

CHARON OF VILNA

Written by

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FADE IN

INT. FLAT - EVENING. VILNIUS, LITHUANIA, 1939.

An old book is on the table. Gasoline lamp gives light. CHARON of VILNA, about 60, sits at the table and writes in the book. His face is hidden in the shadow, hard to recognize. Two portrait photos on the wall, catholic priest and dark haired beautiful woman.

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.)

Me, Charon of Vilna, accept for safekeeping following gold jewelry from Vilna families:

(Charon takes a look to the portrait of his wife MIRIAM (MIRA) (33))

UNKNOWN VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

1. Family of Evron: Samuel, Masha, Keila, Alto, address Pohulianka 17-6, gives the following property for storage:

Gold rubles: 45 coins of five rouble, 67 units of ten rouble coins, 29 units of 15 rouble coins, Fifteen units of a Twenty dollar gold coins.

Jewelry 58 units of 9,000 rubles gold value.

Relatives abroad: Ephraim, cousin in Chicago.

2. Family of Mass: Gerson, Gita, Soulmis, Nesanuel, Strasuno Street 11-7, gives:

90 units of 10 rouble gold coins, 200 coins of 5 gold roubles and gold jewelry 2500 gold rouble value. Relatives: Uncle Maso California.

3. Cvij Luba, Mickiewicz pr. 1 / 3 - 8th, gives:

An old Jew with his wife sits in front of Charon. They put on heavy doctor's bag on the table. The Jew slowly flatters his bag and opens it with trembling hands. His wife keeps his elbow. Her eyes went all misty.

The Jew takes several bundles from it and carefully opens them. There are golden coins and jewelry.

The couple calculates their coins and jewelry and puts them into the few piles on the table.

They both move the jewelry to Charon side.

An old Jew signs in the book. Charon glimpses to his wife portrait. Beat.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - DAY. 2010

VERONICA, busy, elegant about 50, quits the nursing- hospital and meets her husband Jonas (50), tall, starting to grey.

JONAS

How is your father today?

VERONICA

Bad. Even eyes do not move. We could not speak with the help of alphabet like before. But doctor says it is temporary. Eye nerves will recover. So will you replace me during my trip to the conference?

JONAS

Yes, of course. Your students are my students. I will correct their works every evening this week.

-VERONICA

I always doubt is it good spouses work at the same job. And please could you set the ancient wall clock going- it stopped just few days ago. My father liked to do it ages ago.

INT. VILNIUS UNIVERSITY- EVENING (2010)

Jonas greets colleagues and a guard and goes to Veronica's office through long corridors of 16th century building. He unlocks the door and enters the cabinet.

He glances their family picture, parents with a daughter and takes a look to the ancient clock attached to the wall.

Jonas goes to a small office kitchenette and takes a glass of water.

He puts the glass at the table, sits down and starts to read and correct students' works.

INT. VERONICA'S OFFICE - EVENING

Jonas finishes correction of student works.

He puts a toolbox near the clock on the table and opens the wall clock.

He tries to set the clock going. The clock beats few times and stops. Jonas tries to look at the rear of the clock. It is attached to the wall by few big bolts. He unscrews the bolts and moves the clock from the wall with all his strength.

The bolts fall down with parts of plaster and pieces of red bricks.

JONAS

Damned!

Jonas takes a screwdriver and cleans the hole in the wall.

Suddenly a strange sound of metal to metal peals.

JONAS (CONT'D)

What's that?

Jonas cleans the hole in the wall taking away few more bricks.

A part of a second wall is seen behind. Bricks seem different.

Jonas knocks the bricks. It sounds like metal, bricks are metal, but red color.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Strange. Copper bricks?

Jonas takes away one copper brick with the help of screwdriver. Unexpectedly it appears very heavy and falls down on the floor with a great bang.

Jonas cleans the copper brick with clothes and puts it on the table. He examines all the sides of the brick and measures the weight by hand.

JONAS (CONT'D)

I know only one thing what could be so heavy

Somebody knocks the door and security guard enters. Jonas hides the brick on the table with his body.

SECURITY GUARD

Are you planning to work late today, Mr. Jonas? Your wife left to a conference as far as I know.

JONAS

Yes, I will stay late tonight. A lot of work to do, I have to prepare myself for tomorrow's lecture replacing my wife.

The guard leaves.

INT. OFFICE KITCHEN - NIGHT.

Jonas sits by the table.

JONAS

(unscrewing the copper brick screws with the screwdriver and whispering)

Oh my God!

Jonas sees the copper box full of golden coins. He examines the coins one by one: Russian Tsar roubles, US 20 dollar huge golden coins.

FADE TO:

INT. OFFICE KITCHEN - NIGHT.

Jonas looks to 5 open copper boxes on the table. Every of it is full of golden coins, gold rings, golden chains, jewels, pins, earrings. Jonas stops looking at the treasures, closes his face with hands and sits silent.

FADE OUT.

INT. VERONICA'S OFFICE- NIGHT.

Jonas closes the hole in the wall with the wall clock. He lifts heavy, 20 kg, copper brick, puts it to the bag and leaves the University by its long medieval corridors.

The guard at the door says good night to him.

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - DAY. SEPTEMBER 1939.

Vilnius main street. There is a moderate panic in the street. Some men in Polish military uniforms load an armed vehicle by heavy boxes from the bank building. Some cars and some horse cabins pass by. Two Jews, Moyshe (about 50 with kepis on his had, poor clothes) and EVRON (45, rich black clothes, black hat and with a stick) observe evacuation of the bank.

EVRON

My brother with his family left Warsaw and is coming here.

(MORE)

EVRON (CONT'D)

Germans are approaching Warsaw and my brother's family were afraid to stay in the city and wait what could happen.

MOYSHE

(pointing the soldiers
near the bank)

You see, they evacuate gold from the bank.

Evron, what did you do with your gold? You are rich. Nazis and Soviets are coming. Poland is finished. French and British do nothing except words.

EVRON

I told you we have to take care of our life savings. I did it with my money last week. Catholic priest and his brother professor agreed to help us. Of course, we have to remunerate them.

MOYSHE

Evron, what is his name? Is it safe?

EVRON

(Evron whispers to his
friend's ear)

Professor Charon of Vilna University. His wife was Jewish.

MOYSHE

But can we trust him? We may need our money back soon to buy bread if the war comes. I better bury my little savings.

FADE TO.

INT. VILNA UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - EVENING. 1939.

Professor Charon is sitting by the table behind a pile with a lot of books and dictionaries. His face is hidden behind the books.

Moyshe and his wife enter University (1579) with a small but heavy package. A student shows the way through medieval corridors with arks to the Antique languages Chair.

Moyshe enters the auditorium. His wife waits at the door.

MOYSHE

Good afternoon, Shalom, Mr. Charon,
I am Moyshe and my wife is here
with me. Evron sent me here. He
said you can look after, beat,
while let say. Beat. Uh, so. Beat.
Here it is and of course 10 percent
is yours.

He puts a small but heavy purse on the Latin dictionary.

CHARON

(does not look what is
inside)

Moyshe, I do not keep so little.
You will spend it soon for your big
family. It is no point to keep it
with me. Take it back and go.

MOYSHE

(begging)

Mr. Charon please keep it. Maybe my
children will come to you one day
to take these coins back. Nazis are
so close.

CHARON

(With anger)

I repeat, take the coins back.

MOYSHE

Your wife Miriam once repaired two
pair of shoes in my shop.

FADE TO:

INT. VILNA UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - EVENING. 10 YEARS AGO.
1929.

Charon sits behind his table and pensively looks to the dark
side of his office where Miriam sits on the chair.

MIRIAM

Wito, I have repaired shoes at
shoemaker. It was a pair of your
favorite shoes and my winter shoes.
Do you remember shoemaker Moyshe
and his 5 children?

Charon looks how Miriam stands up and approaches Charon from
the shadow

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

Who is there waiting at the door?

Charon turns to the door

FADE TO:

INT. VILNA UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - EVENING

Moyshe's wife dressed in dark, head covered with a shawl, approaches and gives another bundle.

Charon opens it and sees about 15 golden rings, few chains, earrings, pins. The woman adds a ring from her finger on the table.

Charon takes a book from the row of dictionaries on the shelf.

CHARON

Your names, please, children names,
home address, relatives address.

MOYSHE

(nervous)

Moyshe and Miriam Rabinowitch, 6
children: Aaron, Isaac, Sara,
Rachel, Malik, David and Jacob.
Beat.

CHARON

Already six children? Beat.

MOYSHE

Yes, six. And by the way, I have
received very good shoes from the
Italian leader, if you would like
to see. Beat.

FADE OUT.

INT. HOME KITCHEN - EVENING. VILNIUS 2010.

Jonas picks a massive platinum ring with pressures stone from the open copper box and admires the light reflects from the stone.

Then he chooses two radiant brooches with jewels and tries how they fit to his wife's blue jacket on the chair.

He tries to fit a platinum pin with diamonds to the hair of Veronica at her photo on the wall.

He puts the chosen jewelry to the pockets. Finally he puts a gold massive wristlet incrustated with diamonds on his wrist.

Some biggest Russian coins and large 20 US dollar coins goes to another pocket.

Lastly he takes a golden pocket watch from the nearest box, opens it, sets the watch going and tests an alarm: a melody rings. He sets alarm time one hour later, looks at diamonds on the cover. The watch has massive golden chain. He puts the chain around his neck hides the watch under the shirt.

He covers jewelry on the table with a blanket and leaves the flat.

EXT. VILNIUS AIRPORT - EVENING.

Jonas meets and kisses his wife. The couple drives home.

JONAS

(closes the car)

Women do like surprises. Let's have a glass of wine in the Chinese restaurant?

VERONICA

This restaurant is not very fun. Any news at the University?
(the couple enters the restaurant)

JONAS

I want an empty place. The news are terrific.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - EVENING

(Empty restaurant, Chinese music)

The couple sits in the corner with two glasses of wine.

JONAS

Greatest pleasure for a certain kind of men is to please their women. I know you like ancient brooches. Remember our wedding anniversary? You didn't receive real present from me. Just a copper ring from poor scientist.
(he takes a hand of wife and puts something into it)

VERONICA

Oh, thanks, what's that? Really nice, but very heavy. Hey, am I right it is not a cheap thing? Say me the truth. Where are these from?

JONAS

Surprise. Pin them.

Jonas gives Veronica the ring and bracelet.

VERONICA

(smiling, astonished)

Is it real gold or again you give me copper jewelry? Am I worth only a copper?

The watch rings nice melody on Jonas neck.

JONAS

My darling copper- wife. All the life I dreamed for something big. Look at it, is it made of copper? (He shows the wife time on the watch and the diamonds on the cover)

VERONICA

Unbelievable. You did not steal it, yes? You found them? Somebody gave it to you for sale?

JONAS

Give me your hand (he puts golden coins into the hand of Veronica and embraces her trying to kiss)

JONAS (CONT'D)

What do you feel?

VERONICA

(squirms trying to escape)

Please do not play dogs and cats. You risked by bringing these things. Beat. Don't be a child. (she stands up)

JONAS

Have you ever kept a kilogram of gold in your hand? Beat.

EXT. STREET- DAYTIME. SEPTEMBER 19, 1939

Evron waits until Moyshe replaces Polish flag on the house to the Soviet one.

They join the crowd on the street. People congratulate Red Army is marching Vilnius streets.

INT. JEWISH SHOP - SAME DAY

Few Soviet officers with their wives enter the shop. Wives are happy to buy beautiful pink, red and yellow lace dresses.

INT. RESTAURANT - SAME EVENING

MOYSHE

(drinking tea and
whispering to Evron)

Did they come for good? Soviets
will protect us from Nazis. Maybe
it is time to take our gold from
Charon?

EVRON

And make a great present for
Soviets? Poland lost the war. Our
people in Poland will lose
everything now. West allies will
stop Hitler soon. You will see it
is the same war like in 1914. Then
you will take your gold back.

Soviet officers enter the restaurant with their wives and
take seats. Moyshe, Evron and people from other tables are
watching with surprise and smile the beautiful lace
underwear. Beat.

INT. FLAT - DAYTIME (2010)

Jonas and Veronica return home.

JONAS

Please sit on the bed and wait.

Jonas brings a box full of gold coins from the kitchen and
empties it on Veronica's skirt. Veronica stares at the
treasures. She smiles then laughs. She plays with coins by
hands, put the hand inside the coin heap, left, right.

VERONICA

It's fantastic. Show me all please

Jonas takes her by hand to the kitchen. They take jewelry
from boxes and study it.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

What's next?

FADE TO:

INT. VERONICA'S OFFICE - DAY, SUNDAY

The couple enters University building and greets the guard.

Jonas shifts the wall clock and shows the hole in the wall.

JONAS

There are a lot here these copper bricks. Let's take one more? The wall should withstand I hope?

VERONICA

Very curious, try this one, please.

Jonas takes one more copper brick from the wall with the help of screwdriver and hammer. They clean the brick and opens it under the table in the kitchen. In three sections they see gold coins again, rings and gemstones, diamonds.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(astonished taking few stones in her hand)

What's that?! These are probably jeweler's stones, look, loose diamonds and part of them look like row. Few are quite big. Do you know diamonds price?

JONAS

(takes diamonds one by one and holds them in front of the lamp)

Bigger are more expensive. I looked on internet already. Half a carat about 1000 US dollars, 1 CT costs about 6000 US dollars, 2 carats about 20000 US dollars. 20 US dollars coin, 31 g of gold or 1 ounce costs minimum 1500 US dollars. There are rare expensive coins. 10 Russian Tsar Nicholas II roubles cost about 500 US dollars. Average diamonds are 500 hundred times more expensive than gold. Other stones, row diamonds are not so expensive.

VERONICA

(playing with a wonderful platinum ring with a huge stone)

What shall we do with it? Would you like to declare the treasure and pay taxes? Do not! We did already that, we paid all taxes and lost everything during the crisis, all our shares became zero. It is a miracle. It is a second chance in our lives. Do not lose it. And we have to sustain everything for our daughter. We learnt a lesson during the crisis. We know what money means now. Why are you so silent?

