kids.  
And she's not Roma. Jewish. Salomea.

INT. THE BEDWETTER'S WARD -- NIGHT

Salomea consoles the bedwetters.

LEON.

[loud; a nightmare]

Papa!

SALOMEA.

Look at the room. You're here with me  
now. There's no danger. Just another  
nightmare from before. This is all  
normal. It's going to fade away.

LEON.

I'm not going to fall sleep tonight.  
It's impossible.

SALOMEA.

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

LEON.

I kind of did that already.

SALOMEA.

Maybe the cook is already up doing breakfast, we can get some sugar cubes.

LEON.

You're here every night. When do you sleep?

SALOMEA.

During the day. Anelie works the daytime, I work nights. Nightmares and bedwetters. ...It was great to hear you laugh. Yesterday. Billie came over that morning and sang songs, she told stories, those terrible American jokes.

LEON.

In America every farmer's daughter must be pregnant!

SALOMEA.

That was actually a pretty good day. ...Leon. I know why you fight with the other kids. You're angry, afraid. You and me, we're two peas in a pod.

Salomea consoling another child.

SALOMEA.

Okay, I'll tell you again, and you can keep telling yourself. None of this was your fault, you did nothing wrong. It's not you. You just have the shell shock. But it's going to get better.

JOZKA.

I don't feel any better. All I think about is revenge. Where was God when all this happened? I'm angry all the time.

SALOMEA.

Of course you're angry. After all that happened, I think that not being angry, that would be crazy.

We hear a train whistle, and see Salomea consoling another child, who wakes up screaming.

SALOMEA.

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

JAKUB.

Sorry.

SALOMEA.

You were doing so well.

JAKUB.

It was the train whistle. Most people hear that and they think, "A train, we're going on an adventure!" In Lodz a train meant...well, you know. Another neighborhood just disappears.

SALOMEA.

So tonight we do the scary part. Think. The most terrible day in the camps, the one thing that gives you nightmares... It's okay, you're here with me now, this is how we do it. Tell me the story.

She has a bag of crayons and some paper.

JAKUB.

I just can't. Not like this.

SALOMEA.

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

JAKUB.

Sometimes I feel like a turtle, hiding in my shell. No one can hurt me.

SALOMEA.

We had a boy who felt like a porcupine, all spikes. Let's draw the monster. Let me guess, you want red and black crayons, blood, monster stuff?

JAKUB.

Yeah.

SALOMEA.

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

JAKUB.

Will you stay here?

SALOMEA.

Of course. I'm here every night.

JAKUB.

What if your family comes for you?

SALOMEA.

This camp is my family. My world.

JAKUB.

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.

ANELIE.

[watching with Kolya]  
I can't believe it. I thought she was  
catatonic. I can sleep in my shed now!

INT. DINING HALL -- DAY

Ruta, Rivka, Jozka surround Maja.

MAJA.

So what do you need the peroxide for?  
And the ammonia?

RUTA.

Um, cleaning.

RIVKA.

Yes, cleaning!

INT. THE GIRLS DORM -- DAY

SALOMEA.

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

Hanna, eyes covered, enters the dorm, opens her  
eyes. A row of dark-haired girls has dyed the  
tips of their hair blond. She grabs one gently by  
the hair.

GIRLS.

Dalmatian Girl! Off to outer space!

She laughs.

HANNA.

What's the occasion?

MATEUSZ.

No occasion. That's the point.

HANNA.

[beams]  
Oh, Mati.

They pull her in deeper, and she sees the real surprise - Mateusz has painted a giant picture of her on the wall, crazy hair and all.

HANNA.

It's me!

MATEUSZ.

[whispers]  
Magda let me in, just for today, so I could paint whatever I wanted. 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.

Jean Valjean has more panache than I thought.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Anelie, Maja and Billie at work.

BILLIE.

Well, brace yourself.

ANELIE.

Uh oh.

BILLIE.

Remember that talk we had, about the other camp? Ask a few of the women over there to come here, help with the kids?

ANELIE.

With luck we find a nurse or a teacher.

BILLIE.

Luck isn't the word. They finally caught up to the typhus, now they're getting hit with influenza. Total quarantine.

ANELIE.

Kurwa! We can't bring those people here!

BILLIE.

Army won't allow it anyway. We're not a priority for anybody. So for now...

ANELIE.

We're on our own. God, I'm so tired.

Adam enters.

BILLIE.

Adam? Come in, it's okay.

ADAM.

I was wondering who to talk to first.

MAJA.

Is there a problem?

ADAM.

You know Ewa talks to all the new kids.

MAJA.

Yes.

ADAM.

She knows every awful thing that happened in all those camps. She carries all that in her head, every day.

ANELIE.

I know.

ADAM.

And everything that happened to her - she won't tell me, has she told you?

ANELIE.

No. We asked, she refused.

ADAM.

Ewa was yelling at those kids today. Those poor kids, they were shattered even before they came in.

ANELIE.

You're joking.

ADAM.

Yesterday, she was in the latrine crying. She hasn't taken a day off since...well, ever. I told her to take a break, she bit my head off. She wants to do as all the cases 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've tried talking to her. ...Adam, stick to her like glue. 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.

MAJA.

You'll do fine. Take down their stories, yell for help if you need it.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

Most of the staff talking around a table.

BILLIE.

So, doc, how is it this week?

SOMMER.

[glances at his notes]

Frostbite - those refugees marched down from the hills, mostly barefoot. Stomach problems -- they were eating bugs, worms, poisonous mushrooms... And the new girl from today. Pregnant. Raped. Ready to assist on a Caesarean?

BILLIE.

Love to. Maja?

MAJA.

