



C H A P T E R F O U R



Back in Rego Park. Late Autumn ...





IT WAS THE LAST MINUTES OF THE WAR, I LEFT DACHAU...



I REMEMBER WE GOT EACH A TREASURE BOX FROM THE SWISS RED CROSS: SARDINES! BISCUITS! CHOCOLATE!



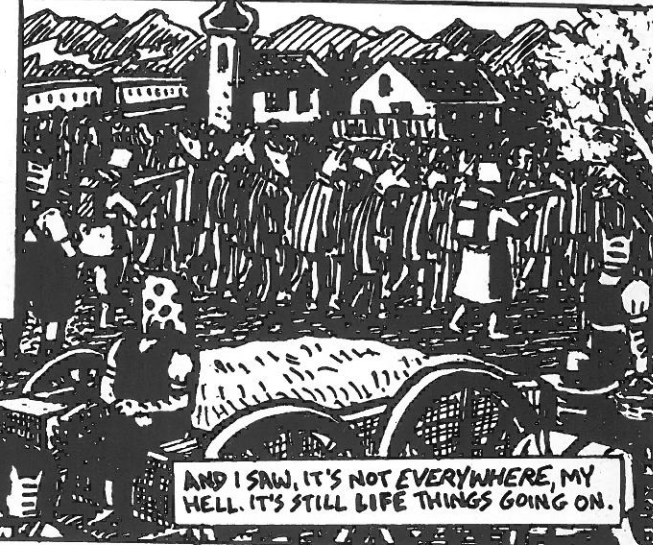
SO, AT NIGHT, SOME TRIED TO STEAL FROM ME...



WITH MY TYPHUS I NEEDED STILL MUCH TO REST, BUT THIS TREASURE WAS MORE TO ME THAN SLEEPING.



WE HAD FROM HERE TO GO BY FOOT TO THE FRONTIER...



WE MARCH. WE STOP. FOR HOURS WE STOOD.

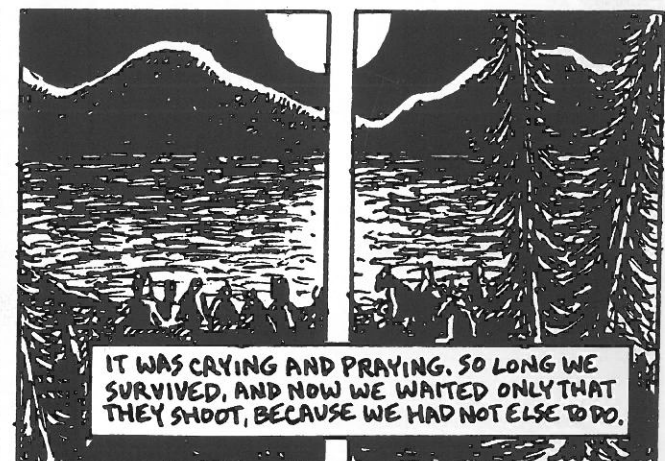
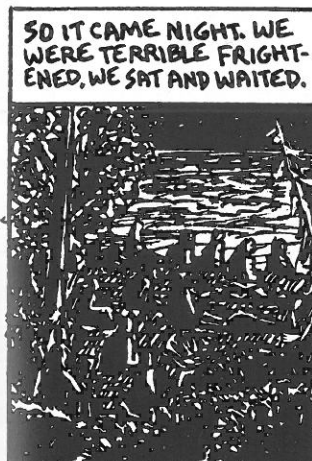
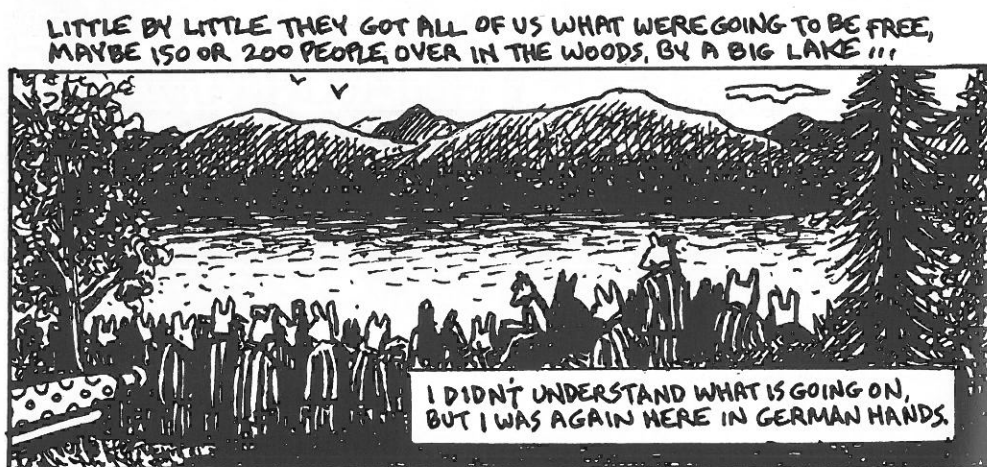