JONAS

(hanging a massive golden
chain on his neck)

Let's see what we have in totally
and then plan how to take
everything safe everything from the
University.

The couple goes through the corridors with very heavy packs.
A professor stops them and speaks about working on Sundays.
The couple nervously escapes conversation leaving their
colleague surprised with mouth open.

INT. FLAT- EVENING

The couple empties heavy packs.

JONAS

Look, I put these coins into the
socks. Put it to the bed under the
pillow. We will see what kind of
dreams it will bring tonight. OK?
In any case we have a reason to
open a bottle of wine.

Jonas brings two glasses and a bottle of a white wine. He
pours it into the glasses. The couple clang wine glasses and
kiss each other.

JONAS (CONT'D)

In any case this will change our
life. I have a sexual dream. Look.

Jonas strews gold coins from the two socks on the bed and
gently lays his wife on the heap of it.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Let's do it here now, please?

VERONICA

(laughing)

Oh no, please, stop it, they are
cold, let's do it in the morning, I
am too excited. I want to examine
all these rings, pins, and
diamonds. Unbelievable.

They bring all the boxes one by one to the bedroom and start
watching the jewelry. Jonas puts several gold chains on the
neck and golden rings on every finger. He hardly can find
right size; they all are too small for his fingers. Veronica
all in gold puts a CD and music sounds. Finally the couple
lies on the heap of treasures in silence and listen to the
music. Candles spark on the table. Beat.

FADE TO:

EXT. DREAM OF VERONICA - NIGHT

Ferryman brings some bricks by boat thru the river in the darkness. Voices and shadows of people left on the shore—they spread hands with golden coins to the ferryman. Some Nazis uniforms and dogs behind them. Ferryman shouts towards another bank of the river "*Miriam, Miriam*", where a silhouette of a woman is waiting.

FADE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

JONAS

(wakes up Veronica from
the dream)

Darling, coffee is ready. Look at
my sock. Very heavy.

Jonas shows a very heavy sock full of gold coins and takes another one from underneath wife's pillow.

VERONICA

Thanks, darling. It is a miracle. I
slept on gold!

Veronica opens a blanket were golden coins shine.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Can you imagine? Several times at
night I was awaken and felt the
coins I was lying on. They were
hot. These coins far from me were
cold. It was sweet but mixed with
some worry. Strange feeling, a
dream, a very well known man,
looking like my father, but
different, shouts to me from the
boat, "*Miriam*" , "*Miriam*" and I see
silhouettes of people with gold on
the shore. Beat. I can't move, I
can't open my mouth and explain
that I am not *Miriam*. And suddenly
you wake me up. We forgot to
discuss something, something very
clear. I remember my father
insisted me to become an ancient
Greek professor. Beat.

Jonas tries to undress her.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Did I promise you something
yesterday? It seems I was too
drunk.

Jonas takes a handsome gold coins from the bed and puts them on the nude belly of Veronica More and more. They start kissing.. Golden coins run from the bed on the floor. They make love on the gold.

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - DAY. OCTOBER 28, 1940.

Lithuanian Army parades in Vilnius. Moyshe changes Soviet flag to Lithuanian one on his house. Beat.

EXT. NEAR SINAGOGUE - DAY

Street of Vilnius, 1939 December.

Group of Jewish are discussing WW2 II events

JEW 1

Many questions we need to discuss.
We lost our savings in Polish zloty. This currency is out of value. Beat.

Is the war over? Poland does not exist? Vilnius is transferred back to Lithuanian Capital? Soviet military bases are set in Lithuania in exchange. Will France and Britain attack Germany? Will Germany attack Soviet Union or contrary? We have no homeland which would accept us. How can we prepare to survive the war? Will it be the same as World War One? No. Nazis do not respect Jews. Bad news from Germany, Austria and Poland. Repressions against Jews become more intensive.

JEW 2

My cousin left to USA 10 years ago. He is happy there now.

JEW 3

(takes a letter from a pocket)

My cousin left to Palestine 2 years ago. He writes me letters only in holy language- Hebrew. But I know only one mother tongue- Yiddish language. So I always ask Rabbi to translate the letters from Palestine. One day we all will return there. Beat. If we could return to our homeland Palestine, if it could be a Jewish state there.

(MORE)

JEW 3 (CONT'D)

We could emigrate all and live there without a fair. At the moment no one state accepts so many Jewish emigrants.

JEW 2

We lived here for 6 centuries. Why should we leave now?

JEW 1

Soviets are better than Nazis for us, Jews. Well, it is difficult to become rich there. But there are other possibilities to have a good life and to be safe if you do not act against Bolsheviks. Look, our brothers lost all their property in Germany and were forced to emigrate.

Brothers, by the way, we have very good thing for sale, Polish army tunics with big discount, totally new, one can remove Army signs and it is very warm in winter. Beat.

It has started to snow. Old Jews finish their talks and disperse. Moyshe and Evron continue walking together.

MOYSHE

Look Evron, we think Soviets are better than Nazis, but they do not like rich. They will take everything from us. Is it the time to take our gold back from Charon?

EVRON

Do not hurry, Moyshe. Soviets attacked Finland few days ago. Guess, who will come first here: Russians or Germans?

MOYSHE

My brother is a Bolshevik here, he told Russia will protect us from Nazis. I am a poor Jew, I have no 5 houses like your family, just a little savings. Beat.

EVRON

USA and Britain had set low immigration quotas for us. We can't immigrate to Palestine because of low Britain quotas. We are left for ourselves to find the solution for survival in East Europe and Germany.

(MORE)

EVRON (CONT'D)

Probably Bolsheviks could save us.
But I prefer Torah than Communist
manifest.

INT. VERONICA'S OFFICE - LATE MORNING

Veronica and Jonas work near the open wall. The wall is cleaned from wallpapers and plaster. A bucket full of plaster and trash is in the middle of the room, furniture covered with papers to prevent dust. Office door is closed

Veronica and Jonas finish cleaning the wall. Copper bricks are chaotically blended in with simple red bricks. Their color is very similar. Jonas takes a metal stick and slightly hits bricks successively in the row.

VERONICA

Like a bell. This one, and this.
Beat. So easy to identify. Beat.

Copper bricks sounds very good. Ordinary bricks give muted clunk. They start to mark copper bricks with a green marker:

JONAS

Five bricks in a row, 33 rows,
totally 165 bricks, if there are no
more copper bricks in the deeper
rows. The wall is very thick, about
1 meter.

VERONICA

(excited)

Please count how much treasures
could it be totally in these 165
bricks and we have 6 more at home.

JONAS

OK lets measure the copper brick:
twenty five on twelve on 6 point
five centimeters from outside, and
inside is twenty four on eleven on
five point five centimeters, so
inside volume is almost one and a
half liter. Let's say coins and
jewelry has gaps, free space in
between, more than 1 liter of gold
in every brick. It means about 20
kg, look, it is really heavy.
Compare 1 liter of water weighs
only 1 kg.

VERONICA

Please, say quickly, how much it is
in Euro or dollars? Let's have
coffee in the kitchen.

They go to the kitchen. Veronica makes coffee. Jonas counts with calculator and peace of paper

JONAS

We have here 171 brick and about 20 kg gold in each, totally 3420 kg of gold or 3420 thousands grams; 1 g of gold costs about 50 US dollars. Approximately it is 171 million US dollars!

VERONICA

Fantastic. Unbelievable. But you told diamonds are 500 times more expensive? We have here few of them.

JONAS

We have checked 6 bricks of 171 and found few diamonds only and of course jewelry.

VERONICA

How to avoid mistake the second time in our lives? Crisis showed we don't know what to do with money, how to save it, how to invest, how to make business. Please, let's avoid similar mistake now.

JONAS

We will avoid an old mistake and could do a new one. Imagine, if somebody will find out we became rich, if police arrest us of avoiding taxes, if the owners of the treasure appear here? So many ifs. At least the main question whom it belongs to?

VERONICA

I guess it belonged to very rich people before the WW2, because jewelry looks ancient and old-fashioned. Isn't it?

JONAS

Yes, it is. And the people probably were Jews. Yes, treasures are antique. Look rings seem very old. If we have a loop or microscope we could read the hallmark letters for example on this excellent ring and probably find year or authors sign on gold jewelry.

(MORE)

JONAS (CONT'D)

Let's buy an electronic balance,
and also I saw a book about
jewelry, how to recognize precious
stones. New hobby?

Veronica continues looking at the jewelry and suddenly knocks
her had.

VERONICA

That's what I meant saying that we
had forgotten something. Jews! They
were killed and we have victims'
treasures now. If Nazis took these
things from their victims, these
are bloody gold. Now I feel very
bad when I touch these things. I
feel guilty.

Veronica took few rings from her fingers, a chain with
medallion, and a pin and put everything on the table.

JONAS

I doubt these treasures were hidden
by Nazis. They had enough time to
take everything to Germany.
Besides, we did not find any golden
teeth. I have read somewhere golden
teeth were teared up from victims'
mouths. Let's take all bricks and
see what's inside. OK?

FADE TO BLACK.

E/I. VILNIUS STREET - STRASHUN LIBRARY - DAY, JUNE 15. 1940

Jewish M. Strashun library.

The same old Jews around the table in the library including
Moyshe and Evron are discussing the news from the war.

Evron shows the photo in fresh newspaper: Nazis parade in
Paris: capitulation of France.

YOUNG JEW

(without barb, with kepi
and paces)

It is unbelievable how easily they
took France. Father, you know many
of us have sympathy to Russians
rather than Germans. Bolsheviks
come and take our property but they
will leave our heads. If national-
socialists come they would take
both- our property and heads.

JEW 1

Sun, you are right. Many of us should sell houses and business as soon as possible. There is no chance Lithuania remain neutral between these two forces. Hard times are coming. Only USA policy prevents Nazis to kill Jews. We will be lucky if Bolsheviks come first.

Jews left the library and saying many goodbyes to each other went down to old town streets through many of Jewish shops.

Moyshe changes Lithuanian flag to Soviet one on his house. Soviet troops march Vilnius streets.

EXT. FIFTH'S AVENUE - DAY (2010)

MARK, 30 ginger-haired fellow meets and kisses his blond sexy girlfriend. She just left University tennis court and carries tennis-rackets in her backpack.

Mark is a grand-sun of AARON and MASHA, Litvaks from Vilna. Aaron's father was Khaim, born in Vilna, lived in Warsaw, at the beginning of WW2 II escaped to Vilna back, Khaim's brothers are Evron from Vilna and ISAAC from Vilna. Khaim with children escaped holocaust thru Soviet Union and Shanghai to USA. His brothers Evron and Isaac died in Vilna during Holocaust.

MARK

(putting his hand on the belly of Lina)

Hi, darling. How was training and lessons? Isn't too hard in your position?

LINA

Thanks Mark, I am OK. And what about your day?

The couple goes down town.

MARK

I spoke with my grandparents about you and told you are from Lithuania. They were shocked. You know, I told you they were lucky to escape holocaust through Soviet Union Far East to US in 1941 together with their parents, my great-grand parents.

LINA

And what? Do they ask you to leave me?

The couple buys coffee in Starbucks and takes seats close to the window.

MARK

No. They are very clever. They told me a sad story about Vilna Jews, and almost all the Jews of Lithuania were killed

LINA

(unhappy)

I know Holocaust. I know some local people participated. Do you want my excuse? We have already spoken about our history many times.

MARK

(taking hand of Lina)

Oh no, darling. Not at all. They told a strange story about their escape from Vilna, Lita and Soviet Union. In Yiddish they call Lithuania Lita. They want to see you and speak. But if you do not want. Beat.

FADE TO:

INT. NEW YORK FLAT - DAY

Big New York flat of rich Jewish family. Evening time, dinner table

Aaron and Masha, Mark's grand-parents serve dinner to their grandson and his girlfriend Lina.

AARON

(OLD ORTHODOX JEW with paces)

It is nice to meet a Lithuanian girl. Lita is my native country, Vilna my native city. Sarah's father and my father were Rabbis in Vilna. If you have a half an hour I will tell you a story how did we escape from the war.

-MASHA

(showing the way to another room)

Let's sit down in the guest room. Mark and Lina would you like coffee or tea?

MARK

(whispers to Lina)

He is eager to tell the story to all new acquaintances and for several times. But he still have excellent mind.

(turns to Aaron)

Grandpa, we came to invite officially you to our engagement party. We are waiting for a baby.

MASHA

(claps the hands)

So beautiful. Such a surprise.

AARON

We will have Lithuanian relatives now. Do you know genetically what Lithuanians are?

LINA

More than forty percent of Lithuanian men have Balto - Slavic ancestors and almost forty percent have Ugro- Finnic ancestors. Beat.

AARON

Excellent, you are a clever girl. So you Lithuanians are genetically Ugro-Slavs and speaking Baltic?

LINA

Like Jews genetically are Arabs speaking Hebrew. Beat.

MASHA

Aaron do not start. What is the date of engagement?

FADE OUT.

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - EVENING. AUGUST 1940.

Soviet NKVD secret police knocks on the door of Jewish house

NKVD OFFICER

Yahuda Leibowich, are you the shop owner on Zamkova street? You have 15 minutes to prepare. Your family must go too. Siberia waits for "capitalists".

And he laughs.

An old Jew kisses his crying wife and children and they start preparation in a hurry.

Mother gives some small but heavy sacks to all of their children and asks to hide deep in panties, she does the same. The father quickly swallows some oiled golden coins.

He gives to the officer some notes and asks for 15 minutes more to take warm clothes to the train. Family takes clothes, some food and leaves with officers. They put them to the lorry already full of arrested Jewish merchants and their families.

EXT. VILNA BAZAR - MORNING. 1941 SPRING.

Moyshe obsessively follows a man with a hat. The hat hides man's face.

MOYSHE
(begging)
Mr. Charon please, I need
everything back.

Charon goes forward without an answer.

MOYSHE (CONT'D)
I really need my money back,
please, save my family...

Moyshe continues to follow and to beg with no response from Charon.

Charon stops and looks at the boy with apples.

FADE TO:

EXT. VILNA BAZAR - MORNING. 10 YEARS AGO. 1930.