We need stone for the graveyard.

BILLIE.

Every grave needs a stone with a name on it. So nobody is forgotten. And we need more firewood - the cold is killing us.

MAJA.

We visited the camp for adults. It was mostly people from the eastern sector. The Russians are stealing everything, attacking the women, so millions of people are coming west. Poles and Russians too. Some of them want to come look at the children once it's okay...?

BILLIE.

Sure. We need more adoptions.

MAJA.

The worst part was the old and the sick - they had a few suicides.

BILLIE.

Belgium is willing to take a thousand more refugees, but only coal miners.

MAJA.

Slave labor all over again...What about those two sisters from Lithuania?

BILLIE.

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

MAJA.

I know. ...Got a woman coming to get her son, another reunion! Some kids want to see the reunion, the others...too painful.

BILLIE.

I'm talking to the other camps. All the refugees, the cards? 17 million people.

MAJA.

You know what is hard on these girls?

BILLIE.

What's that?

MAJA.

[softer]

All the time the girls were in the camps, never had underwear. Two, three years. Right now they're wearing men's underwear from the Army.

BILLIE.

Holy cow.

MAJA.

Proudest moment of my life at the camp. We actually stole the Nazi flag off the pole... Turn your head, Doctor.

She opens her blouse to reveal a red brassiere made from the flag.

BILLIE.

See what I can do to get you girls some undercrackers.

ANELIE.

Oh. Billie. You think we can get the army to push up our bread quota?

BILLIE.

Why? Are we getting more kids coming in?

ANELIE.

No. These children have seen people starve to death. They're frightened. They keep sneaking into the cook's stocks and stealing food. Hoarding it.

BILLIE.

So, the bread...?

ANELIE.

Each night at supper, we pull out bread, tell them they can take put a piece under their pillow. So they know there's always more. I bet they sleep better.

[shrugs]

Sommer and I, we're frantic. We're trying everything.

BILLIE.

So the doctor is working out?

ANELIE.

He's fantastic. Please, God, don't tell him I said so.

BILLIE.

So why didn't Ewa come to the meeting?

ANELIE.

Hotel Walentino. The girls' dorm.

They cross to the girls' dorm and see Ewa sitting in the corner, drained.

ANELIE.

I've seen her like this before.

And in a bed is Salomea, dead asleep, her hand under her pillow, clutching her knife.

BILLIE.

So what happened to Salomea? The war?

ANELIE.

We didn't even know she could talk until last week. But she was so ragged and dirty when we found her, she must have been living in the woods like an animal, for months. She would cry in her sleep. Whatever happened, must have been terrible. 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.

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

EWA.

Oh no no no...

OSWIECIM PAWEL.

The SS pulled me out for special duty -

EWA.

[begins crying, hugs the child]  
I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry...  
[crying harder]

ADAM.

Kurwa.

[fuck]

Pawel. Get Anelie.

TREBLINKA PAWEL.

She went to the other camp.

ADAM.

The doctor then. Run.

The doctor is already entering.

ADAM.

Doctor, good timing!!...Ewa, come here.  
[taking her in his arms]  
Deep breath. Just take a minute, okay?

EWA.

Adam, don't let me go.

SOMMER.

Ewa. Come with me.

EWA.

[sobbing]  
Adam. I can't go, I've got to --

OSWIECIM PAWEL.

It's okay.

EWA.

The cards -

ADAM.

Ewa. I've got it.

Sommer and Ewa leave.

ADAM.

[nervous, reading]  
Sorry. Let's see. Wojciech? Parents,  
the ghetto, Majdanek. You have a  
brother?

OSWIECIM PAWEL.

Is that girl okay?

ADAM.

She's one of us.

Maja enters with a group of new refugees.

MAJA.

Is Ewa okay?

ADAM.

The doctor has her at the hospital.

MAJA.

Can you fill in?

ADAM.

Don't have much choice.

MAJA.

Brace yourself. Fifteen new arrivals.

ADAM.

What the hell happened?

MAJA.

Running away from the Red army. There are more Russian units coming our way.

ADAM.

It's not their sector.

MAJA.

They don't care. They want to see how much they can get away with. The whole countryside is terrified.

ADAM.

Maja. You told Ewa to pull your card out of the Poland stack. You don't want us to look for your family?

[looks at the card, figures it out]

The Germans got your whole family?

MAJA.

[smiles]

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

[touches his face]

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.

MAJA.

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

He nods again.

INT. BEDWETTER'S WARD -- NIGHT

Salomea consoling a GIRL, reading from the Bible.

SALOMEA.

The ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. The waters receded until the tenth month. The tops of the mountains became visible. After forty days Noah opened a window in the ark and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. He sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. But the dove could find nowhere to perch because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah. He waited seven days and again sent out the dove from the ark. When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf!

JOZKA.

They were safe on that mountain? And God promised never to destroy the world again. What do you think?

SALOMEA.

It's been a long time since I bothered with Jehovah.

JOZKA.

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

SALOMEA.

You need friends. Whatever friends you had from the old life - where are they? They're lost.

JOZKA.

Remember I came in with two right shoes? The boy who ended up with the two lefts, they sterilized him. He lost his mind. So he was transferred, they called it.

SALOMEA.

Transferred, as in...?

JOZKA.

Transferred up the chimney.

SALOMEA.

We all need love, more than ever. We need to help each other. Or else we're lost. Go make friends. Telling someone you love them costs you nothing.

JOZKA.

I don't know how to talk to people anymore. How to be normal.

SALOMEA.

Neither do I. It's all of us. Someday life will be normal. You'll have a home, meat in the kitchen, a bathtub. Now, a new game. Think of your favorite memories from before the war.

