

Elena Fishtik
SARA

Laws are keeping silence during the war



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**SARA. Laws are keeping
silence during the war**

«Издательские решения»

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The novel “SARA” is about the harsh fate of a young girl Sara, who’s in her sixteen has overcome a hell a way of three concentration camps during the Second World War, the 1939—1945 and she survived miraculously. At the Bergen-Belsen camp, the fate of Sara crossed the fate of Anna Frank, who died of typhus. The novel is written by the stories of Stephanie Helbling that are complemented by the creative fiction of the author.

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SARA

Laws are keeping silence during the war

Elena Fishtik

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The novel SARA

The novel “SARA” is about the harsh fate of a young girl Sara, who’s in her sixteen has overcome a hell a way of three concentration camps during the Second World War, the 1939—1945, and she survived miraculously.

At the Bergen-Belsen camp, the fate of Sara crossed the fate of Anna Frank, who died of typhus, but after the publication of her diary posthumously, she became a symbol of all the Jews who were killed during the Second World War.

The novel is written by the stories of Stephanie Helbling that are complemented by the creative fiction of the author.

“The war has brought so much grief to mankind that we even shudder when listening to the stories of eyewitnesses, though we are the generation who did not know the war.

And it doesn’t matter how much it was written about this horrible crime, it is necessary to continue to write, to create the movies, to pass this memory to our children. For the Peace! For the Love.

Thanks for the translation of the novel Christina Barkane”

E. Fishtik – the composer, the member of the Union of Composers of the Russian Federation and the European Composers’ Association

She was awarded the medal “For the works in education, culture, art and literature”

Laws are keeping silence during the war

Lukan

The novel “Sara” is about the harsh destiny of a young girl Sara who’s in her sixteen has gone through the hellish way of three concentration camps during the Second world war of 1939—1945 and she survived miraculously.

In the third camp Bergen-Belzen Sara’s fate crossed the fate of Anna Frank who was not so lucky as Sara and she died of typhus, but after her diary was published posthumously she became the symbol of all Jewish people who were killed during the Second world war.

The novel is written by the stories of Stefani Helbling, she is the main character, and also as a result of studying of many historical materials that are added by the creative fantasies of the author.

It is devoted to Stefani Helbling, my parents Fishtik Nina Afanasievna and Vladimir Aleksandrovich who were born the day before the Second world war and went through the hunger and cold, fear and horror that followed them during all these terrible years.

The novel is also devoted to my grandmothers Maria and Elena, grandfathers Afanasiy and Alexandr who went through this awful way and kept the honor and dignity while saving their children, and to all humanity.

The deepest truth is the outcome of the deepest love

Heine

July 2013

By the will of circumstances, I turned out to be in Florida.

Though I was going to take this trip a little bit later as my sister Nata lives here with her family.

I try to visit them more often though I live quite a long way – in Moscow.

The morning sun warms gently my shoulders, the ocean caresses my legs with tender, wave after wave is in a hurry to meet me as we are always glad to each other, I like communicating with the ocean and keeping silence, I like wandering along the white sand of the perfect coast that is a huge and powerful living essence, I like dreaming with it together.

When I'll be sad the ocean is sure to cheer me up and give me a calm.

It seems that it knows everything about me, it feels everything and I feel so good near it!

Today I'm roaming along the coast and I'm thinking about the writing of the book about the loyalty and love.

I've taken a decision to write this book a long time ago but as it often happens we get down to business only when we are finally mature or when the circumstances rouse us to it.

In my case both are together.

The story I'm going to tell you about is very difficult to think of, it's not an imaginary story though there is quite a lot of my imagination as it tends to be in any novel.

An elderly but elegant miss Stefania is sitting in front of me.

She has been living in Florida for a long time. She moved here after her sons from her lovely New York.

Stefania is a graceful woman of old age, she's always dressed tastefully, on the brink of styles – between discreet classic and eccentric.

It is always pleasant to look at her gestures and the manner of communication.

It is incredible and striking ability to be perfect like a queen and at the same time to be sincere and ordinary. It captivated me a long time ago, we had been known each other for many years but I never ceased to admire her and to be interested of her.

She is exactly a person the books are mostly written about.

About their life experience, about the difficulties and misfortunes, about the losses and winnings, about beautiful and eternal love, about the inner and external beauty.

It must be said that this story began a long time ago, immediately after meeting Stefania.

At that time, I was just a detached listener, Stefania was creating a picture of her life to my mother Nina – they have very affectionate and sincere relationships.

During this my visit to Florida Stefania agreed to meet me with pleasure for discussing my future book, she is ready to tell the whole world a story about the great love which she carried through over ordeals and she is still doesn't lose it.

Her face got tense and she consigned to memories.

I am watching her graceful gestures and listening very attentively to the story of ninety years old woman.

Oh, it is need to be mentioned about our meeting.

We are relatives to some extent.

Stefania is Mark's Mum, Mark is my sister's Natalia husband.

Perhaps it's enough for the preface.

“On the Brink of Disaster”

Stefania's memories carried her away to the distant forties of the twentieth century that were the most terrible and at the same time the most significant years for her.

At that time her name was Sara Averbah and she was only sixteen.

SARA

Chapter 1

“God exists as HE is essential”

Spinoza.

– Sara, let’s go quickly, the ship won’t wait for us.

– I’m almost ready, Mum. And where is Boris?

– The brother is taking out things to the porch, be quick, please.

Sara ran out from her room with the signs of tears on her eyes.

She tried to hide them but nothing could be hidden from mother.

– Ow, ouch – Emma threw out her hands.

– I don’t want to go to Poland, Mum. But why it was Borka who was sent to L’vov to work as if there were no athletes in our city, – Sara exclaimed and pouted her small lips with the sense of resentment, and then she added, – if only Mania would go with us, I’ll miss my sister so much.

– My darling, Mania has got family. You know that Mosia can’t leave his barbershop.

– Why?

– Sara, his business is going well. And indeed Moisey is “a water boy” – they won’t let him go.

– And will you miss Mania?

– I’ll miss Mania, and my grandson, my little Izia, I will miss so much, but what can I do!?

... – Emma turned away to hide her tears.

– Mother, calm down, Sara was asking crying and hugging mother’s waist.

– My dear daughter, don’t cry, everything will be good, you need to understand if the party sent Boris then he is needed there and his skills are needed, and you will love L’vov like you love your native city Zaporozhye.

– You’ll meet new friends, – Emma clasped the daughter with care and stroked her splendid wavy hair.

Silk locks of hair were spreading over shoulders of a young and incredibly pretty girl.

She was proud of her hair so much.

– And Mania has got family and she can’t go with us, – mother continued.

– Oh, I understand everything.

Right at that moment Sara recognized that her childhood was finished and she began new adult life.

She was in prospect for not only changing the city for living!

She was at hand to get to know all the polar sides of life.

Nobody could know what was waiting for him in the future.

Summer, 1940

A long way lay ahead.

The ship was going by Dnepr to Kiev.

Passengers were sitting on the floor of the hold, it was quite crowded but Boris has found some sheltered place where Sara and Mum could feel themselves more comfortable.

The young pregnant woman was lying near.

Her face was frightened, time and again she protected her big belly by hands from the scrum, it seemed that she would give birth right now.

Emma smiled to her with encouraging smile and greeted her, Sara has copied her Mum's behavior, though she felt uncomfortable.