IT WAS COMMOTIONS AND RUMORS THEN SHOUTS:



THEY DIDN'T LEAVE US GO, BUT PUT US TO A FREIGHT TRAIN.





IN THE EARLY MORNING  
WE WERE STILL ALL ALIVE.



THEY'RE GONE!

IT'S A MIRACLE!  
THERE'S NOT ONE  
GERMAN LEFT—  
JUST THEIR GUNS!

WHAT  
HAP-  
PENED?

I WAS LYING NEAR THE  
HEAD OFFICER'S TENT—  
HIS GIRLFRIEND WAS  
ARGUING WITH HIM...



SHE BEGGED HIM TO LET US GO. SHE  
WARNED HIM HE'D BE PUNISHED.



"THE WAR IS OVER," SHE CRIED.  
"LET'S RUN AWAY!" SHE SAVED US!



SOME, WE WENT ONE WAY, SOME ANOTHER.

MAYBE WE CAN GET FOOD  
AT ONE OF THESE FARMS.



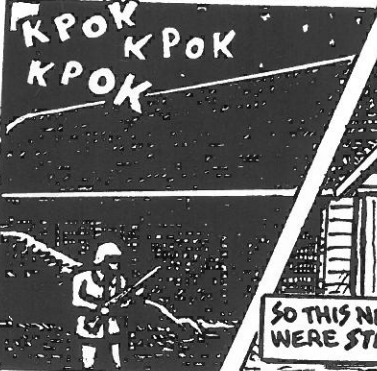
HALT!

ON THE ROAD WAS  
ANOTHER PATROL,  
ALSO CATCHING JEWS.



SO WE HAD AGAIN THE SAME STORY. THEY FOUND  
40 OR 50 OF US, AND CLOSED US TO A BIG BARN.

WE HEARD ALL NIGHT SHOOTING  
IN THE MOUNTAINS AROUND...



KPOK  
KPOK  
KPOK

OUR GUARDS—  
THEY ALL  
RAN AWAY!

SO THIS NEXT MORNING WE  
WERE STILL AGAIN ALIVE!

COME, SHIVEK. LET'S  
FIND A BUNKER UNTIL  
THINGS QUIET DOWN.



WE CAME BY A GARAGE. SO I WENT OVER...

PLEASE, SIR. WE NEED  
A PLACE TO HIDE 'TIL THE  
AMERICANS GET HERE.



GO AWAY!  
I DON'T  
WANT TO  
GET IN-  
VOLVED!

HAVE PITY.  
IT'S JUST  
FOR A DAY  
OR TWO!...

WELL...THERE'S A PIT IN  
THE BACK. IT'S NONE OF  
MY BUSINESS IF YOU  
WANT TO LIE IN IT!



OVER A DAY WE LAY THERE.  
THEN TWO WEHRMACHT CAME.

HEY! WHICH WAY  
IS INNSBRUCK?

THAT WAY,  
OFFICER.



BUT WAIT—TWO JEWS  
ARE BACK THERE,  
HIDING IN A PIT!



THEY WERE IN SO BIG  
A HURRY TO RUN, THEY  
DIDN'T EVEN LOOK TO US.



A PART OF THIS HOUSE, IT WAS A BARN.