JOZKA.

My mother braiding my hair, singing to me. ...Um, grandpa and his chocolate. ...And the harvest festival, all the dancing.

SALOMEA.

Every night, before you sleep. Say it over and over. Mama. Chocolate. Dancing.

JOZKA.

Mama. Chocolate. Dancing. 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.

SALOMEA.

Every kid is different. The kids from the ghettos, afraid they will starve.

KOLYA.

They're the ones hoarding the bread.

SALOMEA.

Yes. The children from the death camps, they fear the gas chambers. And the ones who hid - terrified of getting caught. Used to be I had my own nightmares - now I'm seeing everyone else's, a new movie every time I sleep. That's what made Ewa crack up. So when is it my turn?

KOLYA.

The girl who isn't afraid of anything?

SALOMEA.

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

[points to her head]

If I unravel like a ball of yarn, not even Anelie can save me. So I hang on.

[looks up at him]

I used to be a child. What am I now?

Maja enters.

MAJA.

Kolya. Have you heard from your army?

KOLYA.

Not a thing.

MAJA.

You're sure?

KOLYA.

What's going on?

MAJA.

Salomea. Come with me.

They walk to a corner.

MAJA.

Be careful with the Russian. Something is going on.

Magda enters.

MAJA.

She's here. Magda. I don't want people to panic. Quietly as you can, pass the word, curfew every night. Sundown. It's dangerous to wander around at night.

MAGDA.

I'll keep an eye on the latrine too.

They look outside and see a platoon of GIs.

MAGDA.

Why all the American soldiers?

MAJA.

Trouble with the Russians.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

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

SERGEANT.

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

BILLIE.

Salomea?

The GI watches Salomea's knife work, fascinated.

SALOMEA.

I'll take him on the Pee Watch tonight.  
Get some sleep, I'll come get you at  
nine. ...Finally they're sending more  
grownups. Did they forget we're here?

EXT. COMPOUND -- DAY

Hanna and Mateusz sit in a doorway, kissing.

MAJA.

Hey, Superman, I catch you snogging  
again, you really will fly through  
outer space!

MATEUSZ.

Snogging?

MAJA.

What you're doing. Snogging!  
[to Salomea]  
Pawel is having a little trouble with  
the big kids on the compound.

SALOMEA.

Treblinka Pawel or Oswiecim Pawel?

MAJA.

Auschwitz.

SALOMEA.

You are joking.  
[marches off, beyond furious]

MAJA.

But that's the boys' ward, no girls --

INT. BOY'S WARD - DAY

Salomea enters the ward like John Wayne. OSWIECIM PAWEL sits in the corner, wary. Silence descends.

SALOMEA.

Hey. Babe Ruth.

LEON.

What the hell are you doing here?  
[gestures around the room]  
Boys only.

SALOMEA.

Jackass. You see that kid in the corner? You know where he came from?

LEON.

[beginning to deflate]  
Just having a little fun.

SALOMEA.

[staring, not even bothering to raise her voice]  
Anybody who fucks with Pawel, fucks with me. Leon, you're on the Pee Watch with me tonight. Nine o'clock.  
[begins to leave]

LEON.

I'm not going on any Pee Watch.

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

SALOMEA.

Nine o'clock, Leon. Don't make me come find you.  
[leaving]

JAKUB.

You better just do what she says.

SALOMEA.

[from the door]  
Sunday there's a dance. We need boys. Bring your friends... And Pawel too.

INT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

ANELIE.

I want to ask you something...This is so embarrassing...Working with these kids all these months, I never realized how badly I want to be a mother someday.

SOMMER.

You're perfect for the job. No joke. ...I take it you didn't come here to propose marriage.

ANELIE.

[a smile flickers]

Some terrible things happened in the camp in Poland. I had 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 sick kids, now you want to show me your...

[gesturing at her middle]

ANELIE.

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

SOMMER.

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

ANELIE.

It's really not important.

SOMMER.

It may be important. Where were you?

ANELIE.

Auschwitz. Josef Mengele. I think you know him.

SOMMER.

Jesus. Anka.

ANELIE.

I didn't want to throw that in your face like that. But if you really had no idea what Mengele was up to, now you're going to find out.

INT. DINING HALL -- NIGHT

A dance fueled mostly by singing, stamping, clapping. Leon, Jakub and Pawel enter; Pawel beams at Salomea who is transformed, a total girly girl.

SALOMEA.

[smiles at Pawel; 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.

He's afraid of girls.

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

SALOMEA.

Problem solved. Let's dance.

A record player begins to play Dinah Shore's "I'll Walk Alone". Mateusz and Hanna dance slowly, in their own world. Other couples follow their lead.

MAJA.

So...Leon?

SALOMEA.

[guilty smile]

Leon was picking on Pawel. We're fixing Pawel, the hard part is fixing Leon.

MAJA.

Girls are always trying to fix boys.

SALOMEA.

Leon is a child. He's like every bully in the world, he's afraid.

MAJA.

So you dance with him?

SALOMEA.

[smiles again]

The dancing is nice. You should get out there! Come on, Leon...

INT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

Anelie sits in a robe.

ANELIE.

How did it go? I didn't think you were going to put me under.

SOMMER.

Go rest. Salomea is covering for you.

ANELIE.

[impatient]

Sommer. Babies?

SOMMER.

Well, you've got a chance.

ANELIE.

Thank you.

SOMMER.

From what I saw today, Mengele was no surgeon. I wouldn't trust him to slice ham. He sliced a tissue sample out of your uterus, there was scarring, infection, I did some repair work.

There is a risk of complications,  
miscarriage...

ANELIE.

Like any other girl.