Knapsacks, bags, kitbags, people – all was mixed, the shout, the scream of children, tears of people who were saying goodbye, loud greeting exclamations of people which met their acquaintances by chance, the moan of the old lady who was lifting on the gangway with difficulty, sailors who were finishing the last preparations for leaving, the powerful horn, and the ship is slowly going.

People are waving to their relatives from the shore and people from the ship are also waving in response, the last exhortations are heard, the picture of the shore is getting smaller and finally it is disappearing, disappearing...

The freight ship that was transporting people sometimes, finally it slowly began to go, it captivated Sara with Mum and brother Boris to something completely unknown.

And it scared the young girl.

She was afraid not only for herself but also for her brother and Mum who became a widow so early.

Very often Sara asked her mother to tell about her Dad as he died when Sara wasn't even five.

Of course, she remembered some moments when her father was playing with her with hand-made toys, when he was reading books to her, he brought these books from the printing house where he's been working for all his life and the printing house was the reason of his death, as some chemicals that were harmful for lungs formed the big cancer tumor that killed him.

Sara remembered even her questions that she asked her father:

– Father, is it true that Jesus was a Jew?

– Yes, daughter, it's true. At that time all were the Jews – it was such time, – though her father was never religious, moreover he was a strong communist.

– Father, Sioma told me, that God lives above.

– Yeah, daughter, your friend is right, God lives above, – and mentally added to himself, – and torments below.

Sara's father was the mine of information, he knew a lot of proverbs and sayings as all Jewish people knew.

They are wise in the womb.

It is said in some Jewish saying that Jewish people are born old.

When his father Isaac died Boris became the support of the family.

Since childhood he was notable for the great responsibility, accuracy and he liked to take care of others so much.

It was not necessary to ask him about the help, to force him or plead to do something, the nobility was in his blood.

The name – Boris he took for himself when he got eighteen and before his name was Ziama.

This story is also very exponential and it shows the qualities of his nature.

Ziama had his beloved cousin Boria.

They were very amicable. Boris died when he was young.

The death is very strange and mysterious.

Friends and acquaintances talked a lot about the solar eclipse.

This day came. Boris as many other people went out on the street, he spent an hour in the yard and watched the sky.

He watched the disc of the Moon that slowly hid the solar disc – this beautiful new formation enraptured him.

The sky got dark and the bright stars appeared on it.

And suddenly, around the solar disc that was hidden by the Moon, he noticed the bright solar crown.

Feelings were inexpressible.

It continued only a few minutes but it was enough for Boris.

As if he discovered something essential for himself.

As if he got to know the Great Secret.

His face was calm and unruffled.

He looked at the sky one more time, smiled and went home, lay on his bed and... died.

This mysterious death of a young and healthy boy shocked the whole family, and Ziama closed for a few days, he couldn't communicate with anyone, and when his stress has gone away he announced to everybody that in memory of his brother he would take his name.

And from that time he is Boris.

The hold of the ship was impossibly full.

People were sitting, lying and staying, yawning with boredom.

Sara's pregnant neighbor name was Maria.

She was going to Kiev to her parents for childbirth as her husband was taken to the army.

She was afraid a little bit because it was almost the time for childbirth, but it was much more awful to stay alone in Zaporozhye where there weren't any relatives at all, where there wasn't any help, and this one was her first child, she didn't know what to do and how, she hadn't any experience, that's why she made so desperate decision.

The first day of the journey was quiet.

The weather was fine. Passengers were eating and drinking, the food was not so good but still passable.

Sara spent a lot of time on the deck watching the changing pictures of the nature.

There, on the coast, thick trees that was brightly shined by the sun lights were gently swaying on the wind as if they were saying goodbye with their branches.

On the other side of the Dnepr voices of children were heard, they greeted the next vessel and immediately said him goodbye.

The night was coming: the fantastic sunset, the singing of birds, that was heard from the coasts of the Dnepr, quiet lullaby for a little girl, the smooth surface of water and shadows of trees that were reflecting in it – this all made Sara so calm, appeased her...

Day by day, night by night, the vessel was slowly going to the final destination.

It was seven and the last day of the way, it was dark and suddenly the thunder and lightning appeared in the sky and a heavy rain poured.

The vessel was so poor that it became clear immediately as water with high speed appeared in the hold, people worried, the ship was swaying from side to side because of strong wind, it was impossible to stay, and to sit on the floor was more impossible, as water appeared very fast and all things: wallets, suitcases, bags almost everything was under the water.

Everybody panicked.

People ran by the ship and nobody knew what to do.

Boris shouted to Mum and Sara:

– Go upstairs quickly.

Sara just made a step and she felt that someone seized her leg, she turned and she saw the frightened eyes of pregnant Maria, she murmured something pleading about the help.

Sara called her Mum:

– Mother, quickly, here... – Sara showed on Maria, she couldn't speak because of fear, she was shivering and her leg was in tenacious hand of Maria.

– Maria, stand up quickly, let's go upstairs, – the mother leaned forward to help but at that moment Maria screamed and she writhed in pain. It was clear for everybody – the contractions began.

– Boris, mother turned, she was looking for the son.

– I'm here. What's going on? – Boris helped an elderly people to climb on the board.

– Maria is giving birth.

Boris immediately appeared beside, with very fast and resolute movement he caught Maria and went upstairs.

All passengers were frightened because of heartbreaking scream of Maria.

Sara was shocked and she couldn't move faster, it seemed that her legs clung to stairs, people lined up behind her, pushed each other, hurried the girl, pushed her in the side and back with accusations and shouting.

The wind got stronger, the rain lashed people with a violent force, sometimes it knocked them down, sobs and wailing, the scream of children, women's crying mixed in with the thunder, and shrill, the unbearable scream of pregnant Maria.

Boris carried Maria upstairs, covered her with a sailcloth that he discovered in the fore ship, the mother settled beside, she was stroking Maria and saying to her:

– Be patient girl, everything will be good, you need to be patient.

Maria was keeping silence for some time and then she began moaning, and again it was a terrible cry.

The pain didn't give her relax for a long time.

And the rain got stronger and stronger.

The hold was almost flooded.

There is inexpressible fear in people's eyes.

Sailors are going back and forth down the vessel trying to patch holes in some way.

The frightened voices are heard:

– I can't swim!

– God, help me!

– Semyon, where in my Semyon?

– Alyosha, go here quickly, leave your bale.

– Somebody help, here is a granddad!

– Mum, Mum, I am afraid... – children are crying.

The lightning flashed menacingly across the sky, it was impetuous thunder, it seemed that the sky was burst, nobody could remember such rain in his lifetime. Old people were praying and begging for mercy.

The vessel became more and more unstable, the wind threw it from side to side, people were clinging ropes, cuts on palms from coarse rope immediately revealed themselves, many people couldn't endure the pain and let off the rope, they were immediately cast on the opposite side and they saved themselves only with the help of some miracle by clinging for everything, as the main aim was not to fall out of the side of the ship because they understood that otherwise a certain death would expect for them.

The strengths were all at the end.

Soaked to the skin, plagued to the point of exhaustion, people were ready to drop elements continued throughout the night, there was no power no beg for help, not even moan.

In an ominous buzzing mess of thunder, lightning and rain noise, people felt themselves like hostage to a raging storm, and already people were almost resigned because there was no more neither the strength nor even the idea of how to resist such attacks.