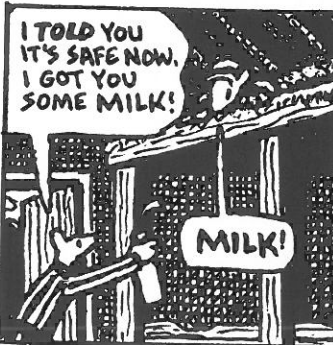
FROM THE WALLS WE HEARD SHOUTING:



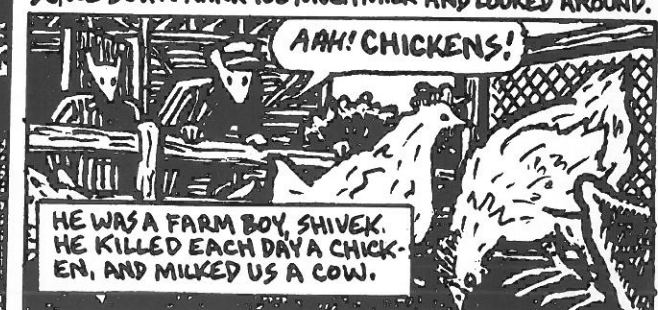
THE FAR SIDE FROM OUR BARN FELL DOWN A LITTLE.



I WENT MYSELF TO THE EMPTY HOUSE.



SO, WE BOTH DRANK TOO MUCH MILK AND LOOKED AROUND.



OUR STOMACH GOT A SHOCK TO EAT MILK AND CHICKENS. WE GOT VERY SICK OF DIARRHEA.

I TOLD EVERYTHING HOW WE SURVIVED TO HERE...

...AND FROM DACHAU WE CAME OVER BY TRAIN TO-

THAT'S JUST MY MEN SIGNALING THAT THEY FOUND A CACHE OF GERMAN AMMO...

THOSE KRAUTS CAN'T HURT YOU ANYMORE. THE ONLY ONES LEFT ARE DEAD OR DYING.

BANG! BANG!

THIS HOUSE WILL BE PART OF OUR BASE CAMP...

BUT I GUESS YOU BOYS CAN STAY IF YOU KEEP THE JOINT CLEAN AND MAKE OUR BEDS.

WANT SOME CHOCOLATE?

M-MAYBE FOR LATER. THANK YOU.

SO WE WORKED FOR THE AMERICANS AND THEY LIKED ME THAT I CAN SPEAK ENGLISH.

THANKS FOR THE SHINE, WILLIE.

IT'S O.KAY, SERGEANT. DON'T EVEN MENTION.

THEY GAVE TO US FOOD CANS AND GIFTS AND CALLED TO ME "WILLIE."

ONE TIME IT CAME A WOMAN WITH OFFICIALS TO THE HOUSE.

ARREST THOSE TWO JEWISH THIEVES!

THEY STOLE MY HUSBAND'S CLOTHES!

WE NEVER LOOKED ON WHAT CLOTHES WE TOOK!

ROB-BERS!

YOU'LL HAVE TO GIVE 'EM BACK, WILLIE.

"SO, LET HER TAKE," I TOLD. "WE HAVE STILL 3 FULL VALISES!"

ACH! LOOK ON THE TIME! WE HAVE TO HURRY NOW WITH MY WINDOWS.

BUT, BEFORE I FORGET- I PUT HERE A BOX WHAT YOU'LL BE HAPPY TO SEE.

I THOUGHT I LOST IT, BUT YOU SEE HOW I SAVED!

MOM'S DIARIES?!

NO, NO! ON THOSE IT'S NO MORE TO SPEAK. THOSE IT'S GONE, FINISHED!

BUT, BELOW MY CLOSET I FIND THESE SNAPSHOTS, SOME STILL FROM POLAND.

COME. YOU'LL LOOK AFTER THE WINDOWS!

IS THIS UNCLE HERMAN?

THANKS.



YAH. HE WAS ANJA'S OLDEST BROTHER. HE RAN, IN LODZ, THE FAMILY HOSIERY FACTORY.