SOMMER.

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

ANELIE.

Anesthetic? Sommer. I was awake the whole time. 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. ...Sommer, I'm afraid. I have hope now. Babies. Hope is a dangerous thing.

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 - you're just a child --

EWA.

Careful, you're mixing the Treblinka cards ... Remember Monsieur Rosenzweig from the other camp?

BILLIE.

Yes?

EWA.

I'm helping him take care of the little girl, we found her in the spring? He wants to adopt me. Take me to France.

BILLIE.

France?

EWA.

He's going start a bookstore. He should be at a college - Euripedes, Marlowe, I could listen to him for hours.

BILLIE.

He's a single man, I'm not comfortable-

EWA.

He's married. His wife went into hiding. I'm going to help him find her.

BILLIE.

[smiles]

Well, you're perfect for the job.

EWA.

Don't we try to match up orphans with the parents who lost children?

BILLIE.

Ewa, what about your own parents?

EWA.

[touches her own chest]

Billie, this is Ewa the witch. My parents got on the train in Lublin. We know where the train went. I've worked with the other camps. No sign anywhere.

BILLIE.

So you're giving up?

EWA.

[holds up her own card]

I'm letting go.

BILLIE.

You're sure?

EWA.

[looks at the card]

I'm saying goodbye.

BILLIE.

I'm sorry.

EWA.

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

BILLIE.

Ewa, once you get to France, write a  
long letter to your children.

EWA.

My children?

BILLIE.

Of course children. Write the whole  
story, your parents. So they're never  
forgotten. Start now, before you  
forget.

EWA.

That's brilliant.

BILLIE.

Write about Maja and Anka and the rest.  
We're your family too. Every person in  
this camp says you're magical.

EWA.

[smiles]

They say I'm a witch. It's not the  
same.

MAJA.

[entering with Sommer]

Hey.

She takes Ewa into her arms; the two girls leave.  
Billie tosses cards on a table, pulls out a  
bottle of whisky and sits in one of two empty  
chairs.

BILLIE.

[very rocky]

Doctor. Grab a chair... Getting cold.

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

BILLIE.

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

SOMMER.

You have children at home?

BILLIE.

[cards in her hands]

Home? My husband and I, last four years, we've had a month together, total.

[spreads her hands apart]

Atlantic, Pacific. So, instead of having my own kids, I watch these kids here roll by, like broken cars I can't fix. I'm a nurse and I can't fix em. Somebody broke their hearts. On purpose. Explain that to me, Sommer. You were there.

Close to crying, she does her best to reel it back in; she shivers and he drapes a jacket around her.

BILLIE.

Thought I had it bad when I was a prisoner in the Philippines. This has been a long war.

[looks at the cards]

I had this stupid magic card game that was going to put the whole world back together.

SOMMER.

Your optimism is a sweet thing, keep hold of it...You're going back to that husband of yours. He's a soldier?

BILLIE.

Yes. I have no idea where he is.

SOMMER.

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

BILLIE.

Dammit, Sommer, now I'm going to cry.

He puts his hand on her shoulder, and she puts her hand on his. She hears a distant truck horn.

BILLIE.

Shit. The Russians are here. Find Maja!  
[touches his shoulder]  
And you stay out sight!  
[wipes her eyes, rushes out]

EXT. TREES NEXT TO A LATRINE -- NIGHT

Mateusz and Hanna are sitting next to each other under a tree near the latrine. Full moon.

HANNA.

You said it would be warm. Put your arm around me.

MATEUSZ.

Who the hell is that?

Salomea and Rocha are running toward the latrine.

SALOMEA.

Quick quick quick! Good girl!

She half-flings the girl into the latrine.

SALOMEA.

On night shift I change the kids who wet the bed. This one actually woke up in time to make a run for it.

HANNA.

You forgot your shoes.

SALOMEA.

So...working on your comic book in the dark?

MATEUSZ.

You're the one who never sees the light of day. We should put you in the comic book. Bring back Varney the Vampire.

SALOMEA.

You want to make me a vampire?

MATEUSZ.

Maybe not.

SALOMEA.

Let me know when you need a mermaid and I'm in. You shouldn't be here. Curfew.

[returning to the latrine]

You okay in there?

MATEUSZ.

It's amazing. You've changed so much.

HANNA.

Being afraid all the time, I was rung out like a rag. Now I come find you and everything's alright. I'm not alone.

[kissing his hand, guilty smile]

Honestly, I'm drinking you up, like medicine. Love can cure anything, I think...So why do we come here at night?

MATEUSZ.

No sun. You're even more beautiful when the sunglasses are off.

HANNA.

Maybe you should be Varney the Vampire.

MATEUSZ.

Maybe I should drink from your neck.

He kisses her neck and she shrieks. The little girl comes out of the latrine.

SALOMEA.

You two are disgusting. Ah, there she is, round of applause!

ROCHA.

All I did was pee.

MATEUSZ.

[points to the dining hall]

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

SALOMEA.

Not your business.

MATEUSZ.

Trouble?

SALOMEA.

[stopping, looking warily]

Are either of you from Russia?

A truck rolls into the compound.

SALOMEA.

[picking up the little girl]

Hide! Now!

RUSSIAN SOLDIERS climb out of the truck and Galina leads them swiftly across the compound. Children scurry out of the way.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHT

Maja has assembled the refugees Galina wants to take, Daniel among them. She has American MPs, armed, protecting them. Galina arrives with her soldiers led by YURI. The American and Russian soldiers eye each other. A tense silence descends.

BILLIE.

[with documents]

Major. Another night visit.

GALINA.

I see you have some friends.

MAJA.

