

Nowhere to Run

Another boring day at school had gone by, Michael hated school. He wanted to explore, not to be stuck in a classroom learning maths or punctuation that didn't make sense. That was his view of school, but other classmates teased him when he got a low score in tests, it seemed anything he got wrong needed mocking.

Michael's sore feet plodded along the cobblestone road that was lined with houses and shops, shoemakers, florists, markets and patisseries, way too many to count. Though he was thinking of the lorries that had been passing through the town. For many months now he had been asking himself: What were they? Where were they going? Just then, coincidentally, one of them came flying round the corner and down the winding road, and at that exact moment one soldier shouted, "There's one, on the corner, quick!" and the driver drove violently towards where Michael was standing.

He ran but they caught up. Soldiers jumped from the lorry and seized Michael by his collar then threw him into the truck. He was stone cold with fear. Inside the lorry it was midnight, even though it was bright quiet day outside; inside it was still as black as the darkest pupil in an eye. There was no-one else in the lorry, just him with an awful, aching pain in his arm where he had been tossed inside. Then, all too quickly he felt queasy all round his stomach it was a strange and queer feeling; then, everything went black.

What felt like days later, Michael woke. He was not in the dark lorry now, but in a dark stone room with leaks in the ceiling; some water dripped down onto the back of his neck, it sent a shiver running down his spine. In a sudden move, an ancient door he had not been attentive enough to notice opened. Sunlight streamed through, past a tall man, leaving a dark shadow. He was carrying a huge pair of scissors. "Sit," was all he said, pointing to a deserted chair in a dark corner. The chair looked so disintegrated it could fall in on itself.

Michael was so frightened that he was obedient. When he looked away, the man quickly took out his scissors and cut his hair until he had none left. Michael cried out and tried to wriggle away but the man gagged him and pulled it tight so he could barely breathe and couldn't voice his own words. Not soon after Michael was a different person altogether. The unidentified

man then gave him a combination of striped clothes and the Star of David. He signalled with a grunt and some hand actions for Michael to dress in them.

A couple of minutes later, Michael stepped out from the old crooked doorway, towards a miserable life ahead, he knew in an instant he was not the only one there.

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Hyacinth was lost. She had long blonde hair and ocean blue eyes. She couldn't find her father; he had gone to work and left a note to say where he had gone so she followed his usual path, but now she was lost.

A couple of minutes later she saw barbed wire and broken fence poles that had half collapsed into the earth. She followed the extensive path of bits and pieces which led her to a clearing. A clearing that twisted and turned her mind inside out.

Deep hollow eyes stared into hers. Empathy for their hollowness and thinness crawled up her spine; they were hardly alive. Their pleading ensnared her thoughts into her head and turned them into thoughts of sorrow. Michael called out for food, and others joined in. Hyacinth had bread buns in her small rucksack so she broke off bits for them to share between them.

After that she came everyday with clean water, food and blankets for warmth. She knitted woolly socks and hats for them, and taught them their spellings, learnt their names and they learnt their manners. Hyacinth promised she would keep them alive if no-one else did.

Meanwhile another soldier saw Hyacinth tending to the other children. When she was leaving, the soldier seized her and gave her words she would never forget: "You carry on like this and the punishment will scar you forever, be warned you won't expect what's coming." She couldn't even think of the punishment, it sounded so bad, but she had to keep her promise. She couldn't let her friends down.

The next morning, Hyacinth realised her father was gone again; no note like last time. Where he went she would never know. In her village it was silent. It seemed like the excitement had finally died down into sadness. However where her father really was, was where he would be taking in his last air.

He was in a gas chamber.

She knew the other soldier had told their leader and now the punishment was slicing and had yet to scar. The silence in the house was extremely unnerving; so much so it filled Hyacinth's eyes and soul with tears. All that was left was his uniform. She was immediately concerned about the punishment for the children that had done nothing wrong but were sure to be punished. She couldn't let that happen. She ran to the concentration camp.

She ran through the village, past an old bomb crater, past a torn Nazi flag and to the camp. The guard who had given her the harsh words was there, watching, waiting, like a fishing line reeling in his catch. She was unlucky; she ran into him.

All too quickly, the guard clasped her arm and threw her into an open truck. Michael was watching. He ran towards the electric barbed wire and climbed through the largest gap. He was a small child but still cut himself deeply on the back of his legs. The truck was setting off and he sprinted after it. Hyacinth grabbed his hand and, for a moment, time stopped. Michael looked into Hyacinth's ocean blue eyes and she stared into his bloodshot green ones. They both knew it was the end of their fairy tale. There was nowhere to run.

Time resumed its beating pace. Michael was still holding Hyacinth's hand and then, 'BANG!' Michael felt shock, along with pain, sprint around his body; he felt shivers and an uncomfortable feeling. Blood seeped down his chest and tears pricked Hyacinth's eyes. He was dying.

He dropped. Down and down to the floor. Hyacinth kept her grasp on his withered hand and the weight of his dead body pulled her downwards, under the truck. She was run over. Gone forever.

Some months later, the war ended. No one had found the two children. Their bodies still lay, only bones by then, showing broken ribs and fractured wrists. Their remains of their bony fingers were still clasped around each other's wrists, never wanting to let go.

Alice Pilott