IN 1939 HE AND HELA CAME TO SEE THE WORLD FAIR, AND STAYED HERE THE WAR. IN 1950-YOU WERE A BABY-WE CAME ALSO HERE, FROM STOCKHOLM TO HIS HOUSE.



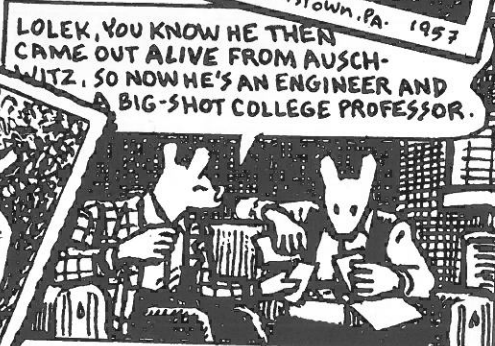
I LIKED BETTER TO STAY IN SWEDEN-I HAD AGAIN A GOOD BUSINESS-BUT ANJA INSISTED TO BE WITH THE ONLY SURVIVING ONE OF ALL HER FAMILY.



AND -OY-WHEN HERMAN DIED FROM A HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER IN 1964, ANJA STARTED THE ALSO TO DIE A LITTLE.



SO HERE IT'S THEIR TWO KIDS, LOLEK AND LONIA, WHAT STAYED BY US, IN SOSNOWIEC, IN THE WAR.



LOLEK, YOU KNOW HE THEN CAME OUT ALIVE FROM AUSCHWITZ. SO NOW HE'S AN ENGINEER AND A BIG-SHOT COLLEGE PROFESSOR.



THE LITTLE GIRL, SHE FINISHED WITH RICHIEU IN THE GHETTO.



THIS BROTHER OF ANJA, JOSEF, HE WAS A SIGN PAINTER, A COMMERCIAL ARTIST, ALWAYS SHE SAID YOU RESEMBLE.



HE HAD, IN LODZ, A GIRLFRIEND-A BEAUTY-BUT SHE LIKED MONEY AND NIGHTCLUBS. THEN THE GERMANS TOOK AWAY THE FACTORY FROM ANJA'S FAMILY.



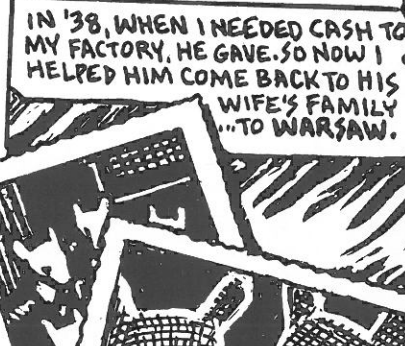
SO HE HAD LESS MONEY AND SHE LEFT HIM, AND HE KILLED HIMSELF.



THE MIDDLE BROTHER, LEVEK, HE RAN WITH HIS WIFE TO RUSSIA WHEN THE WAR CAME, BUT WHEN HE SAW HOW IT WAS THERE, HE WANTED TO RUN BACK.



THOSE WHO RAN TO RUSSIA, THEY PUT TO SIBERIA AS TRAITORS, BUT TO SMUGGLE BACK OVER THE BORDERS COST A FORTUNE. I SENT SOME MONEY...



IN '38, WHEN I NEEDED CASH TO MY FACTORY, HE GAVE. SO NOW I HELPED HIM COME BACK TO HIS WIFE'S FAMILY... TO WARSAW.



Levek. Sosnowiec '21



IN WARSAW, YOU KNOW HOW IT WAS. IF THEY STAYED ONLY IN RUSSIA, THEY STILL NOW COULD MAYBE BE ALIVE.

ANJA'S PARENTS, THE GRANDPARENTS, HER BIG SISTER TOSHA, LITTLE BIBI AND OUR RICHIEU... ALL WHAT IS LEFT, IT'S THE PHOTOS.



"I LIVE... MY FATHER, AND FELA, AND HER 4 KIDS, I TOLD YOU GOT TAKEN IN '42."



"WITH ME INTO THE GHETTO BEFORE THEY ALL DIED LATER TO AUSCHWITZ."