Billie. Leave this to me... I have most of the people you wanted, right here. And a couple of MPs. Make sure no one disappears mysteriously.

GALINA.

Is there some trouble?

MAJA.

We have all the MPs awake and on duty. Just so you know. ...We've been on the radio with American judge advocates for three days.

GALINA.

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

MAJA.

[looks at the top page]

The American lawyers say you have no control over the Poles, so the young lads from the Polish Home Army, we can take them out of your stack. Lighten your load. Also, the other allies don't recognize Russia's seizure of the Baltics, so those two Lithuanian girls, leave them off too.

GALINA.

I have my orders -

BILLIE.

I don't work for the Red Army.

MAJA.

Billie, I've got it....These four here, mistaken identity.

GALINA.

I was told to take them.

MAJA.

Can you prove who they are?

GALINA.

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

MAJA.

I know, isn't it awful?

[looks at Galina]

You'd think they had a reason to hide from the Red Army.

[the documents again]

These three, there's some dispute as to where they were born -

GALINA.

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

MAJA.

Well, that part of the border is under dispute. Could take a long time to determine whether they're even yours. ...Two more, disappeared.

GALINA.

Either you find them or my men will.

BILLIE.

How many men did you bring? I can have an armored company here lickety-split....You are out of your sector. And this isn't a concentration camp, there are no fences. We have runaways all the time, especially when your truck rolls into the area.

GALINA.

I'll be calling my general.

MAJA.

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

[points to Sonya]

GALINA.

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

The girl recoils.

MAJA.

Sonya has tuberculosis, the doctor can't release her for quite some time.

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

GALINA.

I don't believe you.

MAJA.

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

GALINA.

So I only get one, and I have to wait until she's cured?

MAJA.

Sorry you wasted a trip. Oh, wait. Not a total waste.

[points]

I've got ten cans of ham I can't use. Help yourself.

Galina looks at a can of ham. Then she takes a long, hard look at the American MPs, who stare right back, ready for trouble.

GALINA.

You have paperwork on all these people?

MAJA.

Took all night. We knew you were coming.

Major finally sits, and sighs with relief.

GALINA.

Oh thank God.

MAJA.

I beg your pardon...?

GALINA.

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

YURI.

But the Colonel said -

GALINA.

Go. Eat.

Russian guards leave. The American MP's relax.

MAJA.

I don't understand.

GALINA.

Yuri has big flapping ears...If only you know how much I'd rather be taking a pile of paperwork, than taking these people.

MAJA.

Then why -

GALINA.

Most of you people would have ended up in the gulag. You, boy, you were in the Polish resistance?

DANIEL.

[smiles, steps forward]

We destroyed trains, bridges, planes -

GALINA.

You were the boys who cut the power in Warsaw?

DANIEL.

Yes, we burned gas tankers, sabotage every week.

GALINA.

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

DANIEL.

[stepping back]

I thought we were all on the same side?

GALINA.

Yesterday's news. We had the same enemy, he's dead now. And you Polish Jews, don't go back to your homes - the locals took your houses, they'll kill you.

MAJA.

What if we get more German POWs?

GALINA.

We took ninety thousand German prisoners at Stalingrad. You know how many made it home alive? You could fit them all in your compound. The rest...

ANELIE.

[panic, looks at Sommer]

All dead?

GALINA.

[points]

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

[gestures for Kolya to approach]

I've heard you crying in your tent. You were never cut out to be a soldier.

KOLYA.

I don't understand.

GALINA.

Remember when you found our unit? Cracow, you said you were lost - you looked an awful lot like a deserter. I scooped you up like a lost puppy, no paperwork, no one can prove you're mine. So if you disappear, no one's going to blame me. So stop trying to protect me.

KOLYA.

You mean...

GALINA.

[indicates Sonya]

Go steal a jeep, take this sick girl to the main road, and run. Roosevelt slammed the door on the refugees, but Truman is going to let you into America. You have the soul of a poet. Go be a taxi driver in Brooklyn, or grow wheat in Kansas. And make babies with blond hair and blue eyes.

SONYA.

[embarrassed; handshake, whispers]

My name's Sonya. It's alright, I'm not all that contagious. Just get us to the border first and we'll figure out the rest. I just want to be out of Germany.

MAJA.

[to Sonya and Kolya]

The French refuse to take refugees. You need to go through Belgium.

[to Galina]

So why are you helping these children? Is this some sort of trick?

GALINA.

When I was born, the city was Leningrad, but we used the old name, Sankt Peterburg, or just plain Peter. You were from Warsaw, a starvation ghetto, right? Leningrad was a starvation city. Hitler issued an order - "Leningrad must be erased from the face of the Earth. We have no interest in saving the lives of the civilian population." He went before his adoring fans in Munich and said very openly -- "Leningrad must die of starvation."

MAJA.

You're joking.

GALINA.

The invading army was told not to accept our surrender, because then the Germans would have to feed us. They were told to run us out into the countryside, and then burn the city to the ground. To this day I don't understand it.

ANELIE.

[puts her hand on Maja's shoulder:  
she wants to ask the questions]  
What do you mean?

GALINA.

Just think of all the effort Hitler put into killing my city way up in the frozen north. And in killing you Jews. All the soldiers, all the trains, the railroads, all the guns, to run those camps? Just to kill unarmed people. If he had put all that effort into fighting the war, he could have marched all the way to China. He would have conquered the world. In the end, you and I killed Hitler. It was us. Remember that.

ANELIE.

So Hitler came with his army.

GALINA.

The blockade. Two years. Some nights we had hundreds of fires. They bombed the power plants, the water plants. No oil or coal could get to us. In one night Hitler managed to bomb five hospitals.