Under the morning, as a challenge to this power, the crying of a newborn child sounded loud and shrill as if claiming the human strength and endurance.

Maria lay almost breathless Boris was holding her by the shoulders during all contractions while Emma was helping delivering the baby.

Sara huddled in a corner far away, she was trembling and sobbing, her lips were bitten to the blood because of fear.

At the dawn the downpour began to recede, the thunder grew quieter and quieter.

The wind gradually died down, and people became alive, they began to move.

All people were wet and tired but extremely happy that all of this was already behind.

Emma decisively took off her jacket, staying in one combination she squeezed the water from it, and wrapped the baby, putting him on Mary's chest.

Maria hugged her little miracle, and cried with happiness.

Emma stroked her head and comforted:

– All right, I was telling you that everything would be good.

We have almost arrived and Kiev could be seen.;

– Thank you, – Maria was slowly speaking, – in a weak voice, still sobbing.

When came to round the passengers realized that all their belongings were drowned in the water.

And it was also a shock, many of them didn't have anything.

So it was Emma and her children.

Some woman took off her gas handkerchief and handed to Emma, with the words:

– Take... cover up somehow!

Emma nodded and thanked, threw a shawl over her shoulders, barely tied to a small nodule on the chest.

The vessel was like it has visited the mouth of the sinister monster, it was torn and worn out, slowly and heavily docked at the port.

The meddle with the strained faces followed every movement of the ship, realizing what have survived all people who were on the board.

The exhausted passengers eagerly lined up, they were ready to leave the ship.

Boris and Sara kept Mary under their arms.

Emma was helping the old lady to stand up.

Finally, the ship docked and filed the ladder.

The noise, noise, tears, cheers, greeting.

Parents met Mary and they thanked her rescuers infinitely.

Immediately Mary's mother took off her jacket and scarf and quickly swaddled the baby in the dry.

Mary's father took off his jacket and gave it to Emma.

They proposed to Emma with children stay with them in Kiev for a while, but Boris could not, he had to arrive on time to L'vov where he was expected duties.

Now they would also have not a simple way from Kiev to L'vov by train.

The freight train was already at the platform, and people rushed to take their seats.

In fact, there were no places in such cars, as it is a solid platform with a wooden flank places.

People jumped into the car and tried to sit on the floor in a way that would have more room to win themselves, that is, almost reclining.

Boris jumped the first, and gave his hand to his sister and mother.

They have located close to the musicians and the family moved from Kiev to L'vov. People who got to know about the loss of all things of Emma and her children immediately gathered dry clothes for them.

Sara changed into a dress, which had to tie a rope, it was the size of two more. It became immediately warm and comfortable.

She clung to her mother's shoulder, as if searching for protection.

The car quickly filled and the door closed, chattering by constipation so loud. The train that followed to L'vov finally moved and Sara, in order to distract a little, began to torment her mother by the memories of her father, as she has done it so often.

Boris was sitting near and also listened attentively to the memories of the past wonderful time when the whole family gathered on evenings in the kitchen and after dinner Dad read books to children or played games with them.

Emma remembered Isaac when he was young; she praised him all the time, saying that he was very much a model husband and father he worked hard and loved his family greatly.

Sara listened, but the thoughts of the unknown future life absorbed her more and more.

A strange premonition of a joy and misery at the same time.

Suddenly she was dreaming of an idle life, costumes and fans, and then she felt the anxiety and tension.

The passengers were talking loudly, someone even joked, they laughed all together, even Sara could not help burst out laughing, listening to the stories of the older musicians.

Having passed almost half a day, the train made a stop in some remote area, Sara did not remember that name.

– Parking for 30 minutes, – the loudspeaker announced at the station, followed immediately one after the other passengers repeated aloud the announcement, all rushed to the door.

People quickly jumped out of their cars and wandered around the neighborhood.

– Hey, kid, where is the water here?

– Emma asked the child who was passing by.

He pointed in the direction of the column with the water, and all passengers rushed to this side.

People lined up, each drank and took the water with him.

Sara was staying in a line of two elderly men who were constantly exchanging their stories:

– I travelled so good last year, I decided to thumb a lift, maybe someone would drive me, and someone stopped, so I went with him and, ah! I even didn't pay money!

– Oh, how was it?

– When we came, I went out of the car and began to rummage through my pockets, and so cunningly that the driver heard I said as if to myself:

– Damn, I think I've dropped the wallet in your car...

When the driver heard it he hit the gas and went away.

– Listen Ziam, and aren't you lying? Well... You're a genius!... – they are laughing and patting each other on the shoulders.

– Musia!!!

– From a distance coming toward the line, loudly and angrily his wife was shouting and you couldn't stay the last in the queue, what kind of simpleton!; Musia and Ziam hunched their necks from fear, but it seemed they were lucky, Haya was running past, her main aim was the market place which was opposite side.

Three middle-aged ladies were ahead, they turned at the cry of Haya and recognized in her an old friend, they portrayed a smile, saying some words of welcome.

Haya, on the run replied in kind keeping the same etiquette, and ran on.

I must say that Haya screamed so loud that she could easily outshouted the signal of an approaching locomotive, so that the whole line responded to her cry, but three ladies who were standing in front of Sara, didn't miss the opportunity to discuss Haya, but not her cry, they were not bothered by it, they were not timid by themselves, they may cry, no less shrill, one of them by changing smile on a wry face, as if just she has smelt the rotten sauerkraut, cheerfully she set the tone:

– Listen, there is Haya!

– Really!

– Did she live behind the school? – said the third.;

No one was going to answer the question, the first lady who exclaimed was burst with the desire to savor Haina, sorry ass:

– Is she put on weight more? Well, asshole!

– The nightmare – the other assented shrilly.

– Keep your voice down, – the third person hissed loudly, pushing her friend by elbow, fearing of Haya's wrath, and glancing in the direction of running.

– Ah! Why are you worrying!

If I was not sure that she was among the other things also deaf, I would not speak so calmly.

These phrases have reached all who was staying in the queue, they giggled.

Then the baton was intercepted again by Grandpas.

– Ugh! – it could be heard when grandfathers breathed together.
– Well, how did you marry Haya?
– Ziamia cried in the hearts – she is so ugly!
– Well, I say – a little oblique!
– A little bit?! When she is crying, her tears flow on the back crosswise!
– So this is my mother's choice
– Musia mumbled guilty.
She told me that I would never marry a beautiful girl – she can leave me.
– And the ugly can leave too.
– But this is a different matter!; And Grandpas again were giggling.
– Ziamia rushed into memories – but my mother always told me; – My son! Your first wife should be Ukrainian.
– How so, why? You're a Jew, – Musia embarrassed.
– And I just asked my mother why, and she said that Ukrainians are beautiful, they cook tasty. "She will make the burly man from you. Then you will divorce and marry a Jewess"
– Why? – Musia bewildered more.
– Well, I asked her why? And I got a slap for the slowness.
– Firstly, – my mother told me – you are a Jew.
Secondly, a Jewess wife – this are some connections and string-pulling. And when you will have connections, the position in the society, children, you will divorce and marry a gypsy.
– ?!
– Musia entangled in the calculations of Ziamia's mother completely, he crouched the proper "face".
Ziamia continued with a serious expression of face, understanding the silent scene of Musia:
– Mum likes so much how beautiful the Roma bury.
– ?!
– Did you believe? Well I'm laughing!; And playful old men were giggling again, coughing and tapping each other on the back.;;
Next was the turn of Musia, Ziamia called him so, copying the style of Haya:
– And remember, I was in Kiev last year?
– Of course, you were in Kiev, I remember.
– So I'll tell you, there are such Ukrainians!
– Better than ours?
– How can you compare?!
– Musia outraged. – I had an intimate date with someone, uh-uh! Oh!
– Cheer up and smacking his lips with pleasure, Musia who was already eighty years old, Sara thought so, he added exclaiming:
– Oh, now I know everything for sure!
– So tell me, finally!
– losing patience and scattering spit with envy, Ziamia urged him.
– Listen: she wore a cape with a hood lurex – nothing like you would not find here.
And when she took off her, then it was under the blouse in pink chiffon, transparent as glass!
And her skirt was all completely covered with sequins, so that it was painful to even look at her. Then she took off her skirt...
– And what? – Ziamia insisted impatiently.
– And what, – his friend shouted at him above, – she had underclothes decorated with Walloon lace of purple color and silver threads... Garters were decorated with the precious stones...
– And what? – Ziamia asked losing his patience and self-control.