Miriam and Charon stands by the girl with apples

CHARON
(whispering to his wife)
Mira, don't you think your
relatives sometimes are bothersome?

MIRIAM
(smiling and embracing her
husband)
Darling let's buy green apples.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FLAT - EVENING. 1941 SPRING.

Evron and Moyshe quarrel.

EVRON

Moyshe, everything is hidden, forget you know Mr. Charon. He can't take back your part now. It is not safe. Many families risk Russians can find everything, it is hidden and cannot be taken away so easy. I can lend you something..

MOYSHE

Evron, I need my part back. I will go to Russia. Bolsheviks guarantee we are safe. I have a cousin Bolshevik, he works NKVD. He will help me to get permission. I need my gold back.

EVRON

Moyshe, get away. You would put many families in danger. Beat.

EXT/INT. LANDING. FLAT DOOR - EVENING. 1941.

Three NKVD men in black leather jackets near the door. One knocks on the door. Door opens.

NKVD OFFICER

Comrade Charon? NKVD. Please present your documents

Charon presents the papers.

CHARON

(seriously)

My name is Vytas Radvila.

NKVD OFFICER

May I come in? I have few questions to you.

Charon invites the officer by hand silently. The officer orders soldiers to stay by the door.

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)

Do you live alone?

CHARON

My wife is dead. Do you want to search the apartment?

NKVD OFFICER

Not today.

He walks round the apartment, looking at the photos on the wall.

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)
Is it your brother, the catholic
priest on the photo and here is
your wife, Rabbi's daughter?

CHARON
You are well informed officer.

NKVD OFFICER
Are you a catholic or converted to
Judaism?

CHARON
I am reformed, a protestant.

NKVD OFFICER
Hum, you changed your parents'
fate, you switched to women of
different nationality.

NKVD Officer walks the room and looks at Greek language books
on the table.

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)
Charon, the ferryman, carries
human souls to another life. Isn't
it?

CHARON
He carries the soles of the newly
deceased to the world of the dead
in Greek mythology.

NKVD OFFICER
(approaches the curtains
on the window)
As you know, we Bolsheviks do not
believe in God, a human soul and
life after death. And also we,
Jews, do not have heaven and hell.
Comrade Charon, what do you escort
from the world of living to the
world of the dead?

Charon looks at the curtains

FADE TO:

INT. CHARON'S APARTMENT - DAY. 10 YEARS AGO. 1930.

Jewish relatives with three children visit Miriam and Charon.
Children laugh and run with happy Miriam.

Miriam hides behind the curtain. Children run to the room
searching Miriam

A CHILD
 (speaking childish
 unclear)
 Uncle Wito, where does our aunt
 Mira hide?

CHARON
 I do not understand. Beat.
 (looking to the window
 curtain where Miriam
 keeps a finger near the
 lips)

FADE TO:

INT. CHARON'S APARTMENT

CHARON
 I do not understand your question?

THE OFFICER
 OK, do not worry. You have to
 change your Polish passport to
 Soviet one.
 And, almost forgot, you have a debt
 to one person. I want to be sure
 the debt will be paid soon.
 I will return to this question few
 days later...

INT. VILNA UNIVERSITY - DAY

Historical building from 16th century. Charon goes to the
 University court-yard and follows to the Chair of Classical
 Philology (Ancient Latin and Greek languages).

Students are already waiting in the ancient auditorium. They
 look at each other with smile, since professor Charon
 whispers something to himself as usual

CHARON
 Mira, I have to continue reading
 the course until they close
 University or arrest all of us.

Charon enters the auditorium and prepares some papers at the
 blackboard.

A fellow student with a scarf enters thru the door and
 approaches straitly to him and whispers

A FELLOW STUDENT
 Professor, NKVD. Please leave and
 hide

CHARON

(Charon cleans his glasses
and answers loudly to the
class)

Good morning students. Today we
continue reading and translating
Homer's Iliad. Please take the book
and read lines 33-67.

Charon gives the book to A FELLOW STUDENT with scarf

A FELLOW STUDENT opens the old book and starts reading in
ancient GREEK lines 33-42

A FELLOW STUDENT

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0133:book%3D1:card%3D33>

(Door opens in the middle
of line 34)

NKVD officer enters with two soldiers. He shows by hand not
to pay attention to him.

A FELLOW STUDENT (CONT'D)

(continues lines 34 and 35
in ancient Greek)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0133:book%3D1:card%3D33>

(Charon stops him)

CHARON

(looking to the bookshelf
separating class from the
library)

Please translate

FADE TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - DAY. 10 YEARS AGO. 1930.

CHARON

(looking to the bookshelf
separating class from the
library)

Please translate

Miriam stands behind the bookshelf and whispers

MIRIAM

(smiling seductively)

You have stolen me like Priam stole
Helen. Another sin is we make love
in these long dark corridors of the
University.

Charon, a young professor and Miriam, a student, have a rendezvous in the University building. They go long corridors until meet no person. They start kissing and make love on the floor from behind. Beat.

FADE TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - DAY.

CHARON
(half voice to himself)
You have seduced me

Students and NKVD soldiers looks at each other then to Charon with surprise.

A FELLOW STUDENT
(starts Iliad translation)
So he spoke, and the old man was seized with fear and obeyed his word. He went forth in silence along the shore of the loud-resounding sea, and earnestly then, when he had gone apart, the old man prayed [35] to the lord Apollo
(NKVD officer approaches the student and breaks)

NKVD OFFICER
(interrupts)
I would like to listen more. I think Greeks had too many Gods. Professor will continue this lesson tomorrow.

I hope he will help us to understand one strange missing in this city. It will take 1 hour, no more.

(students start speaking and showing their surprise)

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. NKVD CELLAR - EVENING

NKVD OFFICER sits at the table. Charon sits in front of him on the stool.

NKVD OFFICER
Mr. Professor do you know why you are here?
(Charon shakes the head)
No

(MORE)

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)
 (The OFFICER stands and
 while smoking a cigarette
 explains)

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)
 You have imprisoned Jewish souls.
 Free them. Let them stay on the
 shore of life. And you will be
 free.

Charon meditates.

FADE TO:

EXT. VILNA STREET - DAY, 10 YEARS BEFORE. 1930.

Miriam (40) and Charon (50) walks.

MIRIAM
 If we have children I had to divide
 my love between you and them

FADE TO:

INT. NKVD CELLAR - EVENING

NKVD OFFICER
 Mr. Charon you do not listen?

CHARON
 (returning from his
 meditation about Miriam)
 I truly do not understand. Beat.

NKVD OFFICER
 I do not want to use the force.
 Your brother is under arrest. He
 will be sent to Siberia. You could
 help him. Think about it until
 tomorrow.

(The officer invites
 soldiers and they take
 Charon to his camera)

FADE IN:

INT. NKVD CELLAR - EVENING

A table, NKVD OFFICER, Charon sitting on a stool.

NKVD OFFICER
 I see you did not change your mind.
 We send your brother to Siberia.
 (MORE)

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)

As an enemy of working class you will be treated without a pity.

Are you afraid of torture? What kind? For me, I am terribly afraid irreversible changes of my body: cutting my penis and balls, put out my eyes, to cut my tongue, to cut fingers.

Charon sits silently.

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)

Give us what does not belong to you and you are free. I leave you now with my butchers. If you feel some pain, just ask to stop and invite me. Good luck, a working class enemy.

Two soldiers with some instruments comes to the cellar and start preparations for torture, binds Charon to the chair.

Charon starts to meditate.

FADE TO:

EXT. VILNA STREET -DAY 10 YEARS BEFORE. 1930.

Miriam and Charon are walking. Charon slows his pace and Miriam shows the bench in a small square and they sit down.

MIRIAM

(putting hand on his forehead and taking hand)
Wito, you are so cold, be with me, only with me, speak with me.

Charon is fainting slowly.

FADE TO:

INT. NKVD CELLAR - EVENING

Soldiers start torture by drawing nails.

FADE TO:

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - DAY

Miriam and Charon sit on the bench in the square. Charon's hands twitch. Miriam keeps them and speaks continuously

MIRIAM

Wito, stay with me. It will not last long. Remember our months before wedding, how our families opposed our love? Keep thinking.

INT. RABBI FAMILY APARTMENT - DAY

Rabbi, MIRIAM FATHER (55) father meets Catholic priest CHARON'S BROTHER (35).

MIRIAM FATHER

I am glad we both think in the same way, your brother and my daughter are from different families, different routes.

CHARON'S BROTHER

Their sympathy will not last long. Just I am afraid my brother is such a stubborn Lithuanian. Beat.

MIRIAM FATHER

Miriam is obsessed by as she tell's "the whole life love".

CHARON'S BROTHER

We both will use all our influence to prevent complication of events. Beat.

FADE TO:

INT. NKVD CELLAR- EVENING

Soldiers are surprised the prisoner has no reaction. One of them controls Charon's reactions by knocking his knees. The knees do not react. The soldier controls eyes movement with lamp. Eyes do not react to the light.

NKVD SOLDIER

Coma? No use to continue.

EXT. VILNA STREET -DAY 10 YEARS BEFORE

Miriam and Charon sit on the bench.

MIRIAM

(putting Charon's head on her knees)

Relax, you can sleep now, all is over.

INT. CELLAR - MOMENTS LATER

Soldiers put Charon on the bed. Charon shows no signs of life, but his eyelids tremble.

FADE TO:

INT. VILNA STREET - DAY

Miriam father sees his daughter and Charon walking in the street and stops the equipage.

MIRIAM FATHER

Darling Mira, please return home,
we are so afraid, we love you and
want the best for you.

MIRIAM

Father, if you make obstacles to
our wedding I'll become a Communist
party member. Beat.
(and she returns to
Charon)

Poor Rabbi stares stupefied.

INT. VILNA UNIVERSITY YARD - DAY

Charon meets his brother catholic priest.

CHARON'S BROTHER

Dear brother, you can loose your
professor position if merry that
Jewish girl.

Charon leaves his brother without words.

INT. NKVD CELLAR - EVENING

Charon lying on the bed whispers "Mira, I want a civil marriage".

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. COLLECTORS CLUB - DAY (2010)

Jonas walks in the hall of Vilnius collectors club. Men have coin albums, albums with post stamps, ancient postcards and books. Some have ancient armors. Jonas stops at the table with old Russians coins, silver and some gold.

JONAS

What is the price for 5, 10 and 15
Tsar roubles?

(The owner of coins opens
page with golden coins)

OWNER OF COINS

If you have something for exchange
we could make a deal?

JONAS

I would like to know the price
first.

OWNER OF COINS

Just please show what you have

Jonas shows gold roubles he has.

OWNER OF COINS (CONT'D)

I could give you 200 dollars for 5
roubles, 400 for 10 and 600 for 15
rouble coins. 20 US dollars golden
coin is about 1000 dollars cost.

JONAS

I saw bigger prices on the
Internet. Thank you, I'll think.

Some moments later Jonas meets another collector eager to buy
coins. They leave outside the collectors club and sit into
the car. The collector investigates every coin through hand -
lens. They agree the price. Jonas receives a huge bundle of
dollars and counts them.

INT. FLAT - DAY.

Jonas enters his flat. Veronica meets him. He shows a bundle
of dollars.

JONAS

50 thousand dollars. I sold about 1
pocket of golden coins.

(Veronica takes the bundle
with very happy face)

VERONICA

I like it. It makes me safe. It
makes me happy. It is not true
money does not make people happy.
They do. By the way: I called to
the hospital, my father is worse,
his eyes do not move anymore, like
half a year ago. They started a
stronger medicine to recover his
senses.

JONAS

Good news come together with bad news like always. Beat.

Look I have bought a digital laboratory scales. It is very interesting you can measure weight in milligrams, carats, ounces. And look at gemstones catalog I found in the book- store. We'll become jewelry and gemstones specialists for the next 2 years?

(Veronica looks at the diamond catalog turning its pages)

VERONICA

Lets investigate and classify what we have: diamonds and jewelry based gemstones. Their weight, possible price.

The couple closes the curtains, brings the balance on the table, places a box with diamonds and rough diamonds, a box with gemstones jewelry. Jonas takes the biggest diamond from the box and puts it with a pair of tweezers on the scale.

JONAS

Lets see everything in carats, since prices usually are per carat. This papa is more then 1 centimeter size, look how beautiful. Papa's weight is 5.1 carats. It is more than 1 gram.

VERONICA

Wait, here in the catalogue. It looks like this picture. And see in laptop diamond prices page: the shape, color, clarity affects the price very much. Oval shape. But it has small inclusions and color is not so clear. I would classify papa as I color, VS2 clarity.

JONAS

The price in the table for oval shape, I color and VS2 clarity, 4 carats is 121 500 dollars. Here we have 5,1 carats. So papa's price is almost 124 000 dollars. I become crazy of such numbers.

(Veronica excited shows two smaller diamonds)

VERONICA

Take a look these two are quite big and very clear, no inclusions, shape is round. Both are lets say of ideal cut.

JONAS

OK then mama- one is 4.4 carat, mama-two is 4.1 carats weight. Price in the table for excellent quality is 312 000 dollars, then mama-1 price is about 343 000 dollars, mama-2 is about 320 000 dollars.

VERONICA

I am crazy too. I need a cigarette.

They go to the balcony, she smokes and whispers

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Is it safe to sell these diamonds?

JONAS

Probably we need to contact Dutch or Belgium jewelry specialists. When you sell you could expect lower price and taxes are applicable.

VERONICA

I need to visit my father in hospital as soon as he recovers his senses. What do you think, could he know anything about the treasures?

I remember now he passed so many weeks in my office reading Latin history books about Roman Empire and he always repaired my wall clock. Beat.

The couple returns to the jewelry. Veronica makes a coffee. Jonas opens a bottle of white wine. The couple continues investigation with coffee and wine.

JONAS

(playing "mama diamond" in the light)

Here it is a box of rough diamonds. What does the catalog and internet give for their prices? Here are about a thousand carats in this box, it means about 200 grams.

VERONICA

(looking at platinum ring)
 Here I found
<http://www.adtec.co.za/instr.pdf>
 They give a table of year 2000
 prices. If I choose a price in the
 middle of the table, it is about
 500 dollars per 1 carat, best rough
 diamonds cost about one thousand
 per carat.