ANELIE.

[sitting next to Galina, the way  
she does in the shell shock ward]  
In Peter? How did you stay warm?

GALINA.

We didn't. Every stick of furniture was burned, slept on the floor. Our neighbor had this huge piano, and we watched it burn for hours. Then we

burned buildings - we had to decide, do we want the shelter, or the wood for fuel? Then the trees. A whole city devouring itself, committing suicide. Our generals ordered us to build a giant barricade, 400 miles long. They just couldn't see. Hitler didn't want to fight us.

ANELIE.

He didn't?

GALINA.

No. He wanted to starve us to death. Because a quick death with a bullet or a bomb or cyanide gas was too good for us. His troops stole all the food on the way to Peter, then bombed the food warehouses. Hitler's main weapon wasn't the army. It was food.

ANELIE.

So how did you get food for all those millions of people?

GALINA.

We didn't. We did try. We had to bring supplies across the lake -- boats in the summer, trucks in winter when the lake froze. Imagine driving a truckful of flour across ice, with artillery coming down all around you -- forget about braking, you couldn't even steer. The Americans tried to send us food through the Arctic Ocean, but it was like feeding an elephant with a teaspoon.

ANELIE.

So what did you do?

GALINA.

When the food boats were sunk in the lake, we sent down divers to get it. Can you imagine, diving in that freezing water? We ate the food, sea weeds and all. The ration went down to

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

ANELIE.

Twenty below. Fahrenheit? Celsius?

GALINA.

Twenty below, does it matter?...We found two thousand tons of sheep guts, and made this edible glop out of it. Sheep intestines. Just imagine the smell. Then we ate the horses - it really does taste like glue. Then we ate the dogs and cats, each one skinnier than the last. And then the birds until they figured out they were on the menu and flew away. And the rats - they learned to avoid us too. We learned to sleep with our small children, so the rats wouldn't try to eat them. And eat the corpses...

ANELIE.

Was it only the rats who ate the corpses?

GALINA.

What do you think?...On a really bad day we'd pray for that fat war profiteer to catch a bullet in the head, he weighed three hundred pounds easy. 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 no liver - never eat a Russian man's liver. Too much vodka. Although we couldn't make vodka either. Can you imagine a million Russian men with nothing to drink?...

[laughs]

The Germans found seven million of us there. By the time they were done, there were only four hundred thousand left, plus what was left of the soldiers.

MAJA.

That's all? Out of all those millions?

GALINA.

The Reaper began with the easy pickings - the sick, the unlucky, the old... God, the children. That first winter, a hundred thousand starved each month. Bodies stacked up like logs til summer. I buried my daughter in the snow, deep as I could, the ground was too hard. I like to think she wasn't eaten by the animals. Or anything else.

[looks at Anelie]

How old are you?...If you live to be a hundred, you will never see anything like watching your own child starve.

ANELIE.

Six million people?

GALINA.

Leningrad - the death toll was worse than Auschwitz. More Jews died in Leningrad than in Dachau over there.

ANELIE.

So this why you're going easy on us?

GALINA.

No, Leningrad is why I'm not afraid about lying to my boss. Without this paperwork, I get the gulag. Might get it anyway. But after Leningrad, the gulag would be a holiday! What more could they threaten me with? After you've been raped, you've eaten your neighbor's cat and eaten your neighbor...I will never be afraid of anything again... My daughter would have grown up to look just like you. Just

like her father. I think that's who he was.

[calls out]

Yuri. Come get my ham. Give it to the general - maybe it keeps me out of the gulag. I'm not going to eat it. Ham.

Galina and Anelie share a look, before Galina heads for the door.

ANELIE.

That camp down the road. For the adults. Do they have a shell shock ward too?

BILLIE.

No. I think you invented it. God, both of you were fantastic.

GALINA.

[from the doorway]

I forgot. Anyone here from Auschwitz?

ANELIE.

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

GALINA.

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

ANELIE.

Do I look stupid?

GALINA.

I'm not going to grab you and throw you into my truck. It's actually even worse than that. It's a box.

ANELIE.

Billie?

BILLIE.

Sergeant, come out to the compound with us, will you?

EXT. THE COMPOUND -- NIGHT

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

GALINA.

Back up, boys. No funny business. Not this time. Yuri, pull it out.

Yuri brings a crate. The MP watches the Russians.

GALINA.

We found twenty crates like this one at Auschwitz. The SS left it behind.  
..Yuri, it's alright, just open it up.

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

ANELIE.

Clothes. Children's clothes.

GALINA.

Last time I was here, I heard your children were wearing rags.

Anelie smiles, and then she realizes why the clothes are here.

ANELIE.

These came from Auschwitz?

GALINA.

We found children's clothes. Toys. Shoes. Glasses...And teeth. The gold fillings.

ANELIE.

Look - this one has a name written in the collar. Leah Greenspan. Adam!

EWA.

Here's another. Abraham Duberstein. Adam, have a look, write down the names you find in here. You can tell the Red Cross what happened to these children.

BILLIE.

So all these children are...

ANELIE.

[holding up a dress]

It came from Auschwitz. Leah Greenspan  
is not coming back for her clothes.

YURI.

Hey! Medved!

Ewa and Adam, examining the box, look up,  
startled.

ADAM.

Medved? My name is Lieberman.

YURI.

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

Adam plucks out a teddy bear.

SALOMEA.

I'll take that.

She takes the bear and looks at it, shaking her  
head. She looks at Yuri.

SALOMEA.

Thank you. In my ward there's a girl  
who sucks her thumb, needs a pal just  
like this one. Don't forget your ham.

GALINA.

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

Galina picks up one of the dresses, and all the  
emotions of Leningrad hit her at once.