– Then she took off her clothes and garters ... Ziama wiped the drops of sweat from his forehead, by the movement of hand that gripped the wrist of a happy storyteller, he made it clear that he needed a brief respite, and after a few seconds, exclaimed again:

– And what?

– Well, what – what, what – what?

– Musia waved disappointed

– And then everything was exactly as with my Haya...

– Mmm!

– Musia shook his head in disappointment – listen and how is your Haya feeling now?

– She is sick and ill, I said to her:

– Haya, do you know if any of us will die, I will most likely go to Israel...

– I understand you, and now you're going to L'vov, – Ziama laughed.

The queuing for the water was quite long, friends countered each other relentlessly, the language in which they spoke was a surrogate for the Jewish, Ukrainian and Russian:

– How did you marry Haya, I am afraid of her, she can kill by the glance?!

Listening to the elders, Sara became cheerful.

After drinking some water and taking it with them, she and her mother crossed the road, where there was a small little market, the brother, a little later, caught up with them.

The mother thought it would be good to exchange her ring on the products, as the way was expected to be not near and not easy, where there is such a possibility could be.

The voices of traded were heard everywhere:

– I would not for a half price buy this fur coat.

Look – there is a fur out! – a thick aunt squealed.

– Madame, but for this price a couple of years you will have a great leather coat!

– Either he made fun of, or really believed in his words the seller with the silly expression on his face, reminiscent of a caricature.

Suddenly, as in the gramophone, right behind Sara the voices were heard:

– We haven't seen for a long time! How are you doing? What do you do?

– Thank you, slowly. I am working on memoirs.

– Writing memoirs? It is wonderful. By the way, have you already reached the point when you have taken me 30 rubles?

Pictures, characters and actions change like a kaleidoscope.

– Good day, Semyon Markovich, how are you doing?

– Little by little, and yours?

– The same. I have an interesting little case to you.

There is a luxury bride for you – the young widow of great beauty, she is very serious. And innocent.

– How innocent? You said that she is a widow.

– Oh, a word that she is a widow, it was so long ago, she has already forgotten everything.

“The bazaar”, you can see and you can hear everything!

The signal train whistle alerted that passengers should take their seats.

People hastily rushed to their cars.

The bazaar deserted at once and traders immediately bored, staring at the chain of cars, whether envying departing, or regretting that did not have time to bargain and sell, barter or more items.

Meanwhile, the train had already started off.

The night was falling.

All the passengers began to prepare for the bedtime.

Each tried to stretch his legs, but it was not easy, everywhere they were bumping into the other passengers, the little wick was lighting, people had to navigate almost to the touch.

At the end of the car someone screamed, the voices of neighbors were heard:

- A! Are not you ashamed?
- So many thieves are around!
- No, I mixed up the bag!
- We know how you are confused!
- All right, leave him alone, maybe he really mixed up, it is too dark in here.
- Stop yelling, let sleep!
- Sleep yourself there.
- I said, shut up already!
- What? – a hefty man outraged rising from his seat.
- Okay, okay, keep calm, – probably his wife wailed.

Near the neighbors hissed, and somehow it all gradually found a peace.

Sara and Emma sat down on either side of Boris, and put their heads on his shoulders.

Boris was already snoring and his mother was also dozing, Sara could not sleep.

Thoughts assailed her.

– What is L’vov? – Sara wondered mentally.

After all, this city still belongs to Poland, though it is already managed by the USSR.

According to the stories, it is beautiful, that’s all.

Laws are keeping silence during the war.

Lukan

Chapter 2. L'vov

Ancient, beautiful Polish city of L'vov met Sara with her family not hospitable, by the wild downpour, by the wind that knocked down and grim faces.

The red flag flew over L'vov.

It seemed almost a year, as the city lives and breathes the atmosphere of change, but from the first minute it was clear that nothing of the kind, the city and the citizens were strangers, not like Zaporozhye and its inhabitants.

Temporarily Boris and his family were located near the railway station, in a communal apartment, they were given rations.

In the morning the brother left the service, Emma began to work about the house, and Sara went out.

She stood on the porch with a little hesitation, fighting the urge to dive back into the apartment, it was so uncomfortable and even scary for her.

Two old women were sitting on the bench and discussing something, looking at the windows on the second floor.

Sara was also curious, and she looked up.

There was a young woman who cleaned the window.

Sara thought, there was nothing special, and went towards the center.

Passing by the old ladies she heard one of them appealing to the young mistress who cleaned the window:

– Oh, Galia, you are a hostess today, you are washing the windows as neighbors couldn't be seen...

Sara was very amused by this.

Suddenly, her eyes fell on a beautiful dome of the building, which was located nearby.

Sara was interested in looking at this house closer.

She walked toward the object that interested her by slow and careful steps.

And then there was the next one, and another, and another, from house to house of a unique beauty.

Sara wandered through the quiet, winding streets, looked at the beautiful buildings, admired the architecture, but could not accept this strange city for her.

Why?

What prevents her so?

Perhaps she feels something that does not let her get close to it?

What is it?

She didn't feel such anxiety before.

A week later the Soviet authorities granted to Boris and his family the apartment, though small, but in a beautiful old building, on the fifth floor, in the city center.

There was almost no furniture.

No utensils, no clothes, no possibility to buy it everything. Boris worked a lot, Sara helped her mother around the house, went to school, studied the ballet.

The neighbors were good, immediately they collected all the necessary things and brought them to the beginners.

The life was getting better gradually.

Sara learned that they live in the house, where the famous actress – Ida Kaminskaya lives.

She had heard of the actress's talent, but still she has not been able to visit her performances, and all of a sudden – the neighbors.

Sara thought that somehow she will acquaint with her favorite actress, and will go to her performances, and perhaps even like Kaminskaya become an actress, and will play with her on the same stage.

Thoughts have taken Sara to the fabulous world of art, and brought her a feeling of satisfaction. The life seemed to be leveling off, new friends appeared.

Sara felt that Boris was not easy, but she also knew that her brother will do everything to make her and Mum happy.

The difference in nine years strongly made itself felt. Boris was like a father to a younger sister, he loved her, and considered it his duty to protect and teach her.

But the life was still hard, they had to starve and save each slice of bread.