MARCUS, MY CLOSEST BROTHER, AND MOSES, WENT TO A CAMP, TO BLECHAMER, SOON AFTER I CAME OUT FROM THE ARMY.

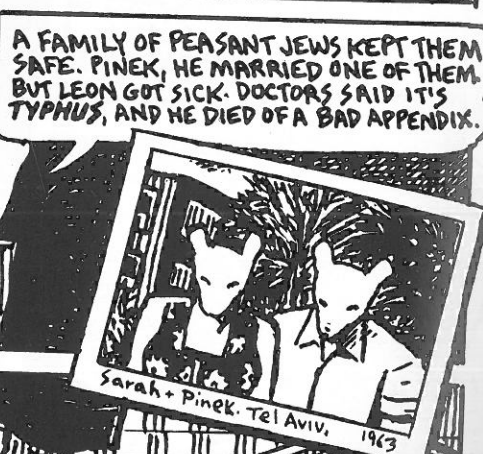
I SENT THEM MONEY BY THE RED CROSS... I HID IT INTO BREAD.



I WROTE THEM: "THIS BREAD, IT'S EXPENSIVE. EAT IT VERY SLOW AND CAREFUL." I MET AFTER THE WAR A GUY, HE SAW THEM DIE, BUT WOULDN'T TELL ME HOW.



MY OTHER BROTHERS, LEON AND PINEK, THEY DESERTED OUT FROM THE POLISH ARMY TO LEMBERG, IN RUSSIA...



A FAMILY OF PEASANT JEWS KEPT THEM SAFE. PINEK, HE MARRIED ONE OF THEM. BUT LEON GOT SICK. DOCTORS SAID IT'S TYPHUS, AND HE DIED OF A BAD APPENDIX.



SO ONLY MY LITTLE BROTHER, PINEK, CAME OUT FROM THE WAR ALIVE... FROM THE REST OF MY FAMILY, IT'S NOTHING LEFT, NOT EVEN A SNAPSHOT.



"WE GAVE HER OUR VALUABLE THINGS TO HOLD UNTIL THE WAR IS OVER."



"WE DIDN'T BELIEVE, BUT THE PICTURES AT LEAST, SHE GAVE BACK."



CAN I TAKE THESE HOME? YAH. IT'S FOR YOU. BUT, WAIT- I'LL PUT THEM TO AN ENVELOPE...



THE CIGAR BOX I CAN NEED FOR- AKKH!



WHOO- YOU SEE! MY NITRO-STAT HELPS ME RIGHT AWAY. BUT I TALKED TOO MUCH. I'LL LIE A LITTLE DOWN.



UM-WHAT ABOUT THE STORM WINDOWS? ALONE YOU CAN'T KNOW HOW TO DO, AND I'M NOW TOO TIRED FOR THIS. MAYBE TOMORROW WE'LL DO.



IMPOSSIBLE. I'M TOO BUSY! I'LL COME OUT AGAIN NEXT WEEK. ACH. THEN NOW WE MUST DO IT. I'LL-UNNF



GREAT- HAVE ANOTHER HEART ATTACK! LOOK, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO PAY A BIT MORE FOR HEAT A FEW DAYS LONGER. GROAN.



I'M -UH- SORRY I MADE YOU TALK SO MUCH, POP. SO, NEVER MIND, DARLING. ALWAYS IT'S A PLEASURE WHEN YOU VISIT.



WHAT ABOUT YOUR SIDE OF THE FAMILY?

MY SIDE?... MY FATHER, AND FELA, AND HER 4 KIDS, I TOLD YOU GOT TAKEN IN '42.



ZOSHA AND YADJA, MY YOUNGER SISTERS, HAD ONLY 1 KID EACH, AND CAME WITH ME INTO THE GHETTO BEFORE THEY ALL DIED LATER TO AUSCHWITZ.



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THESE PHOTOS WE GOT FROM RICHIEU'S POLISH GOVERNESS.

WE GAVE HER OUR VALUABLE THINGS TO HOLD UNTIL THE WAR IS OVER.



BUT AFTERWARD SHE SAID, "ALL THESE VALUABLES, THE NAZIS GRABBED AWAY."

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