GALINA.

[whispers]

Bozhe. Bozhe moi.

She looks at Billie.

GALINA.  
Take good care of your children.  
[pats her belly]  
Fill their bellies.

INT. THE BEDWETTER'S WARD - NIGHT

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

EXT. THE WOODS - NIGHT

Dawn breaking. Sonya and Kolya hug Ewa and get ready to take off in a horse cart. He puts his coat over her. They share a look.

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

She runs off. A nervous silence.

KOLYA.  
You speak any Russian?

SONYA.  
No. You speak any Polish?

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

She begins to laugh, and soon he does too.

KOLYA.  
So English it is...No one can bother us once we get to Bastogne. ...It will be safer if we tell people we are married. ...So if they take me away and ask me what my wife's favorite color is..

SONYA.  
[smiles]  
Yellow.

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

Ewa prepares to board a truck.

EWA.

We swore to stay together. We managed  
to stick together through it all.

MAJA.

War's over. Go to France.

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

EWA.

Now listen carefully.

She kisses him, the real thing.

EWA.

Dijon. It's in France. Come find me  
next summer. Do I need to say it again?

ADAM.

I missed that first bit...

Ewa laughs and kisses him again. Hugs him.

ADAM.

Dijon. Be worth it just to see you  
smile like that again.

She boards the truck with her new father.

INT. ANELIE'S SHED - NIGHT

Anelie curled up on the floor, Sommer holding  
her.

ANELIE.

Jonatan!

[screams the name over and over]

SOMMER.

Jonatan?

ANELIE.

[gradually gaining consciousness]  
Bayonets. Over and over, with bayonets.

SOMMER.

Wake up.

ANELIE.

It was a loaf of bread. For me.

SOMMER.

You're in the new camp now. Far away from Poland. The sun is coming up. I can smell the kitchen, they are heating up potatoes for breakfast. We can fill our bellies. But get a little sleep first. Dream of a farm. Pigs and chickens.

ANELIE.

No pigs....He looked a bit like you.

SOMMER.

Who?

ANELIE.

Jonatan... Stay with me. Okay?

INT. BEDWETTER'S WARD -- NIGHT

Salomea consoling Anelie. It's daytime.

ANELIE.

How am I supposed to let go of these children, these stories, and go live a real life, marry a man, have children?

SALOMEA.

Don't be silly. You're already the best Mama I've ever seen.

ANELIE.

The children run around like animals, how am I supposed to punish them? I

can't. And those two boys who are always sitting in the corner - some of these children are never going to be okay, no matter what we do. ...You know what I'd like you to do for me?

SALOMEA.

What?

ANELIE.

That knife you have under your pillow every night? Throw it in the latrine. Let it go. You'll sleep like a baby.

Salomea crosses to the quartermaster and Maja.

SERGEANT.

Jesus. I was on night watch. I had no clue. What do you need me to do?

MAJA.

A hundred things, but mostly teaching the kids, Polish and English both. Help out with the boys.

SERGEANT.

Panna - sorry - what's your name --

SALOMEA.

Salomea.

SERGEANT.

Pretty name.

She beams.

SERGEANT.

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

SALOMEA.

Last night was easy. Wait til three of these 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.

Okay. Thanks. ...Hey. Souvenir.

She gives him her knife.

SALOMEA.

[smiles]

Belonged to an SS officer. Long story.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Billie, Anelie and Sommer working, Colonel drinking coffee.

BILLIE.

Well, Colonel, you were right. A lot of kids who don't have a matching card.

COLONEL.

Well, you were right about the camps. The total death toll, we may never know.

BILLIE.

What makes it worse, the Russians have put up this gigantic wall. People in the east can't get out, no one can get in. They're splitting families right in two. We're fixing up some of the adults in the next camp, to adopt these kids. And Anelie and Salomea are doing wonders with the shell shock kids.

COLONEL.

Well, like I said, you were right. That's why the next sheet is going to have your promotion on it.

ANELIE.

Captain?

COLONEL.

Got that box for you.  
[points at it]

Billie, did you really buy the life of a Jewish girl for ten cans of ham?

BILLIE.

Wartime is loaded with irony, sir. Should I have haggled her price down to five cans?

COLONEL.

U.S. Army ham. We're all gonna end up in the stockade. ...Billie, that's not the only one you saved. Don't sell yourself short. ...Well, doctor, the lawyers are all done with you.

SOMMER.

So quick?

COLONEL.

The stack of cases is just ridiculous. They're cranking out verdicts like sausages. No, you're not going in for a long stretch. Two year sentence with the other POWs, probably out in one.

SOMMER.

Can I still practice medicine?

COLONEL.

Yes, I had a witness, persuaded them you would be a big help.

SOMMER.

A witness?

COLONEL.

[to Anelie]

Fraulein, thanks for your help. I know they can use another doctor.

ANELIE.

Of course.

Anelie and Sommer exchange a look.

COLONEL.

Billie, help me figure out this box?

They exit; MPs enter.

SOMMER.

Anelie?

ANELIE.

They need doctors...Without you, we never would have - it was your idea, we saved those children in the ward -- My God, you're going to jail! What happens if -

SOMMER.

Anelie, don't be silly. The guards will be nasty, they will yell at me. You've been doing that to me for months.

ANELIE.

[smiles]

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

SOMMER.

Why do you think?

MP.

We ready?

SOMMER.

Been waiting for this a long time.

EXT. COMPOUND --DAY

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

BILLIE.

Thank you.

Maja sees the colonel's driver - a corporal in a motorcycle with a sidecar.

MAJA.

God, I'm a genius. Billie, do we have some gasoline?