The end of 1940 was full of ambiguous events in the country, followed by the entire population. Now, everywhere you could hear the terrible assumption of the impending war.

There were constant anti-Soviet uprising in the city and its suburbs.

There were rumors that the unstable situation on the Soviet border forces the power send to the country people of Jewish nationality, in order to avoid the sudden attacks and reprisals by the Germans.

But, at the same time, the press emphasized that the Soviet Union is absolutely satisfied by both domestic and foreign policy of the country and its achievements.

New Year's holidays were coming.

Sara for the third night was preparing Christmas outfit together with her mother, because there will be the evening at school, and Sara wants to be the most beautiful.

Emma has donated for this material, which recently she bought on the curtains and decoration was tulle, or rather carved figurines and floral elements that Sara sewed in the collar area.

The mood was pre-holiday, Sara was constantly humming under her breath waltz music, the mother sang a duet sometimes, they were laughing and constantly trying on New Year's dress.

It sounded on the radio solemnly:

– On the eve of the New 1941 we want to share with all the Soviet citizens of those achievements, which raised the Soviet Union to a new stage.

We have reasons to be proud of the state affairs and 1940 outgoing.

It made an enormous contribution and fundamental improvements in the matter of training and education of the staff of the Red Army and Navy.

The Soviet people are waiting for the future with confidence and joy.

– Well, you see, Mum, – Sara said happily – all these rumors, especially of Uncle Lenia and Aunt Galia, about the possibility of war, and that we should get out of here, all nonsense!

– Of course, dear, nonsense – Emma did not want to frighten and upset the daughter. In the air, it seemed, indeed there was the atmosphere of full optimism.

The country met the New 1941 with the best hopes and assurances of the Kremlin leaders almost can appease people.

But a few days later it became clear that not everything is going well.

On the radio and in the press it was reported that the Germans began to shift its troops to Bulgaria.

There were rumors that the Germans were acting with the consent of the Soviet Union, however, TASS denied categorically that it happens “with the knowledge and consent of the Soviet Union”.

Conversely, the speakers vied claimed that the USSR was in no way aware of this.

Boris came home from work so tired and depressed.

Emma laid the table, and silently stared into the eyes of her son with anxiety, she was waiting for a frank conversation.

Boris paused, then took out a newspaper, opened it slowly and said:

– Here, there is a detailed account of Hitler’s speech.

He is fully convinced that he is waiting for a new victory over the British, he says that America is wasting time and energy in helping England, still the collapse is waiting for them.

– Boris, calm down, Uncle Stas says that Hitler will not get to us, and then you heard on the radio, what was the speech of our Party, they are confident that everything is under the control.

– Mum, it’s not that simple. Of course they will not make the panic among people. But that’s just at the end of his speech, Hitler said the following sentence:

“I have taken into account every possibility, which is only imaginable” – and added, maybe you and Sara will agree to leave L’vov, somewhere far away, in the heart of the country.

Well, not in Siberia, I beg you to leave?

– No, no and no!

We will not leave you.

And then, I do not believe that, even if Germany will come to the Soviet Union, then we are facing something bad.

– Then why are there so many Jewish refugees from Germany and Poland?

He’s a Nazi, he hates Jews, the first on whom his anger will fall, the Jews will be.

Sara came to the room with a smile from ear to ear that quickly disappeared from her face, after she heard snatches of the last sentence “He’s a Nazi, he hates Jews, the first on whom his anger will fall, the Jews will be”, she asked her mother and brother:

– Well, for what evils people hate Jews so much?

It was a long pause in the house...

Emma slowly closed her eyes and said in a void:

– Jews are hated because of their merits and not defects.

There was even a long pause... And suddenly Boris jumped up and begged:

– You must go! Mama, Sara – it’s not a joke!

Jews run from Germany and Poland more and more.

I’m sure – it’s a bad sign!

– Well, why are you so confident?

– Mum couldn’t understand

– Look, all who remember the last war, say that the Germans did not cause harm to anyone including the Jew.

This is a policy and all.

Well, L’vov will be the German city, and all!

Big deal!

Day by day it was more anxiety and feelings.

In the Soviet Union, more and more attention was paid to the military and professional training, to further strengthen of labor discipline, training of industrial workers at trade schools numbering 600 thousands of students and other labor reserves.

The words “mobilization readiness” repeatedly were said in an oral advocacy and in print.

On the Red Army Day, February 23, “Pravda” published an article by General G. K. Zhukov (before he came to the post of Chief of the General Staff), perhaps less optimistic than his speech two months ago.

He wrote that 1940 was a year of the fracture, “rebuilding of training and educational system”, but made it clear that the reorganization is in progress and that the situation is still far from perfect.

Since the ending of the War, he noted, the army has undergone great changes, for example, « the unity of command were strengthened” but much remains to be done and “conceited and complacent” is not necessary.

The article gave some feeling of anxiety and encountered the conclusion that “big changes” that took place in the Red army is unlikely to be completed until 1942.

Chapter 3. The War

*“In our time, the Jews have only one choice: either to become a Zionist,
or stop to be a Jew”*
Crossman

The Germans entered L'vov in the morning June 30, 1941.

And on that day it began a three-day pogrom against the Jews, which was organized by “Ukrainian people’s police” with the connivance and instigation of the Germans.

The formal pretext for the pogrom began shooting the prisoners in the prisons of L'vov, that the NKVD carried out during the retreat of the Red Army.

Boris was taken to the army very quickly, it immediately alerted Emma and Sara.;Boris insisted on his mother they immediately went into the heart of the country.

There were not only rumors about the probability of the war but also hints in the press, on the radio.

After the beginning of the Second World War (1939) and Hitler’s seizure of Poland, its eastern part was occupied by the Red Army in accordance with the secret protocols to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.¹

As L'vov on that time was inhabited by a large number of Jews (about 180 thousand), which is almost half of the total population of the city, the Soviet authorities in summer of 1940 sent about 10 thousand Jewish refugees from Germany and Poland deep into the Soviet Union because they have the fear of a sudden military action and the invasion by Germany.

L'vov, though was a part of Poland, was ruled by the Soviet regime, which hasn’t shown care about the Jewish people of L'vov in a proper way, they weren’t sent to the heart of the country.

The indigenous inhabitants of L'vov didn’t want to leave their homes, they believed that the Germans will not cause them harm, as it was before.

Sara’s family also preferred to stay in L'vov, and there was a hope on the sanity of politicians.

Despite the set of various kinds of incoming information from legal and illegal sources, people refused to believe in the complete loss of reason from around the world.

The Soviet people were inspired full protection from the Kremlin.

Most of them like children implicitly believed and trusted themselves to their leadership, especially the common people.

Already in the first days after the June 29, 1941, the date of entry of the Germans to L'vov, there happened pogroms in the city staged by them, claimed the lives of thousands of Jews.

After a few days in the wood near Bilogorschey Germans shot 1,400 Jewish men.

The whole of July 1941, the Germans and Ukrainian auxiliary police destroyed in the wood near L'vov Jewish politicians and intellectuals, as well as the Jews trapped in urban raids.

Almost all the synagogues and cities were blown up or burned.

When on Monday, June 30th the Germans entered the city, the smell of not buried corpses could be felt from the burning prisons.

It was the discovery of thousands of half-decayed corpses of political prisoners, who were killed by the NKVD in the previous days, when councils have realized that the rapid German attack makes it impossible to evacuate the prison.