JONAS

(taking diamonds from box
 by fingers)
 Then we have in this box about half
 a million dollars for rough
 diamonds. And the box of cut
 diamonds is of similar weight.
 Average 1 CT price is 25000
 dollars. Then the price of cut
 diamonds box of 1000 CT weight is
 about 25 million. Beat.

VERONICA

(pulling all the content
 of the box to Jonas
 handful)
 Jonas, let's put everything or
 almost everything to bank deposit
 boxes? I am afraid to live nearby
 such treasures. Hooligans can kill
 a man in the street for 5 dollars.

JONAS

(putting the diamonds to
 the handful of Veronica)
 OK, but remember wars and
 revolutions, occupation and crisis
 are common in East Europe. Banks
 can not survive these catastrophes.
 Lets check the rest of copper
 bricks, find the most beautiful
 things we would like to keep. Then
 shall we keep some gold coins and
 jewelry for the rainy day. Other we
 could sell and invest into reality,
 business.

VERONICA

(puts diamonds back to the
 box)
 Stop, no, do not speak about
 business. Never again. We will not
 declare the treasure, we will not
 pay any taxes. We will not look for
 the owners or relatives of the
 owners.

(MORE)

VERONICA (CONT'D)

It is our's now and I will protect
it by all means.

(Jonas kissing his wife)

JONAS

You are my tigress.

FADE OUT.

I/E. BANK - DAY

Jonas and Veronica, both nervous, enter through the bank door. They speak to bank clerk about safe deposit boxes they ordered by phone.

The couple fill up papers and follows bank clerk to the cellar. The clerk opens two deposit boxes and leaves the couple alone. They put two heavy bags into the boxes and leave the bank.

FADE TO:

I/E. SECOND BANK - DAY

Jonas and Veronica excited enter through the bank door. They speak to bank clerk about safe deposit boxes they ordered by telephone.

The couple fill up papers and follows bank clerk to the cellar. The clerk opens two deposit boxes and leaves the couple alone. They put two heavy bags into the boxes and leave the bank.

I/E. BANK IN PARIS - DAY

Jonas and Veronica enters LCL - Le Crédit Lyonnais bank in Paris, 31 Boulevard des Italiens. They meet a clerk, open two accounts and rent two deposit boxes.

Again they put two heavy bags to the boxes. The couple leaves the bank and enters nearest cafe with tables at big windows facing the boulevard. They take a small table and orders two coffees.

VERONICA

I will miss these beautiful things.
It is nice we have prepared some
nice things to present to our
daughter.

(Jonas taking his wife's
hand)

JONAS

Twenty years later our daughter
will receive everything.

(MORE)

JONAS (CONT'D)

And we still have about 20 kilograms in the car. So, to London, as we planned before?

VERONICA

Yes, but let's we leave the car in the port and take a ferry to London. Euro - tunnel probably has x - ray control of luggage, like in airports.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. LONDON STREET - DAY

The couple walks on London street and enters Barclay bank section. They repeat all procedures for account opening and rent of two deposit boxes. Later they walk on the street enter a pub and order beer.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. VERONICA'S OFFICE - DAY.

Jonas and Veronica take copper bricks from the wall.

JONAS

Only two more rows of totally ten bricks are left and unchecked. Are you curious what's inside? Or maybe let's leave them to excite our curiosity later?

VERONICA

Lets take these 10 bricks home but leave them unchecked and put real bricks back here. It will be our secret.

Jonas takes a brick to the table

JONAS

We succeeded to sell about fifty pieces rings, golden chains and a lot of coins in the collectors club. This is the best place, no taxes, anonymous. We have almost 2 million dollars in cash and in bank accounts. We will visit three villas in forest villages tomorrow and choose one to buy.

FADE OUT.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Jonas and Veronica meet the owner of a small villa in the forest village south Lithuania. They visit the rooms, yards and agree to buy. They sign an agreement on the table in the yard. They stay there for a weekend.

INT. VILLA - EVENING

The couple digs 2 meters deep pit in the basement and hides there 60 copper bricks there. The work is finished. They wash their hands and sits with wine in the yard. Veronica smokes a cigarette.

VERONICA

So, we have 60 bricks here, 60 bricks hidden at home, 30 bricks in 5 banks. 15 bricks are sold for 15 million dollars. It seems we made everything as safe as possible. Let's think about visiting our daughter in New York. I have chosen really nice things to make a present to her. We have to tell Lina our secret. Beat.

Veronica shows a very nice necklace and puts it on her neck.

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - NIGHT. 1941

Two trucks with soviet soldiers stop in the rich houses street. NKVD officer commands according the list with addresses.

NKVD OFFICER

Two people house number 22 apartment 5, Smole Abram, next two people- apartment 12 Epshteyn Movsha, apartment 17 Palin Rivka, house number 24, apartment 1 - Zel Berel

Soldiers run to the house according the command, knocks the door and take families out. Only several minutes were given to prepare.

A woman runs out of crowd to the NKVD officer and cries:

JEWISH WOMAN 1

Comrade officer, I know you, you are Moyshe's cousin. Can you help us, we are Jews like you. Beat.

NKVD OFFICER

Sorry, I am member of Bolshevik party, you are working class enemies. Your place is in Siberia.

FADE TO:

EXT. NOVA VILNIA TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Soldiers bring arrested Jewish families to the stock-car (cattle-truck) train. Many people of all nationalities Lithuanians, Poles, Russians and Jews are put to the stock-cars.

INT. NKVD CELLAR - NIGHT. JUNE 22 1941

NKVD officer sits at the table, soldiers bring Charon to the cellar and put him on the stool in front of the table in the middle of the cellar. Small window high on the wall. Charon seems very weak, but there are no evident marks of torture on his face, just hands bandaged.

NKVD OFFICER

I am disappointed of you professor, we communicate for a few months without results. You have a visitor today.

Soldiers escorts Moyshe through the door and tell to sit down on another stool.

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)

Mr. Moyshe, please tell us what happened with your gold.

MOYSHE

Gold? What gold? We are poor people, I would say working class, we have 4 children, very poor family, no job, our flat is terrible, just two rooms.

NKVD OFFICER

Mr. Moyshe please skip the details.

MOYSHE

Yes, yes, so I tell we are very poor. We were afraid of war and wanted to keep safe our few coins and very few rings. You know, my father was very poor, a real working class, he made shoes.

NKVD OFFICER

Stop, Moyshe, I said skip about your father.

MOYSHE

OK, OK, so we had no food, but we succeeded to save some coins for a rainy day. It is close, that day. So we gave all our savings to Mr. Charon. He is a very good man, intelligent professor, his brother is a priest. So we thought it is OK he keeps our treasure until the life becomes more safe for poor Jews. Beat.

(NKVD officer stands and approaches Charon)

NKVD OFFICER

Mr. Charon, what can you respond?

MOYSHE

I am very sorry, I do not want any troubles for Mr. Charon.

NKVD OFFICER

Silent, Moyshe. We wait for the answer of Mr. Charon.

CHARON

I don't have his money.

NKVD OFFICER

Mr. Charon, please be wise. You really have not only Moyshe's money, but also many others Vilna Jews treasure. Poland does not exist, capitalism is over here in Lithuania, you Poles have problems.

CHARON

I am Lithuanian.

NKVD OFFICER

Your brother priest is a Pole and you are Lithuanian?

CHARON

We choose the language we loved. Our grandparents spoke Lithuanian, but our parents changed to Polish.

NKVD OFFICER

Well, language it is not our problem. Where is Jewish gold? Are you a thief, professor?

CHARON

I can't help you.

NKVD OFFICER
 (to soldiers)
 Comrades, bring another witness

Soldiers take Moyshe to the corridor and brings Evron to the cellar.

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)
 Comrade Evron, do you know this man?

Evron looks at Charon

EVRON
 Sorry, Mr. Officer, I don't know him

NKVD OFFICER
 Comrade Charon, do you know this man?

CHARON
 No.

Suddenly in the corridor loud shouting starts, many soldiers began to run. A soldier enters the cellar and whispered something to the officer.

(Moyshe heard and understood the words and started to cry)

MOYSHE
 Oh my God, Germans attacked Soviet Lithuanian border, the war started, I am finished, we are finished
 (nobody pays attention in sudden chaos, Charon whispers to Moyshe)

CHARON
 Do not worry. I'll keep my word.

FADE OUT.

EXT. KAUNAS STREET - DAY, JUNE 22-25, 1941

Uprising in Kaunas

Russian troops and officials are leaving Kaunas in a hurry.

Small groups of Lithuanian activists occupy the Presidential Palace, post office, telephone and telegraph, radio station and radiophone.

Morning June 23,

People on the streets listen to the radio broadcast. The voice reads the declaration of Lithuanian independence. The broadcast is repeated several times in Lithuanian, German, and French.

The Vilijampole Bridge across the Neris River is under the surveillance of the rebels as they expect the Germans to enter the city through this bridge. But it is already wired with explosives. 40 Soviet troops and three armored vehicles protect the bridge and waits for the right moment to detonate.

Rebels start fire. Soviets retreat a bit. One rebel runs to the middle of the bridge, cuts the wires, and thus saves it from destruction. On his way back he is shot dead by Soviet fire.

On June 24, tank units of the Red Army in Jonava is ordered to retake Kaunas. The rebels ask the Germans for assistance by radio. Soviet tank units are bombed by Luftwaffe.

EXT. KAUNAS STREET - DAY. JUNE 1941.

The first German scouts enter Kaunas on June 24 and find it in friendly hands.

A day later the main forces marches into the city without obstruction and almost in a parade fashion.

On June 26, German military command orders to disband and disarm the rebel groups.

EXT. VILNIUS NKVD YARD - JUNE 22 DAY

NKVD men take political prisoners with attached hands to the lorries in the yard of Vilnius NKVD.

NKVD OFFICER

(whispers the order to two soldiers)

Shoot them on the road to Minsk.

He returns to the cellar and says all the soldiers to take the documents to the lorries and leave him alone. He enters to the cell where Charon is imprisoned. The man is very weak and lays on the bed without signs of life. He opens the eyes and looks to the NKVD OFFICER.

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)

Comrade Charon I came to say good bye. I could kill you now but I won't. You have hidden the property of the people of Soviet Republic. But I won't kill you. Do you know why?

(MORE)

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)
 (He waits the answer for a
 while)

NKVD OFFICER (CONT'D)
 You and yours will bring back the
 gold to us sooner or later.

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - DAY, JUNE 23, 1941.

Lithuanian revolt in Vilnius.

Small group of armed Lithuanians takes post office, radio station and hoists Lithuanian flag on Gediminas tower.

Moyshe looks at the tower and runs home, and changes Soviet flag into Lithuanian on the house.

EXT. NYC JFK AIRPORT - DAY. 2010.

Lina (25) and her boyfriend Mark (30) meet Lina's parents departing from KLM Dutch Royal Airlines Boeing. They come for Lina's engagement party. Family kisses in the airport.

LINA
 I am so happy you are here. Mark
 will leave me with you today.
 Everything is ready for engagement
 party.

The group of four takes yellow cab and goes to a hotel at Central Park. Parents take an apartment and they have a room for Lina booked besides. Family prepares to go for a dinner at hotel restaurant.

INT. HOTEL APARTMENT - EVENING

The family of three continues speaking in the apartment with some drinks.

VERONICA
 Our darling daughter. We have
 brought some presents to you.
 (Veronica takes a nice
 puddle and give it Lina)

VERONICA (CONT'D)
 Please open.

Lina opens excited looks at a ring, necklaces and bracelet with stones. She admires the jewelry looks at the stones and thanks her mother by kissing her and then the father.

LINA
 From when we did become rich again?

VERONICA

Darling, I will tell you a fantastic story what has happened to us. All these bijoux, you can see more in my puddle we found as a hidden treasure at my job office. It is an ancient jewelry. We have much more, golden coins, diamonds, it was fantastic. We waited the meeting with you to tell everything.

(Veronica puts necklaces around the neck of Lina)

Here we have chosen platinum jewelry because you are too young for gold. We selected a brilliant necklace and a bracelet for you. Papa has something for you too.

Jonas opens a small box and shows 5 diamonds in it. He gives the box to Lina.

LINA

(excited taking a biggest diamond and looking through it to the light)

First time in my life I keep a real diamond in my hand.

LINA (CONT'D)

Thanks pa. I just have some fear and a bad feeling about all this.

VERONICA

It is because such thing happened first time for us. We also do not feel guaranteed we are doing everything correctly. We decided not to declare the treasure we found and not to look for possible owners in purpose to return the treasure to them.

(Lina keeping diamonds in her hand)

LINA

My friend is a Jew and his grandparents came from Vilnius by the way. Beat.

JONAS

We did not rob anybody, we and our parents or grandparents did not take part in Holocaust.

(Jonas and Veronica looks at each other)

We do not know and try to guess whom the treasure belonged to.

(MORE)

JONAS (CONT'D)

Do you think we should give everything to Lithuanian state. I suppose we could legally claim for about a half of treasures another half belongs to taxes. Will we risk?

LINA

I would not, but it is your property and your decision.

VERONICA

I already made a decision not to declare and not to pay taxes. It was enough for us to bankrupt once during the crisis two years ago.

LINA

Your can bankrupt even faster if you do not declare. You can even get into jail.

VERONICA

We have a good lawyers now. We will fight in this case. Just let's keep everything in secret. It seems finding treasures in your own workplace becomes a big trouble and not a big joy. Beat.

LINA

OK, I will not dispute. In any case the diamonds are so beautiful and I want to wear your presents and not to keep it in secret.

Lina puts her necklaces on her neck and bracelet on her hand and a ring on the finger and poses against silent family and the mirror. Parents admire her beauty and her smile.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Lina's and Mark's engagement party in a restaurant. Lina has a a silk scarf on her neck.

Mark's parents and grandparents Aaron and Masha take part.

Lina's parents Jonas and Veronica sit in between with Marks' relatives.

Mark stands up and kisses Lina and puts an engagement ring on her finger. Everybody applauds. Then guests drink champagne.