BILLIE.

Sure.

MAJA.

Colonel, can you stay an extra day? We can feed you and give you a bunk with the boys. 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, Maja gives the corporal a ferocious hug. And then the colonel.

INT. BILLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Billie waiting, Anelie arrives.

BILLIE.

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

She opens a box and pulls out a pair of underwear big enough for Kate Smith's heavier sister. Anelie, all of 95 pounds, collapses in hysterics.

BILLIE.

He had to have the box inspected when he crossed into the sector.

ANELIE.

[points]

That poor man is married to...that? We need to be nicer to him next time.

BILLIE.

It's good to see you laugh. I think you and Maja could both get in here.

ANELIE.

[points]

Please tell me there's a brassiere in there. I've got to show Maja.

BILLIE.

[examines the monstrous skivvies]

You could hold them up with rubber bands. Or a belt.

ANELIE.

I wish I could show them to Ewa. Making her smile was no easy thing..

INT. GIRLS' DORM - DAY

Most of the staff has been gathered.

SERGEANT.

Dammit, Magda, Billie told me to come to the girls' dorm!

MAGDA.

[wielding a stick]

Got my eye on you.

SERGEANT.

[in the doorway]

Jesus. ...Ain't nobody naked in there..?

BILLIE.

All clear.

MAJA.

Why is everybody here? What's wrong?

BILLIE.

Maja, my husband is coming Saturday. He got out of the hospital.

MAJA.

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

BILLIE.

Maja. I'm rotating out of here. I've got orders. I'm going to Walter Reed to teach, and Johnny gets the Pentagon.

MAJA.

You're leaving? Who's going to run this place?

BILLIE.

You are.

MAJA.

I can't run this whole thing by myself!

BILLIE.

Maja, you've been running the place for months. I've been at the hospital round the clock since the doctor left.

MAJA.

But I'm only -

BILLIE.

The army is sending a doctor and a nurse. As far as the Army is concerned, they're in charge. But it's your show. Anelie will still help with the kids -

ANELIE.

Salomea is teaching that big kid to work with the shell shock kids too.

BILLIE.

The new doctor, you need to show him the ropes, the shell shock. It's only a year - soon they have to run out of lost people. ...They're opening the German colleges, and they're required to take some kids from the camps. My colonel got you at the top of the list.

MAJA.

A university? My God -

BILLIE.

That's all a year away.

MAJA.

What do I study?

BILLIE.

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

MAJA.

Haven't really had time for dreams.

BILLIE.

Take the time. I know you love these people, but this is not your future.

ANELIE.

So what do we do?

BILLIE.

Please, God, keep pushing to find homes for these kids. Adoption, anything. The thought of leaving them here when I go...

MAJA.

First thing, big farewell for Billie. If we had a fatted calf, we'd kill it.

ANELIE.

Fatted spam? It's kind of like food, but not really.

BILLIE.

You know what's in spam, right?

ANELIE.

Don't tell me, I don't want to know.

EXT. THE COMPOUND - DAY

Most of the camp comes out for Billie's departure. Salomea is with Leon in the background, staring at Billie. Hanna has trimmed her hair, leaving lots of black, and then re-bleached only the very tips.

BILLIE.

You trimmed your hair.

HANNA.

Yes, black and more black. I'm not pretending to be a Catholic anymore, but I can still fly through outer space.

MATEUSZ.

Nurse Billie, our latest comic book, all for you.

BILLIE.

I can't take this, you made it by hand, it's your story -

MATEUSZ.

We made it for you. It has all of us in it.

HANNA.

Here's the good witch.

BILLIE.

Ewa! She's beautiful. She looks happy.

HANNA.

And the evil szkop.

[looking up vaguely]

Sorry, Doctor, we needed a villain.

MATEUSZ.

Babe Ruth and the girl in the forest. Dancing on the moon.

BILLIE.

Wow, Salomea has a big knife there.

HANNA.

It's a magical sword so she can fly to outer space. And here are the two Pawels drinking martinis in the Hotel Walentino. See, the girls' dorm with the big picture of me in the back.

BILLIE.

But they only let girls in there.

HANNA.

It's make-believe.

MATEUSZ.

And one last one, I did it a few months ago. So you never forget.

He opens it to a drawing.

MATEUSZ.

Ewa, Anelie, Maja, Salomea, and...you.

Billie hugs Hanna and Mateusz, then Anelie and Maja. A jeep awaits. The whole camp watches.

BILLIE.

One more stop.

She walks to the graveyard with Salomea.

BILLIE.

Jana. You see? I remembered.

She sprinkles a bit of dirt on a grave, accepts a ferocious hug from Salomea, and then gets into the jeep and looks at the children.

BILLIE.

Who's going to take care of all of you?  
Where on earth are you all going to?

KIDS.

To outer space! We love you, Billie!

The jeep rolls out. The younger children take off their coats and run after the truck, trailing their coats behind them like capes.

KIDS.

Aviator Boy! Dalmatian Girl!

Mateusz, Hanna, Anelie and Maja run to the top of the hill where we first saw them. Salomea looks at Leon, takes his hand.

SALOMEA.

[smiles]

Come on, you too.

And up they run.

SALOMEA. [VO]

The waters receded, and three years  
went by. Three years later, they were  
still waiting in their camps and their  
tents. A hundred thousand children.  
Waiting.

The children sit in a circle facing each other.  
Salomea wipes her eyes, takes a deep breath.  
Hanna is in Mateusz' arms, wearing his glasses;  
Mateusz plucks a strand of hair from Hanna's  
face.

Salomea sees Mateusz holding Hanna, slowly  
smiles.

FADE OUT.

THE END.