¹ <http://hi-lvov.narod.ru/LightboxImageSlideshow/eLvov.html>

The representatives of the German Army in the second half of June 30 reported that L'vov's population has turned their anger on the killers of the NKVD against "the Jews living in the city, which has always cooperated with the Bolsheviks"

On that day, Jewish men were rounded up in the so-called "prison works" – to dig up and carry out the bodies of those who were killed in the prison.

Boris was very worried for his mother and sister.

He was constantly asking them in his letters do not go out, to hide in the basement, in case of danger.

But they are still sneaking out of the house in search of food and water.

One day Sara ran out of the house with a bucket to get some water, but when she came to the arch of the house, in the twilight her eyes met with glowing lights across the street.

At first, she froze with fear, then at closer look she recognized the neighbor guy whom she has seen sometimes in the courtyard.

The guy said quietly:

– Do not go there. Do not go! There's a pogrom.

Sara never saw pogroms by herself, but she had heard about them and about the atrocities committed against the Jews.

She shivered and turned to run back home, but the boy stopped her:

– Go to us quickly. They won't come to us. I heard that today they are going to go to the Jewish houses.

– No! But what about Mum? – Sara pleaded.

And then suddenly the shouts and cries were heard from her yard.

The guy grabbed Sara by the arm and dragged her to his entrance.

She ran after him sobbing and not understanding anything, in the head – the porridge, before the eyes something flashed, but there was nothing she could not make out.

Popped into the entrance, they quickly hid behind the door, as they heard the sound of a door opening on the ground floor.

The big man hastily left the apartment and walked quickly into the street to take a look at the next pogrom.

Sara and her rescuer stood behind the door and watched through the crack.

For the third day in the city there were galichansk festivities in the form of the Jewish pogrom.

The pogrom was organized by the Germans, together with the Bandera "Ukrainian people's police".

According to the authors, the pogrom in L'vov was the action of "self-purification" and the revenge "Judeo-Bolsheviks" on the part of the oppressed people to whom the valiant German army brought freedom.

Sara was looking into the door crack and shivering.

The mad men beat women with sticks and drove them to the inner courtyard of the house.

In a few minutes the yard was filled with roar, screaming, crying and pleading mingled with curses, shots, echoing sound of stones and sticks on the backs of Jewish women.

Half-dressed women were drove to the yard and there they were beaten again and stripping off the remaining clothes.

Women screamed, begged for help, but they continued to scoff at them, making them to crawl on knees with hands up.

Beat and led the pogrom largely their own, that is, people's police and the Germans ran and took photos.

People were running from the apartments and watching at all this chaos, not daring to utter a word.

The crowd watched anyone with a thirst for revenge, someone with contempt, some with sympathy.

And on their eyes, the Jews were tormented, because they are Jews, and all, and it was their only blame!

Cries of activists came from the crowd:

- The Jews are the nomads and hicks...
- Self-seekers...
- Damn materialists! Beat the Jews!
- Jewish communists!
- Beat, beat, beat...
- Jewish capitalists!
- Beat!
- Ukraine for the Ukrainians!
- Beat the Jews!
- Jude! Jude!

Banderas were convinced that the Jews were the main support of the Communists, and largely were responsible for repressive actions against the Ukrainians.

Everywhere were the leaflets calling: "Know! Moscow, Poland, Magyars, Jewry – they are your enemies! Destroy them!", "Marxism is a Jewish fiction" and "Stalin and the Jewish commissars are the main enemies of people!"

– Beat them!

L'vov's activists grabbed another girl and stripped her naked and then demanded her to crawl on knees, they were not shunned to strip naked even older women, men.

Sara pressed her face to the gap and sobbed silently, looking at the startling picture.

Very near, Sara even held her breath, Bandera policeman with a bandage in a good mood, dragged by the hair a young woman, completely naked and half-dead.

And after him, a respectably dressed Galician kicked an elderly Jew by feet.

People's police ran up to him and joyfully began to beat him, and then they dragged him like the carcass, showing off to the crowd.

The Germans-guards did not intervene at all, everything was presented as a "self-purification action".

The worst thing is that for many participants the pogrom was like cheerful festivities, the galichansk carnival.

The people's police was grimacing in front of cameras of Germans who took photos as a rare "monkeys" with pleasure.

By watching this picture, Sara suddenly has lost her consciousness.

The guy picked her up and ran on stairs to the second floor.

Frightened parents and brothers met him at home:

– Where did you go, Arthur?

– Before she could finish saying, Mum falls straight in a chair when she saw her son with Sara in his arms.

– Oh, the trouble! What will happen now? – mother whispered crying.

– Nothing will happen, mother! They will not come to us. All around know that we are Poles. You know, they just take the Russian Jews – Arthur soothed his mother.

– Come here soon, – the father showed his son to a small room.

They put Sara to bed, she began to recover, tears were on her face, her eyes were fixed on one point on the ceiling, she whispered all the time:

– Mum, what about my mother?

– Sara, when the pogrom will finish, we'll go and find out all about your mother, – soothed her frightened boy.

– How do you know my name?

– I brought the products to your school and immediately noticed you, your friends called you out by name – Arthur blushed and looked away, repeating, – I immediately noticed you.

He added, slightly hesitated and did not know what to say, – I also finished this school.

Sara looked at him in silence, and for appearance's sake, just to maintain the conversation she asked:

– Have you graduated seven classes too?

– Yes – Arthur replied joyfully – I graduated three years ago.

– And I'm this year. – And when I saw you, I thought – a ballerina.

You have such a fine figure!

– Arthur perked up.

– You guessed right, I studied ballet for years. Now I have dilemma: I love math and ballet.

What to do as a profession?

– Of course ballerina! It is so unusual!

– Do you like ballet?

– I love y ... – Arthur stopped. He even feared that he gave himself with giblets.

The situation was saved by brothers who said another comment about what is happening on the street.

The father stood nearby, sighing and shaking his head from side to side:

– Why did not you leave?

What did you hope for? You didn't believe rumors, that Russian Jews will be bad in the case of Nazi occupation, and you believed that you will be protected by the power?

So what?

The Soviet authorities did not even remember about that mortal danger that threat the Jews of L'vov.

But thunder burst!

– Oh, oh! – mother was sobbing.

– Yes, yes! That's right – people were not only not evacuated, but not even informed about the need to leave L'vov.

Only a few left, who according to the rumors, could not hope for anything good, they have also convinced a lot of Jews to leave until it's too late.

However, a few could believe that the Soviet government will not protect them!

Minutes turned into an unbearable eternity.

Sara bit her lips because of tense waiting of the end of the pogrom.

She rushed across the room, and then asked brothers who looked through the window:

– Well, what is it? Are they leaving?

– Yes, they take away the last of the victims, there are still dead people left – they have already began to load them, they will leave soon – the guys were sympathetic to Sara and they wanted to tell her as soon as possible that all is finished.

Sara's head was buzzing and pounding, she could hardly breathe, she could not find a place for herself.

The food and tea that was proposed to her remained untouched, despite the fact that she was very hungry.

The watch metered seconds monotonically.

The world seemed to be floating over the abyss.

On the ground floor of the house, Arthur's parents had their ice cream shop.

It was a big shop, in which there was also a workshop for the production of these products.

The family owned this business for a long time and they were the main supplier of ice cream not only around L'vov, but also to many cities in Poland.