MARK

My grandpa wants to tell his story, how do they escaped from Lithuania just before Nazis occupation

AARON

(with a cup of coffee
shows some photos from
Vilna and starts the
story)

When the Nazis attacked Poland, my family moved from Warsaw to Vilna. When the Russians occupied Vilna, Soviet soldiers started making midnight searches in order to catch the "capitalists." News from Warsaw were bad and my parents were concerned about the Germans reaching Vilna.

We got news that a Japanese Consul in Kaunas provides transit visas through Japan if one obtained a visa to Curacao - one could then obtain vital exit permits from Russian occupied Vilna.

The Consul of the Netherlands gave us a paper that said that a visa was not necessary for Curacao and on that basis the Japanese Consul Chiune Sugihara issued us with a transit visa for Japan.

FADE TO:

EXT. KAUNAS 1940, JAPAN CONSULATE - DAY

Crowd of Polish Jews at the gate of consulate. Khaim, Aaron's father enters the consulate door. He presents his documents to Mr. Chiune Sugihara's wife which assists her husband.

CHIUNE SUGIHARA'S WIFE

Are there all the papers? If you have something else please leave on that table. Tomorrow the same time we are waiting for you

(The Consul shows little table on the corner, where few envelopes already are)

Khaim puts an envelope on the table.

Khaim leaves the consulate with happy face and embraces his wife waiting him out of the gate.

KHAIM

Darling, they promised visa tomorrow. I paid a lot of dollars for it.

(MORE)

KHAIM (CONT'D)
 (A Jew waiting near the
 gates listens their
 conversation and
 whispers)

A JEW
 My friend told Mr. Consul expects
 1000 dollars per adult. How much
 did you pay?

KHAIM
 I paid less than that for two
 visas. Children are inscribed to go
 together.

Aaron (V.O.)
 We then applied and received an
 exit visa from the Soviet
 authorities in Vilna.
 After receiving our papers, we
 bought railway tickets from
 Intourist, the Soviet travel
 agency. We left Vilna by train in
 February 1941 first for Moscow,
 then to Vladivostok on the Trans-
 Siberian Railway for 12 days.

INT. RUSSIAN TRAIN - DAY. 1941 WINTER

Few Jewish families including Khaim (Mark's great-grandfather), his wife, three children, including Mark's grandfather Aaron of about 12 years old. Rabbi Finkel also has three children, including Masha (12), later Mark's grandmother.

Women prepare food and everybody pray. Some Russian passengers drink vodka, eat fat smoked ham with pickles and make jokes of strange Rabbis clothes.

Aaron takes Masha by hand and they go to the end of carriage, open the door and they stand in between two carriages at the noisy place at the window looking to Siberian Taiga forests.

AARON
 Masha I will go with you to
 America, great country. Will you
 live with me?

Masha starts to speak, but door opens and three Soviet soldiers come to smoke and share a bottle of vodka. In a minute Masha's mother runs in.

MASHA'S MOTHER
 Papa invites you back, quickly.

One of the soldiers, an officer, follows them and demands documents from both Jewish families.

Rabbi Khaim and Rabbi Finkel present the papers. The officer reads for a minute, then salutes and gives papers back. He orders noisy drunk company stop shouting.

Siberian taiga is seen through the window..

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING.

AARON

(continues his story. Mark
and Lina listens)

The landscape from the train was
mostly white, with occasional
trees. There were many stops.

EXT. RAILWAY STATION IN RUSSIA. SIBERIA - MORNING. WINTER,
1941.

Passengers of Trans- Siberian train get out to buy some
food. The only thing for sale was - boiling water.

INT. TRAIN STOP - NIGHT

Soviet Gulag prisoners on the station are waiting another
train. Soldiers guard them. Some of shabby men make use to
speak through the open window of the train.

A MAN

Hello, Shalom, please can you give
us some food?

KHAIM

(Aaron's father)
Who are you?

A MAN

We are Jews, political prisoners,
work here nearby in a camp. Could
you please give us some food?

Khaim took some food from their sacks and gave to the
prisoners.

EXT. RUSSIAN TRAIN STATION IN VLADIVOSTOK - DAYTIME. 1941.

AARON (V.O.)

And so to the last stop,
Vladivostok.

All the passengers seemed very
excited. They reach Soviet
frontier.

(MORE)

AARON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The grown-ups were searched by the Soviet customs authorities. Jews were prepared for this and all savings put to children panties few hours before.

EXT. VLADIVOSTOK PORT - DAYTIME. 1941.

(People embark a ship)

AARON (V.O.)

From the Vladivostok train station we went across to the port and boarded a ship for our voyage to Japan. Passengers slept all together on the floor mattresses.

EXT. KOBE - DAY

AARON (V.O.)

We arrived in Japan and were taken out for inspection by the authorities to check our visas and went off to Kobe. We stayed in Kobe for a several months and tried to receive US visa in US embassy in Tokyo, but unsuccessfully.

EXT. SHANGHAI - DAY. 1942

AARON (V.O.)

The only place open to Jews from Soviet Union was Shanghai.

In August 1941, we took a boat to this international city and lived there until the end of the war. French, British and Chinese zones divided this city with contrast.

In the final weeks of the war, the US started bombing Shanghai. Finally the war was over, the Japanese had surrendered and the Americans entered Shanghai in September 1945.

We began to receive letters from relatives. They wrote us about gas chambers, about concentration camps.

(MORE)

AARON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We began to realize the scale of the tragedy and how lucky we were. We even never been hungry. Beat.

People began to leave Shanghai in different directions, Australia, Israel, the US, South America. They wanted to rejoin their families and also to escape the oncoming Bolshevik threat and start a new life.

We obtained a visa to the US and arrived to San Francisco in the end of 1946. That's our story.

MARK

Grandpa, you did tell us your uncles Evron and Isaac with families had died in Vilnius ghetto?

FADE OUT.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Everybody thanks Aaron for the escape story.

Masha rings by a spoon to the cup:

MASHA

I am very happy for my grandson and his chosen beautiful Lina. When Mark told for the first time a year ago, that he has a girlfriend from Lithuania, Aaron and me were surprised.

Because we both are from Vilna, Lithuanian capital. We have escaped from there just before the war and lost all our relatives here during Holocaust.

Here I have a present for Lina, a platinum necklaces. When I married, Aaron's mother presented it to me. They had specially made three identical necklaces and presented them to wives of their three sons.

When our son has married, I gave it to his wife. Now Marks mother presents it to Lina.

(MORE)

MASHA (CONT'D)

We hope tradition will continue and Lina will donate it something 20 years later to her daughter or daughter in law.

(Masha gives the box to Lina and asks Mark to put a necklaces on Lina's neck)

Mark asks Lina to take of her scarf, takes a necklaces from the box and turns to put it on her neck. Lina looks at the present, her hand touches necklaces she wears, looks with a big surprise to her parents- two pieces of jewelry are identical. Beat.

FADE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Mark's grandmother Masha asks Lina to show necklace she has. Masha shows to Aaron and Mark's mother two identical pieces of jewelry.

AARON

(touching the jewelry)

This belonged either to my uncle Evron or Isaac.

They both died in Vilnius during holocaust.

Some months before the war almost 200 Jewish families from Vilna and we, refuges from Warsaw, hid our treasures to one very respectable man from Lithuanian- Polish family. He had a strange name Charon. His wife was Jewish, but died years before the war. They had no children. How could this necklace appear in your hands? Tell me darling Lina.

JONAS

(whispers something to frightened Veronica and then answers to Aaron)

It is our gift to Lina. We got it in Vilnius Collectors Club, antique flea Market.

AARON

It seems our treasures are on the Market. Nazis did not find them. Charon probably escaped them as well as escaped communists.

(MORE)

AARON (CONT'D)

Our duty to holocaust victims is to find the treasures and return them back to their alive relatives or simply to Jewish organizations, synagogues in Vilna.

Mr. Jonas, since we are going to become relatives I believe you will help to identify the sellers of these treasures to police? We are going to inform Interpol and start investigation.

I borrow your daughters gift and we present everything to police. Or may be you have better solution?

JONAS

(approaches Aaron and takes both necklaces)

Since we are going to become relatives and Lina is pregnant it would be better to avoid police and to try to make a private investigation. Otherwise I have to hire a lawyer and to face you in court. As you are going to start investigation against us.

AARON

Oh no, my friend, lets try to do it privately. But I take back Lina's present and let's discuss it on Monday.

(He takes a necklaces from Jonas, they hesitate which is which)

Lina starts crying, Mark tells to her something. The party is over. Friends are becoming enemies. Beat.

INT. NKVD CELLAR- DAY. 1941.

Charon is very weak and hears a noise in the corridor. German SS Officer (25) with two soldiers enters the cell.

SOLDIER 1

Are you a political prisoner of Soviets?

Charon just whispers something. The officer orders to take him to the hospital. Beat.

EXT. VILNA STREET - DAY, JUNE 24, 1941

Wehrmacht marches Vilnius streets. Evron watches in a distance Germans on the street. Small crowd, mainly minor Lithuanians, salutes the invaders.

Moyshe runs home takes off Lithuanian flag from the house. He looks for the Nazis flag between several available flags: but does not find. Beat.

MOYSHE

(crying for his wife which helps to look for Nazi's flag)

Twenty years ago my father changed Czar Russia flag to German, then to Lithuanian, then to Soviet, at least to Polish.

Just for twenty years here was Poland, and the story starts again. But I am not ready for swastika flag. Beat.

INT. STRASHUN LIBRARY - DAY. JUNE 26, 1941

A Jew approaches Evron and excited with tears in his eyes starts telling the story about murdering in Kaunas yesterday.

FADE TO:

EXT. KAUNAS THE YARD OF LIETUKIS GARAGE - DAY. JUNE 25.

http://www.vilnaghetto.com/gallery2/v/lithuania/album78/Kovno_massacre.jpg.html

About 45-50 men group aged 30-50. They are forced by group of civilians armed with rifles and wore armbands. The captive men are Jews. They are forced to collect horse manure into the heap. After that they are ordered to wash from the water pump. Some are ordered to take rubber hose to the mouth and wash. Jews refuse and start to run to one side of the yard. Then killing starts. Jews are beaten by rifles, iron bars, sticks. The group of German soldiers stood aside watching the massacre. Kaunas civilians, men, women and some children are present and watching too.

MAN IN LITHUANIAN CROWD

(explains to others)

It is a revenge to the members of NKVD security forces for murdering about 2000 political prisoners last night (Ref.2) by retreating NKVD and Soviet army.

About fifty wounded man lie on the ground. Few men try to stand up but are hosed down with water. Bodies of death Jews are taken to the truck.

Ref.1

Google: Murdering of Jews in Kaunas Lietukis garage

Ref. 2.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rainiai_massacre

INT. EVRON'S APARTMENTS- NIGHT. - STOCK SCENE

Evron speaks with his wife. Three children are listening.

EVRON

My wife, prepare us for leaving,
clothes, food, last money.

EVRON'S WIFE

ABA, what about our gold we hidden
for the case of war? We need it
back?

EVRON

It won't help us. Do you want to
make a present for SS? Let it be
our message for future generations.

We had a good life in Vilna, in
Lita. Poor Poles and Lithuanians
were different of us, but they were
soft regarding Jews.

You and me. We loved each other. It
is normal finish. Do not be afraid.
New life is coming in Palestine and
may be in USA. I hope my brother
Khaim will reach USA one day from
Shanghai.

EVRON'S WIFE

Gold could save our lives.

EVRON

Yes, for a while. But it can be
used in a better way: to deliver a
message after the war. Our life,
our story will be written in it.

EVRON'S WIFE

Are you all right, my husband? You
speak strange things. Gold is not a
book, gold is not a message. What
do you mean?

EVRON

But yes. Gold keeps us alive in this period. The shape of our souls is written on the golden coins and diamonds in the rings. Look at your ring- you see yourself, you see me and our children. Beat.

FADE TO:

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - SUMMER DAY

Jews with yellow David stars fills old town streets. Charon still feels weak and speaks with few old Jews, Moyshe stands nearby.

JEW 1

Mr. Charon, we know what are you doing for us. You have passed big troubles but even bigger ones are ahead. Beat.

Suddenly Lithuanian police and German soldiers close the street and all Jews are taken to trucks. Charon has to show his documents. Moyshe succeeds to hide in the staircase.

INT. CHARON'S APARTMENTS - EVENING

SS Officer with soldiers knocks Charon's flat door.

SS OFFICER

Mr. Charon, nice to meet you again. I see you recovered after Soviet interrogation.

(he sits on the stool in the kitchen)

Let me ask you, why Russians were so interested in you?

CHARON

They arrested many of University colleagues, catholic priests.

SS OFFICER

You are different. We are interested in your mission as well.

They arrest Charon and takes him to Lukishkes prison.

Interrogation.

Charon sits on the stool.

Soldiers bring Moyshe. He looks beaten and very weak.

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)
 Moyshe is it that man who keeps all
 Vilna Jews gold?

MOYSHE
 He keeps our small savings of my
 family. My father did shoes. I do
 not know about others. Beat.

SS OFFICER
 Mr. Charon, we will have many days
 of talks. Much more you had with
 soviets. You will change your mind.
 Take them both out
 (soldiers take Moyshe and
 Charon out)

EXT. VILNA GREAT STREET - DAY

Great provocation at great street: cleaning the old town to
 establish Ghetto.

Two shots from the window in front of cinema shoot to German
 soldiers. Two Lithuanians in civilian clothes leave the
 apartment and together with German soldiers seize two Jews.

They beat them, accuse them shooting to soldiers and shoot at
 the spot.

Stikliu and Mesiniu (Jatkowa) streets are ransacked by the
 local militia, and Jews are beaten up.

Night comes.

MILITIAMEN
 (run and shout loudly on
 the streets)
 Retaliation, retaliation comes

All Jews are driven out of the neighbourhood.

The next day the women and children on remaining streets are
 seized while the men were at work. Men at workplaces are also
 seized.

Jews are taken to Lukishkes Prison, then to Paneriai, also
 known as Ponar or Ponary, where they are murdered between 1
 September and 3 September. Five to ten thousand people are
 murdered, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponary_massacre

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON - EVENING

SS Officer interrogates Charon. Charon seems very weak,
 beaten. Soldiers escorts Jew men one by one to recognise
 Charon.