Helbling family was famous for incredible kindness, there were always a lot of people in their home.

They shared their food with the neighbors.

And despite the fact that they were very wealthy family by themselves they lived modestly, with no frills.

Although their house was large and it all was decorated tastefully.

The father called Arthur:

– Arthur, everything seems calm. Let's go with me to the store.

– Yes, father, – he turned to Sara and said to her, – I will come back soon. Arthur's mother came to Sara and asked warily:

– How long have you been known each other?

– No, – plunging her neck to shoulders, – Sara whispered.

– Who are your parents, Sara?

– We came from Zaporozhye with my brother and my mother, and my dad died long ago – after a pause she added – my brother was sent here to work.

Mother's heart could not help but feel that her son was seriously in love with this girl.

She was well aware of that the situation is not so simple.

Of course, not about such a girl she had dreamed of for her pet!

Maria and her family are of the Polish nobility, with old-age traditions, they have quite firmly position in the society, they are rich and esteemed in their native L'vov and beyond it.

She is Maria Tauber, she is from a family of magnates – manufacturers, her husband is just from the legendary family.

Who does not know the Helbling family and their famous shops?

How many those who desire from a noble family would like to marry into this family?

And then suddenly – the Russian!

And as it was seen to her – the Communist.

Neither the beauty of Sara, nor figure, nor youth, nor her beautiful hair, no education and ballet classes, nothing could not soften the mood of Arthur's mother, who made it clear to Sara by her whole appearance her fastidious attitude.

The only thing that calmed her a little – that she is also a Jew.

But still among Polish Jews, the elite practically, and Russian – there was a big difference, at least for the Jewish people.

Fifteen minutes later Arthur ran into the room with the package in his hands and said to Sara:

– All is quiet, Sara. I'll take you home – and he handed her the package – this is for you and your mother.

– What is it? – Sara was stupefied.

– This is some food for you.

Heavily sighed Arthur's mother stood beside and waved a disapproving head, looking alternately at her husband, her son, Sara.

– I will not take – said Sara and put the package on the table.

– No, you will take – Arthur said persistently – giving the package to her.

– Take it, take it, – Arthur's mother announced generously.

At this moment Arthur's father entered the room and ordered:

– It's time. I checked everything – nobody! Arthur grabbed Sara's hand and they walked toward the exit.

Sara was thanking her rescuers on her way home.

The house where Sara lived with her mother was very close, but to overcome even a small distance after what she saw was very scary.

However, the street is safe – not a soul!

Arthur and Sara went briskly away to the house of Sara, so they even didn't meet anyone – all people were scared and hid in their homes.

– Mum, Mum, – Sara rushed to embrace her weeping and wailing.

– How are you, daughter? Where have you been? – trembling with fear for her, she clasped to her bosom her daughter, Emma again and again being still in a state of shock, she was muttering – Where have you been? Where have you been?

– Mommy, I was worried about you! I just came out for some water... Just out... And they came down... And this is Arthur ... – And I thought about everything – mother cried.

– Do not cry Mum! Do not! Everything is good!

– Yes, yes, my joy, my sun yeah!!! Everything is good! God is, God is! God is ... – Emma was embracing Sara and did not notice Arthur.

And Arthur was standing at the door and was happy for them, for their happy faces.

He was smiling, he was good.

Finally, Sara put a bag of food on the table and said to her mother:

– Mum, this is Arthur. He saved me. He hid me in their house, they live near here, you know – this ice cream shop is theirs.

– Thank you, thank you – mother repeated looking at Arthur. – So is this the young Helbling? Come on, why are you staying in the doorway? Do you work with your Dad?

– And this is food Mum, – Sara interrupted her mother a little excited.

– How?

– It's his family gathered for us.

– Do not – Emma was so proud woman —she even changed in her face. She became strict and the recent gratitude smile disappeared from her face immediately.

– Take it, take it, we are from the heart, – Arthur said smiling and hurried to leave, until Sara's mother did not give him the package back.

Singing his favorite tune Arthur went home and dreamed, dreamed... remembered how he was carrying Sara in his arms, how close they were to each other hiding behind the door, how she was lying on his bed.

And he wanted to be at home as soon as possible, to lie in bed, where until recently lay a beautiful girl of his dreams.

Chapter 4. The injunction

Day by day the situation in L'vov was becoming more and more dangerous, it was extremely undesirable to appear on the streets of the city especially for a Jew.

But this precaution was not very able to save, especially the Jews.

Groups of people with the guns went from home to home and checked the lists of living.
The Jews were taken away immediately.

Polish authorities could not resist Banderas, Germans.

They were ordered to monitor the Jewish families and resettle them to the basements and all the property was confiscated.

The Germans entered L'vov in the morning June 30, 1941.

Ukrainian Nationalists – Bandera fraction of the OUN, they immediately set up in the city their authorities and “Ukrainian people’s police”.

The head of the Ukrainian government was Jaroslav Stetsko, in spring 1939 he published an article in the newspaper “The New Way” expressing his position on Jews.

Stetsko insisted that the Jews – “self-seekers, materialistic, selfish”, “people without heroics of life, without the grand idea”.

But the Ukrainians, according to Stetsko, “the first in Europe have understood the breaking down of work of Jews”, and as a result they distanced themselves from the Jews a century ago thus preserving the “purity of their spirituality and culture”.

Moscow and Jewry – the biggest enemy of Ukraine – Stetsko wrote.

– I insist on the destruction of the Jews and the feasibility of transfer to Ukraine the German methods of extermination Jewry, excluding their assimilation.

In June 30, 1941 Stetsko read the act of the proclamation of statehood, which Ukrainian nationalists call the Act of renewal of the Ukrainian state: “The restored Ukrainian state will work closely with the National Socialist Great-Germany which is under the leadership of Adolf Hitler creates a new order in Europe and the world and helps Ukrainian people to get free from the Moscow occupation.

Long live the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Stepan Bandera is the conductor of OUN”!²

The same day, a three-day pogrom against the Jews began, which was organized by “Ukrainian people’s police” with the connivance and instigation of the Germans.

Sara and her mother’s time has come.

In the early morning somebody knocked on their door.

Mum and Sara even shrunk from an unpleasant and demanding knock.

A minute later the knock was repeated and sounded even more intolerable.

Almost immediately a voice came out of the door:

– Open. The City Council.

Again there was a knock.

Mum got up and slowly walked to the door.

Sara leaned against the wall looking at her mother anxiously.

Emma opened the door.

She was politely greeted:

– Madame Averbah, get and sign here – a tall man in a gray suit pointed to the list.

² <http://hi-lvov.narod.ru/LightboxImageSlideshow/eLvov.html>

Emma took the letter in which it was written that it is from the City Council, she shook her head and sighed:

– What is it? – She asked the man in gray who was obviously in charge.

– You will open and read.

He again pointed to the list:

– Sign here.

Sara's eye followed her mother and the "long-uncle"

The air was filled with tension.

Emma undersigned slowly and closed the door.

The silence acted threatening. Sara quickly jumped to her mother and said:

– Come on, open up.

– Take, open.

Sara was reading the prescription and tears were on her face, dripping on paper, laying by the colorless large blots.

Emma looked out the window and said nothing.

Shock!

What's next?

The order was aid that they are required to vacate the apartment within three days and that they will move into the basement.

At this point there was a knock at the door again.