SS OFFICER
Did you give this man your gold to
hide?

JEWISH MAN
(looks at the Charon and
shakes the head)

SS OFFICER
Ponary. Next.

SS soldiers brings next prisoner. The same question. The same
answer - no.

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)
Ponary. Next.

Charon meditates.

FADE TO:

EXT. VILNA UNIVERSITY YARD -DAY. 1925.

Young professor Charon (33) watches student theater playing a
Greek play The Suppliants [http://www.ancient-
literature.com/greece_aeschylus_suppliants.html](http://www.ancient-literature.com/greece_aeschylus_suppliants.html). He is ought
very much by the Miriam role on the stage. He presents
flowers to Miriam after the play and invites her for coffee.

FADE TO:

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON -DAY. 1941

Ponary. Next. Ponary. Next. Ponary. Next. Beat.

A POLICEMAN
These Jews are from poor Old Town
district, they hardly could have
big money. The rich Jews live in
outer districts.

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON - DAY. 1941.

SS Officer interrogates Charon. Cell with a small window.

SS OFFICER
I like Greek myths very much, Greek
wars against Persians. Germany
continues Greek culture, Greek
wars, Roman culture and Roman wars.

Our salute with right hand is
Roman.

(MORE)

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)

All countries envy German salute, because we are we continuation of Roman Empire, Holy Roman Empire and Ancient Roman Empire. Do you agree?

CHARON

They were great nations of great culture.

SS OFFICER

Romans almost exterminated Jews in 2 or 3 rebel wars in Palestine.

We will continue their mission.

Future generations will admire The Third Reich, like we admire Rome now.

Great Romans killed about million of Galls. And we, Goths could conquer these almost empty territories.

CHARON

You are very well educated, officer.

SS OFFICER

I studied ancient history in Emanuel Kant University of Konigsberg. We both like Greek and Roman culture and history. You see, I am not a German, I am a Prussian, Baltic, like you. So why couldn't we find common interests?

CHARON

I can't give you treasures you think I hide. Soviets kept me in jail for few months. They searched my apartment, my cabinet in University, my brother's house, they sent my brother to Siberia.

SS OFFICER

I appreciated you survived their tortures. You almost have no nails.
(Professor hides his hands.)

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)

We are not barbarians. Two intellectuals can find common items. Great nations disappeared during ages, ancient Greeks, Egyptians, Romans.

(MORE)

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)

New nations took their place and sometimes their name. It is a natural process, evolution of humans. Evolution will sweep Jewish nation. You should understand new Aryan race is going to rule and prosper. Become a member of our nation.

Listen professor: The best
belongeth unto mine and me; and if
it be not given us, then
do we take it:- the best food, the
purest sky, the strongest thoughts,
the fairest women!"-
Do you recognize the poem?

CHARON

Thus spoke Zaratustra, by Friedrich Nietzsche.
I am not Aryan and my wife was Jewish.

SS OFFICER

Many Poles and Lithuanians who married Jewish wives went with them together to Ghetto. Voluntary.

Professor, your wife is dead, you have no Jewish children. We can assume you made a mistake and you have a chance now to start a new life as an equal colleague of Aryans. Cooperate with us and you will be released soon and return back to University. Reich remunerates his loyal people even non - Aryans.

CHARON

My students would be glad to see me again. Beat.

SS OFFICER

Great, professor. Your students. It is a good idea. We will ask them to bring your Greek books here, you could feel more comfortable. You will cooperate. I promise you.

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON - NIGHT

SS OFFICER enters Charon cell with two Charon's students, male and female. They carry a lot of books.

SS OFFICER

I will come back tomorrow back to receive final answer and I believe professor's good will and clear mind.

A man embraces two students and says to professor with smile

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)

We will talk with your students about ancient history this night, ancient history of Jewish Vilna, about Gaon of Vilna. Beat.

(and he pushes angrily students out of the cell)

Interrogation of students goes on in the next room and professor could listen terrible wails)

In the morning soldiers takes professor to the interrogation room. He sees terribly beaten his fellow students. They are left alone. Professor puts his hands on their weak bodies, students look at him, try to smile but fails. Their faces look terrible.

Professor takes care about students for a several days. They both can't move and talk. Professor opens the book of Iliad and starts reading in ancient Greek and then translates

CHARON

HOM. IL. BOOK 24, LINES 596-610: IN GREEK

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0133%3Abook%3D24%3Acard%3D596>

So spake goodly Achilles, and went back within the hut and on the richly-wrought chair wherefrom he had risen sate him down by the opposite wall, and he spake unto Priam, saying: "Thy son, old sire, is given back according to thy wish, [600] and lieth upon a bier; and at break of day thou shalt thyself behold him, as thou bearest him hence; but for this present let us bethink us of supper. For even the fair-haired Niobe bethought her of meat, albeit twelve children perished in her halls, six daughters and six lusty sons.

(MORE)

HOM. IL. BOOK 24, LINES 596-610: IN
 [605] The sons Apollo slew with
 shafts from his silver bow, being
 wroth against Niobe, and the
 daughters the archer Artemis, for
 that Niobe had matched her with
 fair-cheeked Leto, saying that the
 goddess had borne but twain, while
 herself was mother to many;
 wherefore they, for all they were
 but twain, destroyed them all.
 [610]

Hom. Il. Book 24, lines 596-610
 24.596<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0134%3Abook%3D24%3Acard%3D596>

EXT. NYC PUBLIC LIBRARY YARD - DAY. 2010.

The family of three (Jonas, Veronica and Lina) sit at the table and drink coffee.

JONAS

We can't testify against ourselves
 in court. Can we?

VERONICA

Lawyers in USA are very expensive.
 They take about 30% - 50% of total
 amount. But we can be arrested here
 without the help of lawyer.

LINA

I talked with Mark. He is very
 upset and he reacts very
 sensitively. They all suspect we
 had great-grandparents who took
 part in Holocaust and robbed their
 victims before killing them. We
 could easily buy it in antique
 shop.

JONAS

We all know the truth. We found
 Jewish treasure half a year ago.
 Their killers did not.

LINA

Maybe we could agree with Marks
 parents and grandparents to give
 them some part of the treasures?

VERONICA

We could. But who knows how much
 treasures they gave to mysterious
 Mr. Charon? Jonas, did you notice
 any signs on the copper bricks? I
 saw numbers.

(MORE)

VERONICA (CONT'D)

All bricks were numbered, but no names, any documents inside.

JONAS

We still have last rows of 10 copper bricks unchecked. Lina, ask Mark, how much treasures Aaron's dead uncles hid at Mr. Charon?

EXT. NYC HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Jonas, Veronica and Lina meet Mark and his grandparents in the lobby. Hotel staff leads them to a small meeting room and serves with water.

AARON

Mark's parents had to leave home to LA. We had some time to meet and speak with so called Litvaks, Jew expatriates from Vilna. Few of them are still alive like us, other have children who know the story of Charon of Vilna from their parents. Do you know the story?

Lithuanian family shakes their heads.

AARON (CONT'D)

Some tens or even hundred rich Vilna families and refuges from occupied Poland asked honorable man Charon to save their gold and jewelry when World War two started.

Charon was been interrogated by Soviets and later by Nazis. Nobody from us knew the end of the story.

And suddenly such I would say happy event: we recognized Vilna treasures, they are not confiscated by occupants, they remained in your hands, in Vilna people hands. And please help us to reach the justice.

LINA

(nervous looking to her parents)

Yes, I told Mark that you have found all Charon's treasure. I think I am right and Mr. Aaron is correct.

Jonas looks at Veronica nervously.

VERONICA

Poor child. Mark's family did not give any proofs except identical necklaces which probably have been produced in hundred units at that time.

(Aaron takes necklaces from a bag and a hand-lens from a pocket)

AARON

It is very easy. I can not proof there are no more similar jewelry. But I am sure these two pieces belonged to my family.

(he looks thru hand-lens and reads in Yiddish)

AARON (CONT'D)

To my daughter in law. It is translation from Yiddish. Jonas, Veronica, please take a look.

(he gives jewelry and a hand-lens)

Lithuanian family takes a look.

JONAS

Well, but it could be written in all jewelry dedicated to women. There is no names, no date. Beat.

AARON

Very well, very well, Jonas. Mark, look, how clever your parents in law are. Just look at the other side of the necklaces: "1925, to our sun Khaim and his wife Sarah Levin".

(Aaron gives necklaces to Jonas)

Jonas looks at Yiddish letters, then shows to his wife.

VERONICA

Well, sorry, but we do not read Yiddish.

Aaron smiling takes a dictionary from his bag and Mark opens laptop with Goggle translation. In a few minutes Yiddish words are translated. Jonas family looks at each other. Then Jonas takes out another necklaces- presents to his daughters from Vilnius.

JONAS
 OK, let's look what is written here
 (he looks to one of
 necklaces through hand-
 lens and writes Yiddish
 letters on the paper)

JONAS (CONT'D)
 Please enter to the translations
 these letters.

MARK
 1924, to our sun Evron and his wife
 Zelda Levin".

Lina approaches the father, takes the necklaces and puts it
 against Aaron on the table.

LINA
 Its yours. We are happy we could
 transfer you the message from your
 uncle.

Two families embraced each other. Very sentimental. Tears.
 Mark kisses Lina. Aaron kisses platinum necklaces

AARON
 (whispers)
 Isaac, Evron, my uncles, my family.
 Beat.

MASHA
 It is like they are alive again and
 we meet them now. Beat.

Two families say good bye to each other.

AARON
 Thank you again, God bless you. I
 think next time we will discuss
 exact time and place you return all
 the treasures to us and other alive
 Litvak relatives. Beat.

Lithuanian family is shocked.

FADE OUT.

EXT. NYC CENTRAL PARK- DAY.

Jonas and Veronica walk in Central Park.

JONAS
 Our Jew relatives seems tough.
 Darling, I got recommendation to
 hire a lawyer.

VERONICA
Let's be tough too.

JONAS
He is an emigrant from Moscow,
Jewish- Russian-gay lawyer, his
name is Grisha.

VERONICA
Straight decision. Beat.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY.

GRISHA (35)
Privet druzya - Hello friends. Call
me Grisha. It is a nice opportunity
for me to speak Russian.

VERONICA
Hi, Grisha.

JONAS
Hello, Grisha.

GRISHA
Jonas already told me the story. My
advice : try to negotiate with
Aaron family without a court and
find a compromise. I will organize
the meeting.

FADE TO:

INT. LAWYER'S MEETING ROOM - DAY.

Two sides meet to negotiate.

AARON
This is twenty families list, we
will present about twenty names
more. Only about 20 percent of
Charon's people have living
relatives. They have documents
which begins with: Me, Charon of
Vilna, accept for saving following
gold jewelry from Vilna families.

GRISHA
What is your position?

AARON
They demand for 1 million Dollars
for each family to compensate their
savings lost in Vilna.
(MORE)

AARON (CONT'D)

In case of refusal you will face
big troubles and even American jail
for the whole Lithuanian family of
3. Beat.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND BEACH - DAY

Grisha RUBINSHTEIN speaks walking with Jonas and Veronica at
Coney Island beach. They take a table at Russian restaurant.

GRISHA

You should declare treasures to
Lithuanian government asap. Beat.

INT. NYC HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT.

Jonas and Veronica have a drink before going to bed. She is
dressed not much.

VERONICA

Money did not make our life quiet
and stressless.
(She embraces Jonas)

They start making love. Beat. Telephone call, international
call:

JONAS

Hello, father

JONAS FATHER (V.O.)

Your flat has been robbed this
night in Vilnius. Alarm system
started to work and robbers had to
leave. But they destroyed much of
the flat. And your villa in the
forest has been burned. Only good
neighbors stopped the fire but the
house is one third burned.

FADE TO:

INT. STAIRS - NIGHT. VILNIUS.

Two masked figures cut the electric cables, switched off
alarm and unlocks Jonas flat doors. They start to look for a
treasure inside with metal detector. Suddenly alarm starts
working and they have to leave. They start fire before
leaving. Beat.

E/I - NIGHT (STOCK)

A masked dark figure simply sets fire in Jonas villa in the forest. Neighbors start alarming and start pumping water from the yard.

INT. NYC HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

JONAS

(by phone)

Mr. Aaron, I accuse you for not keeping a secret, because our property in Vilnius is robbed and put fired.

AARON (V.O.)

Nonsense, let our lawyers meet and speak.

Jonas immediately connects to Lithuanian tax office with the letter: "I want to declare 170 million dollars family income" and fulfills internet property declaration.

INT. AARON'S FLAT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

About 10 people are in the room.

AARON

Dear friends, I invited you to discuss the situation with Charon's treasure found in Vilna, Lithuania. I am in a very complicated situation- my grandson Mark is engaged with a girl from that family, they are waiting for a baby.

GUEST 1

I appreciate what you have done dear Aaron, without you we never would find the property of our grandparents. Your family has very reasonable chance to break relations with that Lithuanian family.

GUEST 2

Exactly, Lithuanians did not help us during the WW2, I mean except Charon. Beat. At least very few of them. We have to be honest to the victims of Lita and to finish this question openly in the court.

Everybody starts to speak in approval.

AARON

Nobody argues it, we finished peaceful and private means of negotiations. And we have to hurry: an information about hidden treasures is already spread widely: last night flat of our Lithuanian, let say, opponents, was robbed and their villa burned. They accused me for not keeping a secret.

GUEST 1

The secret is not a secret anymore. We have to hurry. Beat.

GUEST 2

Since the book of Vilna so called Charon's book is not found, I assume Mr. Aaron you did not tell all the details about agreement with the ferryman Charon? Beat.

INT. HOTEL APARTMENT - DAY. SUNDAY

Jonas and Veronica just finished morning sex. They dress and prepare to leave the hotel to meet Lina and Mark at appointed family dinner in Manhattan's Tribeca restaurant.

VERONICA

(making last make-up
sketches against mirror)

Darling please call them and say we will be late for a few minutes.

Jonas calls. Telephone is silent, Lina doesn't answer.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

I feel something wrong, some bad sense. Please call Mark.

Jonas speaks with Mark, later Aaron, later Grisha.

GRISHA

Immediately call the police.

FADE OUT.

INT. HOTEL APARTMENT - DAY

Policemen knock the door and enter the apartment.

NYCPD POLICE OFFICER

Mr. Jonas Katinas and Veronica Katine? You have to follow us.

VERONICA

(angry)

What do you mean by this? Our daughter disappeared. We just called the police to inform.

NYCPD POLICE OFFICER

NYC Jewish community placed charges against your family in appropriating their property in illegal way. You can call your lawyer. Beat.

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON - EVENING. 1941.

Charon's students feel better after 3 days. SS Officer enters the cell with two SS soldiers.

SS OFFICER

Professor, did you change your mind? We let your students to recover. It is a time for them to go home.

CHARON

I really can't help you.

SS Officer orders soldiers to take all three of them to the prison yard.

SS OFFICER

One word Mr. Charon?

Charon keeps silence and meditates.

FADE TO:

INT. VILNA UNIVERSITY YARD - DAY. 10 YEARS AGO. 1930.

Miriam and Charon congratulates students in the yard after receiving their master degrees.

EXT. LUKISHKES PRISON YARD

The students are hanged in front of professor.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON - MORNING

SS soldiers takes Charon out of the cell. SS Officer opens car door and Charon sits at the end seat. The car moves through the town.

SS OFFICER

Professor, what if Jews have no
souls, if all people have no souls?

They bypass a column of few hundred people, mainly Jews with
yellow David stars. The car comes to Ponary pine forest.

Charon is ordered to sit on the stool with SS man at each
side.

SS Officer walks around.

SHOOTING of JEWS

The group of about 500 Jews approaches the place. The victims
are herded together in one of the pits, ordered to undress,
led to the neighboring pit in groups of 10 - 20 people.

Charon sits in 20 meters from them guarded by soldiers of
unit of Einsatzkommando 3a. SS Officer approaches Charon and
showing to the first group of victims asks:

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)

Let's exchange Jewish gold to
Jewish lives. Just tell me stop and
I will let them go.

Charon turns his eyes from victims. SS Officer takes his head
by gloved hands and turns to execution place. Charon looks to
the faces in the dead line and meditates.

FADE TO:

EXT. VILNIUS STREET - DAY. 10 YEARS AGO.

Miriam and Charon visit Jewish meat shop and buy the meat
from one of above victims.

Another Jew at the street invites them to clean shoes.

Third Jew - a coachman takes them to the carriage and drives
them by horse to the outskirts of the city.

FADE OUT.

EXT. PONARY - DAY

An older officer gives the signal and soldiers shoot the
group. Corps fall down the pit.

Next group approaches to the pit. Again Charon is forced to
watch the execution.

SS OFFICER

Hey, a ferryman, take them to Had,
the world of the dead.

Soldiers laugh.

SS Officer and Charon go back to Lukishkes prison by car.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT. DARK.

A man sleeps on the bed and dreams he is a naked Charon and stands in the line with a group of naked Jews waiting for execution. His wife Miriam stands in the distance dressed and smiling sadly.

Command and shots.

Blood slushes on his face from the shot neighbors and he falls down with other victims to the pit.

Other Jews sprinkle sand on Charon's face.

Another group of shot bodies fall down on top of Charon.

The night comes. Poor man is only wounded. He repeats name of his wife "Mira, Mira". He tries to climb up out of dead and wounded bodies like him. He stands up and suddenly light, dogs barking, German soldiers shouts to him.

He awakes.

A German soldier is really standing near the bed and loudly says something to him. He, SS Officer, get ups trembling with sweating forehead, takes his SS Officer's uniform and shoes. Something has changed. Beat.

SS SOLDIER
Who is Mira, Officer?
(and soldiers leave the
room laughing)

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A man with a hidden face dreams in a bed.

He is an SS Officer and stands in the line with other German soldiers in uniforms.

Naked tinny Jews keep rifles. One of the Jews gives a signal and they shoot.

Blood slushes to SS Officer face and he fells to the pit together with other German soldiers.

Other German prisoners sprinkle sand.

Another group of German prisoners is shot by naked Jews.

The night comes. Wounded SS Officer tries to climb out of dead bodies.

Suddenly light, dogs barking, German soldiers shout and he gets up as Charon. Soldiers really are shouting in his cell. Beat.

EXT. PONARY - DAY

An ordinary execution watching day.

SS soldiers put Charon together with a group of about 10 naked Jews and said him to stand together at the pit.

Charon stands still. His eyes find the SS Officer, but he looks to the side.

An older soldier gives a command to shoot. Rifles shoot. Blood from the neighbors slushed on Charon's face and clothes. All Jews fall down to the pit. The only Charon stays untouched. Soldiers laugh.

Next ten naked Jews are put in the line next to Charon. Again the same, blood and parts of brain slushed on Charon. Jews fall down. Soldiers laugh. SS Officer takes a bottle of Vodka from soldiers and drinks.

The third time Charon falls down together with shot Jews to the pit. SS Officer runs to the pit and with mad voice orders soldiers to take Charon from the pit full of dead or wounded bodies. (Soldiers order Jews to take the Charon out) SS Officer shakes Charon and he opens the eyes alive and not wounded.

SS OFFICER

Bastards, give him clean clothes
from the pile of Jewish clothes.

They both return to Lukishkes prison by car. The Officer drinks vodka all the way back. Beat.

INT. NYC POLICE OFFICE - DAY

Jonas and Veronica together with their lawyer Grisha and police officer sit in the office.

POLICE OFFICER

You are not under arrest, but have no right to leave the country. You can leave the hotel only with permission of police. There are no news about your daughter, no details about robbery in Lithuania.

VERONICA

What measures did you take regarding our daughter? Could it be Jewish community making pressure to us?

POLICE OFFICER
All possibilities are under
investigation. Beat.

INT. STURBUCKS CAFE- UNKNOWN DAYTIME

Lina and Mark drinks coffee.

LINA
I am pregnant. I know your
grandparents angry on my parents.
But I am carrying a Jewish baby.
And I cannot speak to my parents
since they made a crime against my
child's grand- grandparents, your
grandparents, Mark.

MARK
OK calm. It is very serious thing
to disown your parents. In any case
the judge will make a decision.

EXT. LUKISHKES PRISON YARD - DAY.

1942 spring. Charon with civil clothes is taken by SS officer
to the car.

Vilna Ghetto Day.

They drive to Vilna Ghetto.

SS OFFICER
We stopped murdering Jews, because
we need workers for the army. Poor
Jews which lived in Ghetto
territory were executed in
September - October 1941. More
wealthy families were moved to the
Ghetto and work for Wehrmacht now.

CHARON
Where are we going?

SS OFFICER
To the theater.

They stopped near the Ghetto and followed to the Ghetto
theater at the Konska (PL) (Arkliu LT) street.

SS OFFICER (CONT'D)
Please take a seat. I will speak to
the Ghetto Commandant.

Charon takes a seat. People look at him, many say Shalom. A
STRANGE MAN takes a seat nearby.

A STRANGE MAN

(whispers)

Mr. Charon are you able to help the Ghetto partisans? We need to buy arms and food.

A concert begins. Charon meditates.

FADE TO:

INT. VILNA THEATER - EVENING. 10 YEARS BEFORE.

Miriam and Charon are watching a play.

MIRIAM

Darling, during the break one person will speak with you about possibility to borrow money from my father. Please do not trust him.

FADE TO:

INT. GHETTO THEATER- NIGHT.

Concert is over. The Strange Man disappears in the crowd. He shows the sign "No" to the SS Officer watching him from the distance.

A rich Jew approaches Charon.

A RICH JEW

Mr. Charon, do you remember me? We are starving here.

CHARON

I am under arrest.

INT. POLICE OFFICE - DAY

Jonas and Veronica wait for interrogation and the lawyer.

VERONICA

(crying)

Our daughter is kidnapped. We do not know if she is still alive. They arrested us, they will put us into separate jail for years, they arrested our bank accounts. Our property in Vilnius is arrested too. They take all treasures and probably will confiscate it. We can't pay to our lawyers, we can't pay to be released on bail. We are totally lost.

GRISHA

(entering through the door
and listening the last
Veronica's words)

Hello. I am working on this issue.
But at the moment everything is
truth. You cannot use your account.
It is good you paid me in advance.

Vilnius lawyer received judge
permission to open your apartment
and to take your treasures. It is
good you tell me the hiding place.
It is not safe to keep it at your
home or villa. But all treasures
will go under arrest by local
authorities until they check your
property declaration. It is very
interesting case, but at the moment
I have no good news for you. You
will be put into separate trial
rooms. It could last for several
months. Also there are no news
about your daughter. No sign, no
evidence.

Woman police officer takes Veronica to separate room and
another man police officer takes Jonas to separate room and
locks the door. Their mobile phones are confiscated. Veronica
cries and demands to find their kidnapped daughter.

INT. NYC POLICE CELL - DAY

Veronica is crying on the bed in her single cell.

VERONICA

Once again we became rich and lost
everything, even a daughter.

EXT. VILNIUS STREET- DAY

SS Officer is walking on the streets of the old town. Jews
women are returning to Ghetto after job. One of them, a
pretty young girl, falls down nearby SS Officer. Everybody
stops in silence.

A JEW WOMAN

She is starving.

SS Officer turns to the cafe nearby and whispers something to
the owner and gives money to his hand. The man runs inside,
then runs outside with a sack full of bread, cheese and milk
and gives the sack to the now sitting Jew girl.

SS Officer walks away and doesn't answer when a German
soldier tries to ask him something.

INT. NEW YORK FLAT - DAY

Mark quarrels with his grandfather Aaron and demands to stop judicial persecution of Lina's parents.

MARK

It is like you persecute me and my family. Do you want to put grandparents of your great-grandchild to the prison? Your persecution leads Lina to disown her parents.

AARON

I am very sorry about her decision.

INT. NYCPD INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Veronica and Jonas wait for their lawyer.

GRISHA

(enters elegant and happy)
There are news about your daughter, she called police and explain she simply condemns her parents regarding the story with Vilnius treasures.

Veronica and Jonas embraces each other. They are happy and shocked at the same time.

GRISHA (CONT'D)

I have good news, Veronica is freed against half a million bail and has to go to Lithuania and show the treasures to local police and stay under surveillance of local police. Your accounts are unfrozen. Aaron as representative of US Litvaks community goes together. Bad news are that papers described the story in a negative way for Lithuanian family. Some people are protesting against NYC Police Department and slogans call Lithuanian family as a descendants of Nazis which stolen victims gold. Opposite news come from Lithuania. Several anti-Semitic people protested in the park against US embassy.

Veronica kisses Jonas and together with Grisha leaves the NYCPD.

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON -DAY. END OF 1942.

Jail soldiers brings a hardly beaten guy (23) to Charon's cell.

CHARON

MIROSLAW, is it you, my student? Do you remember your ridiculous mistake with Latin verbs?

Charon takes care of him.

MIROSLAW

(next day his student feels better)

They captured me according the list of Vilna University students they are going to send to concentration camp.

SS Officer enters the cell.

SS OFFICER

Miroslaw will stay here and we go to Ghetto for a walk, to talk to your friends. Beat.

In the evening Charon returns.

CHARON

Let's start our Greek lessons, students. Beat. At least one student. Beat.

FADE TO:

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON- DAY

Some days or a week passed. The student recovered from injuries.

MIROSLAW

What is the reason professor you are still in jail, but is not sent to a concentration camp or simply shot like thousands Vilna intellectuals? What secret they want to get from you?

Charon looks at the guy

CHARON

Secret? What secret do you mean? My child are you working for them? Are you spying me?

MIROSLAW
 (in great confusion)
 Sorry, professor, I try to save my
 parents lives and my life too.

Charon knocks the door to the corridor

CHARON
 Please report your Officer to take
 this man from me. Beat.

Some minutes later soldiers come into the cell and takes the
 guy.

They give to professor a jacket with yellow David's star.

A SOLDIER
 Hey, you proved you are a real Jew.
 This is your uniform.

EXT. VILNIUS AIRPORT - DAY. 2010

Lithuanian police meets Veronica which is followed by US
 officers. Aaron and Masha descend the same plane. Aaron falls
 on the knees and kisses the ground in the airport

AARON
 My native city, my beloved city, my
 hated city. Beat.

Masha helps him to stand up.

Veronica signs the formalities and is taken to the car.
 Immediately journalists attacks her with questions

JOURNALIST 1
 How do you feel returning home
 after the three months of
 detainment?

VERONICA
 Like Nazi's collaborator extradited
 to Lithuania.

JOURNALIST 1
 How much Jewish gold did you find?

VERONICA
 I am just going to count it.

JOURNALIST 2
 Where are your husband and
 daughter?

VERONICA
 Husband in jail, daughter just
 disowned us.

Veronica sits in to the car and leaves.

INT. FLAT- DAYTIME

Lithuanian and US police officers together reveal copper bricks in Jonas and Veronica flat.

Vilnius University, Veronica's office

Veronica shows the place.

Jonas and Veronica villa.

Veronica shows the place to the police where the treasures are hidden beneath the floor. Vila is half burned.

Lithuanian bank.

Bank staff, police and Veronica supervise bricks with Jewish treasures coming from Paris and London banks, where Jonas and Veronica rented safe-boxes. Totally 165 copper- bricks are found and 6 empty copper bricks in addition.

INT. VILNIUS PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

Special commission of US and Lithuanian specialists open all bricks and look inside for evidence of ownership.

SPEAKER OF JOINED US- LITHUANIAN
COMMISSION

Here we report to audience the facts about so called Charon's treasure in Vilnius.

No letters, no any evidence about ownership were found during 2 weeks of investigation. Except every brick was numbered from 1 to 171. Nothing more.

We do not find any guilt of Jonas and Veronica, because they declared founding treasures. Taxes will be calculated and invoiced to them.

The owners of that treasures if available should prove their ownership and their rights will be satisfied. Beat.

INT. END (STOCK SCENE)

Titles, letters, producers, directors

END of movie. Audience is angry and leaves the cinema unhappy.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Paralysed Veronica's father (95 years old) lies in bed. He can't even blink. Just his eyes are moving. Laptop computer with internet news is open on the table in front of him. A nurse is helping him to use the computer by scrolling the pages by mouse.

Veronica enters the hospital with the police guard, leaves the guard in the corridor, enters the father's room and kisses her father. A nurse wants to leave them alone.

VERONICA

Is my father a little better?

NURSE

Yes, he started to move eyes again. I have read him from newspapers all articles about your family story in USA, about the treasures. It made his reactions, his senses recovered slightly. He saw latest TV news yesterday with you in an airport and ordered to see you asap.

The nurse leaves.

Veronica takes cards with alphabet letters and most popular words. She shows the card "good" to the father. The old man squints to the right by his eyes what means "yes".

VERONICA

I am happy we can communicate again. I see you already know our story with Jewish gold and all problems we got after that. Sorry, you felt bad and I couldn't tell you about the treasures.

The old man's eyes squints left and right.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

OK, father, what do you want to ask?

Veronica starts with saying Alphabet

VERONICA (CONT'D)

(singing?)

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I

Old man squints to the right. Veronica puts the card "I" on the table and continues again

VERONICA (CONT'D)

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L,
M

Father squints to the right. Veronica takes letter "L" and controls father's eyes. He squints to the left.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Sorry, I was too fast. May be "K"?

Father squints left.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
OK, then "K"?

Father squints to the right.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L,
M, N?

Father squints to the right. Veronica tries to guess

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I Know ?

Father squints to the left

VERONICA (CONT'D)
I knew?

Father squints to the right.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Father I try to guess- did you know
about hidden treasures in my
office?

Father squints to the right.

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Oh my God. And you did not use it
for yourself and even did not tell
to me and my mother? Why? Look I am
almost fifty and I never had enough
money for myself, for my family and
even for your health. Father, why?

She starts the alphabet again

VERONICA (CONT'D)
A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I

The new sentence is born: "It is Charon's of Vilna treasures"

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Father, how did you get the
treasures? A, B, C, D. Beat.

New sentence: "I am the SS Officer"

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Suddenly somebody knocks the door and nurse enters with an old man.

NURSE

Sorry, your father ordered his lawyer to bring the testament.

A lawyer enters the room and greets.

VILNIUS LAWYER

My client, your father left me his testament 20 years ago, when his health started worsening and he became left side paralysed. I want to be sure he wants to announce his testament to you now.

VERONICA

OK, please, you know how to communicate with him.

VILNIUS LAWYER

Mr. Vilhelm, please confirm by a squint of your eyes to the right that you order me to announce your testament to your daughter Veronica

Father squints to the right.

VILNIUS LAWYER (CONT'D)

Do you want me to open both the envelopes?

(he shows both things to the father and to Veronica)

Father again squints to the right.

Lawyer opens envelope with handy written pages of the testament.

VILNIUS LAWYER (CONT'D)

OK, please listen father and daughter. I am reading.

Testament, Vilnius, May 28, 1990.

I, Vilhelm Kiela, leave all my property to the only daughter Veronica Katine, maiden name Kiele and asks her to use everything with responsibility and according the conscience.

I was born in Koningsberg, Germany in 1915. My real name is Vilhelm Draht, native German. I graduated from Emanuel Kant University in Konigsberg in 1938. I became a National socialist (NAZI) party member in 1933 at age of 18 and believed in Nazi ideals with all my heart.

VILNIUS LAWYER stops as Veronica takes the glass of water.

VILNIUS LAWYER (CONT'D)

I continue reading
When war started I became an SS
Officer and was dedicated to
special section.

I received a special order to
interrogate Vilna University
ancient Greek and Latin professor
Vytas Radvila, called Charon of
Vilna. Probably due to relation to
ancient Greek mythology or with
relation to medieval Jewish
philosopher Vilna Gaon.

He was from Lithuanian- Polish
family, his wife was Jewish, but
dead in her youth. Charon had not
children. His brother was Catholic
priest, deported to Soviet Union
and died in concentration camp.

We have received information that
two hundred rich Jewish families
gave their treasures to respectable
pro-Jewish professor for
safekeeping.

SS arrested him, we tortured him,
but his health was weak and we
stopped physical tortures and tried
to break him psychologically.

FADE TO:

EXT. PONARY - DAY. 1943.

Charon is forced to watch execution of Jewish families.

After about one hundred Jews had been shot, other Jews had to
sprinkle sand over their bodies. After the entire group had
been executed the Lithuanian firing-squad put their rifles to
one side.

SS Officer Vilhelm takes an opportunity to talk to one of
them.

SS OFFICER

Could you really do such a thing
just like that, the Jews had done
nothing to you?

SOLDIER 1

Yes - after what we've gone through under the domination of Russian Jewish Commissars, after the Russians invaded Lithuania, we no longer find it difficult.' I had been suspected of spying by the Russians. I had been arrested and had been thrown in and out of various NKVD prisons, although I was in no way guilty.

I had only been a lorry-driver and had never harmed a soul. One of the methods they used to make me confess was to tear out my fingernails.

SS Officer VILHELM stops listening and next victim group approach.

Ghetto commandant itself chooses a young naked Jewish woman in the row. Vilhelm recognizes the girl he bought food from the cafe when she fell down from starvation.

GHETTO COMMANDANT

So beautiful and young woman can not die. Please take your clothes from the heap and go from here (and he shows a path in the forest)

The Jewish girl in hurry takes on the clothes and runs the path. Ghetto Commandant takes a revolver and shoots her to the head from 20 meters. Soldiers laugh.

SS Officer starts to feel sick: he vomits and drinks water, unbuttons his shirt for better breathing. But he can't to avoid watching the massacre himself.

Again ten naked victims stand at the pit. They look to the Charon sitting on the stool. Charon looks how SILHOUETTE OF MIRIAM APPROACHES THE VICTIMS.

MIRIAM

(speaks to Charon about every of ten victims)
Do you remember: Daniel is a railway engineer, Jacob is an woodworker, Avram is a banker. Their families already gone. Take them to another shore, my FERRYMAN.

Charon watches strait towards them and smiles a little. Victims smiles back to him sadly. They feel encouraged.

Shooting

After the about three hundred man and women are killed driver brings SS Officer and Charon back by car. SS Officer looks badly sick, he drinks vodka taken from one of local killers.

CHARON

You do not feel good Mr. Vilhelm?
Do not drink this local samogon

SS OFFICER

I feel not good for such a job. But we both can't avoid it. We will go here every day until the last Jew. Beat.

CHARON

I am not afraid of death or seeing dead. As you know, I am Charon- the ferryman of the dead. Beat. You could finish everything now: just shoot me on attempt to run.
(and he smiles sadly)

MIRIAM

(appearing in the back seat near the Charon)
You both are the ferrymen of the dead now.

SS OFFICER

Who is here , a woman? Uh, too much vodka. I will perform my duty to my nation. (Stock: but not to my ex-Fuhrer)

INT. LUKISHKES PRISON - DAY.

SS Officer Vilhelm comes to Charon's cell with the bottle of vodka. He offers a drink to professor, but Charon refuses.

SS OFFICER

Professor, we see each other probably the last week. Ghetto is almost liquidated. I wrote a rapport, that I am not able get your secret and I asked to be sent to the Eastern Front. Let God forgive us for everything. You will be shot dead together with last Ghetto Jews soon. I can't help you.

MIRIAM

(her silhouette appears below the cell window)
Mr. Vilhelm, you have changed.

CHARON

I see you have changed.

SS OFFICER

Again that woman? I see her in my dreams every night. She keeps talking me that I am a ferryman. Beat. Too much vodka. Beat. You can keep your secret until the death. I do not want to see or touch bloody treasures. I do not want to live after what we transferred so many soles to the world of the dead together with you in Ponary. They will continue until the last Jew. I am not able to be a ferryman of the dead.

CHARON

You say "they"?

SS OFFICER

The only thing is left for me- a responsibility to protect my country, my people. So I go to the front to clean myself with my blood.

CHARON

I have a last will.

SS OFFICER

You can trust me.

CHARON

Something can help you to survive and not to loose confidence in people. Give me a pen and a paper, please.

SS Officer takes a pen from a pocket and gives a piece of paper. He takes a second sip from the bottle.

Charon writes an address and something else.

CHARON (CONT'D)

Here is what did you seek all this time, the address. You will find everything in the double wall of the last room. Copper bricks with gold inside. Ask for the book of names of Jewish families and their short testaments at Vilna Lutheran Church Bishop.

SILHOUETTE OF MIRIAM FLOATAGES IN THE CELL.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL- DAY. 2010.

VILNIUS LAWYER continues reading the testament

VILNIUS LAWYER

I took the paper from Charon and found the address the same evening- it was Ancient Greek language Chair apartments at Vilnius University. With the help of a few SS soldiers I moved University staff to commit a search. I stayed there for a night and found copper bricks. I did not touch them.

I have put Charon's sheet of paper inside the first copper brick.

I went to the Eastern Front. Charon was executed in Ponary in 1943 when Ghetto was liquidated.

I become a POW of Soviets and spent 10 years in several Kazakhstan camps after the war.

Later I met Lithuanian woman from deported Lithuanian family. I took her surname after marriage and we succeeded to move to Vilnius.

In 1990 I was happy my daughter graduated from Vilnius University and was left to work in the Chair of Ancient Latin and Greek languages. I was able to visit her often there and took Charon's testament from the brick. I never touched the gold. This is my story. Beat.

VILNIUS LAWYER finishes reading and looks at Veronica and Vilhelm. Then he takes an old sheet of paper from the envelope and reads

VILNIUS LAWYER (CONT'D)

Me, Vytas Radvila, named as Charon of VILNA, transfer responsibility of safekeeping treasures of 200 Vilna Jews families, to the honest German man Vilhelm Draht. Address is the last room of the Chair of Classical Languages of Vilna University. The book with description of their property is hidden at Vilna Lutheran Church Bishop.

(MORE)

VILNIUS LAWYER (CONT'D)

I transfer the name of Charon of Vilna, the FERRYMAN OF THE DEAD VILNA JEWS to Mr. Vilhelm Draht as well.

The new Charon of Vilna is obliged to fullfil the obligations confirmed by my signature at the book of Vilna Jews and, beat, to survive the war. Beat.

Charon of Vilna, Signature. Beat. Vilna, September 25, 1943.

FADE OUT.

INT. NEW YORK HOTEL - AFTERNOON

Veronica and Jonas meet Lina and Mark. Aaron and Masha as well. Lina doesn't look angry on her parents.

JONAS

So, you know about Charon's testament and about his inheritor's, my father's in law testament too. Our lawyer Grisha cannot come today, he is preparing his speech in tomorrow's court. Until now inherits presented proof for about a half of treasures to be returned to them.

VERONICA

I am happy at least to be poor and get rid of all these treasures and 70 years old problems.

LINA

I can't even touch these bloody treasures but I am happy to embrace my parents again.

AARON

My young friends. The truth is triumphing. I think the court will leave a part of treasures to you. Jewish community will be happy to buy your part from you. You do not need to touch it.

There is no Jewish blood on these treasures. When I touch my uncle's necklaces I remember him, I speak to him. Your father, Veronica, succeeded to keep them clean until now. And according to his testament you are THE FERRYMAN, THE FERRYWOMAN OF VILNA JEWS NOW.

(MORE)

AARON (CONT'D)

It is your destiny. Make a right decision tomorrow at the court.
Beat.

INT.NEW YORK COURT - DAY

THE JUDGE

Prosecutors presented the evidence of so called Charon's treasures belong to them by law.

GRISHA

Your honour, I have the last witness from Russia, Holocaust survived Moyshe'S GRANDSON (50), the relative of NKVD OFFICER we met in this story.

MOYSHE'S GRANDSON

My uncle, the NKVD OFFICER, was in charge about this all gold story. Russian authorities agreed to open war archives regarding Charon of VILNA interrogation by NKVD in 1941. Here is famous confiscated, we call, The Book of Vilna, with the Jewish names and their jewelry they left for safekeeping to so called Charon of Vilna.

NKVD succeeded to find the book, but did not succeed to find the gold. Beat.

THE JUDGE

How could your parents survived?

MOYSHE'S GRANDSON

My father could survive Holocaust because my grandfather Moyshe took back his jewelry from Charon. He paid everything to a Lithuanian family to hide my father and his sister in their house in the village. Two other brothers and a sister died in Ghetto because Lithuanian family agreed to risk for and to hide only two Jewish kids. Gold was not enough for all kids to hide. Beat.

Here is the Book of Vilna and its translation from Yiddish.

THE JUDGE

(takes the book. V.O.
reads The Book of Vilna
in the same voice as in
the Opening Scene 1)

Let me read the translation:
The testament of 200 Jew families
from Vilna, Lithuania. We, as
signed below leave for saving for
70 years period. Beat.

Noise in the court. Nobody can hear the last sentence of the
judge.

THE JUDGE (CONT'D)

Silence. I continue

Beat. Our jewelry to Charon of
VILNA. Beat. 10% is a fee we agree
to pay to Mr. Charon.
In case none of inherits of Vilna
Jews claim for their property
during seventy beat (silence in
the court) years, the property
remains to it's keeper, Charon of
Vilna.

Aaron and Veronica looks at each other. Beat.

EXT. JEWISH CEMETERY NEW YORK - DAY

Mark and Aaron walking.

MARK

Grandpa, neither you, neither other
inheritors of the Vilna treasures
did not informed the court about 70
years limit already passed. If they
wouldn't find the book this
condition to be unknown?

AARON

My dear Mark, man is not perfect.
At least in any case, what Veronica
would decide, treasures return back
to us. Understand? Due to you.
Everything the best has to belong
to me and my folks. And if it be
not given us, then do we take it by
ourselves. Beat.

AARON (ALTERNATIVE) (CONT'D)

The best

belongeth unto mine and me; and if

it be not given us, then
(MORE)

AARON (ALTERNATIVE) (CONT'D)

do we take it:- the best food, the
purest sky, the strongest thoughts,
the fairest women!"-

TRUE END