Sara shuddered and Emma said in a decided voice:

– Who's there?

– Emma, it's me, Mara, open.

Emma went to the door and opened it.

– Hello! Emma, who was it? Why did they come to you?

– Oh, and do not ask! Here! – Emma held out the prescription to the neighbor.

She quickly read the text and prayed:

– Well, my God, my God! – Mara moaned, – well, and soon they will come to us.

– Maybe they will not come.

– Oh no, every day they evict some of people, others no one knows where they go – the neighbor couldn't stop.

Emma sighed.

Sara was sitting on the edge of the couch and looked at her mother and neighbor with a frightened look.

– Listen, Emma, do not worry, we'll help you.

Someone knocked at the door again:

– I'm coming, – indifferently and fearlessly Emma went to the door and opened it.

– Well, what can you do? – the neighbor asked Emma and then said to his wife – you, Mara, how go, so go away!

– So after all here, look, they have a prescription. God, what is happening?

– What is it? – Picking up the paper an old neighbor pulled out his glasses from the pocket, put on and began to read aloud an order, constantly shaking his head with indignation and inserting, after each proposal, – oh-oh-oh! Oh you!

Sara quietly sobbed in the arms of her mother, Mara too could not resist.

The old neighbor decided slightly relieve the situation:

– Well, well! Wipe away tears. Everything will be good! Be sure! This is a misunderstanding. The Soviet authorities will establish the order soon.

– And if not, then what? How to live? How to survive in this horror? Where to hide from these reptiles? – Mara wailed.

– Mara we'll be alive and think about something, and if someone of us will die, I am likely to leave for Israel ... – grandpa tried to joke.

– Oh, leave me alone, and your jokes! Every time you interpose them where necessary and not necessary!

Mara was very excited, she was very well aware that sooner or later their time will come.

After dinner Arthur came to Sara.

He was dressed very gallantly: clean white shirt, black trousers that suited him perfectly, polished and it seemed almost new shoes and hairstyle was carefully laid with a perfect parting.

Sara told him about the order, they sat and talked on the vital topic.

Arthur brought the food that Sara's mother has always refused to take, but Arthur left the bag of food on the table and after a brief conversation with Sara went back to work in his shop.

And on this day they have already said goodbye to each other standing on the doorstep.

He carefully asked her not to leave the house, it is very dangerous on the streets, gangs are rampant and at that moment he heard a woman's scream outside the door.

It was heard that somewhere on the ground floor a woman was screaming and incoherently was asking for help.

Arthur opened the door and went down to the floor below.

The crying woman was already surrounded by her neighbors.

He tried to understand what was happening.

The woman was tearing her hair and showing at the open door to her apartment.

Arthur looked back and saw in the apartment the girl who was lying on the floor, he guessed that she was dead.

– My God! My Roza, my girl! God, God! For what? A – a – a help! O God! Kind people, for what? For what??? – heartbreaking mother's tears brought into a stupor all the others.

Arthur felt behind him the light touch, he turned around, it was Sara, she looked shocked.

He put his arm around her and turned to his face:

– There is the dead girl. Do you know them? I do not understand what happened.

– This is Roza's Mum. And there is Roza. We had studied together... She was a communist activist. Was she murdered?

– No, – an old lady said, wiping her tears – Roza committed a suicide.

– How? Why? – Sara sobbed in disbelief, hiding her face by hands.

Emma went to Sara and Arthur, she could not take her hand from her face because of horror, it seemed that she was paralyzed:

– Horrible! This is Roza, you were studying together, Sara!

All the neighbors gathered on the site, the story was passed from mouth to mouth for a few times, the poor woman was drinking soothing medicine, the news immediately spread through the house, people were talking all together:

– In the morning she was attacked by the crowd. Angry crowd...

– Yes, yes, she was seized and dragged along the street directly for the spit..

– And then the bastard cut her hair all...

– So in fact it was a little, then they also took her clothes of...

– They took of everything, bitches..

– Oh, oh, oh!!!

– The end of the world! What is this?

– She cried, prayed so...

– And they beat and beat, kicked, shame...

– Then they started kicking by boots, she fell down, she could not go on, and all these bastards did not let up, poked her in the stomach with their boots..

– How to survive this..?

– So she did not survive...

– Barely she got home, closed in the room and committed a suicide..

– Ah-ah-ah-ah – my girl, Roza! – There was a terrible cry of the mother.

People tried to comfort her, but such a grief was hard to survive.

– Yes, today was so big horror – a woman in a torn dress showed the audience her wounds and said – I did not think that'll break away from there. So they brutally beat people, humiliated...

– I also have seen – said the old man – I don't even know how I was not dragged! There's a little girl of thirteen years a hefty man was hitting her, all were shouting, asking him to calm down, but he just said "Undress to naked" And he tore her dress and dragged somewhere. Those who tried to defend were immediately seized and even worse than that, right in front of others was spoiled...

– Oh, there's one pregnant who was kicking by boots, ah-ah-ah.. and no one could do anything.

– They mostly grab Jewish women.

– Not! Not only women. I saw a man who was publicly stripped down naked and drove across the street, at the same time as the mare he was lashed with a whip on the back. He was covered with blood.

– What do you know, and recently I saw a young, maybe she was twenty years old, she was stripped and stuck to her vagina a stick, she was also forced to walk across the street by the post-office to the prison on Lontskiy street – she was taken away for work.

– The horror! What is happening? What will happen?

– Fearfully! Make fun of you bastards!

– And there in the fifth house the whole family was taken away, and I do not know if they are still alive.

The day before yesterday there was a big march – they drove more than three hundred people by center with their arms raised, and then they were forced to kneel down and move around so much to the prison. Some managed to escape to the alley and the rest were driven on knees, whipping by trash and sticks, even the elderly were not spared.

– Bastards!

– Beasts!

– I saw a monster too, he was elegantly dressed in a beautiful embroidered shirt, he beat people with an iron rod with so much pleasure!

– Yes, these creatures go to the pogrom like on holiday, they even wear ceremonial suits and ties! And then kick by legs with all their parade in the cruelest way, even the elderly. Recently they kicked our professor. He is all in bruises now.

– Yes! And all this ours! They are nits!

– Do not tell me, the Ukrainian nationalist police! Worse than the Germans!

– The Germans do not interfere as they consider it to be the act of self-purification.

– They do not interfere because they are probably shocked by the brutality of these bastards. And why? For what?

– They interfere where it is necessary. Recently they rounded up people to clean after the bombing, and my neighbor should clean the toilet for some German.

– Listen, have you heard how men were driven on Sunday to the lake, they were forced to go into the water up to their neck, and on German drowned them by hook, and women were crying and screaming, but could not do anything?

– Yes, we have heard, the whole town already knows about it.

– And on the street Zamarstynovskaya the Germans were running with cameras and shooting our naked women.

– This is terrible! In the center of the city?

– Is better near the Opera? Such a mockery! Men, women, old men on their knees were cleaning the streets, and these freaks, also women were here, they enjoyed this spectacle, interjected and gloated.

– The crowd of course is cruel!

– Listen, the Poles too have begun to be deported! In the neighboring house just forcibly they were sent somewhere near Warsaw.

A little girl, about ten years old, listening to all uncles and aunts suddenly burst into loud weeping, sobbing and said:

– And I saw when my mother and I went to the post office, there had been people who were severely beaten by shovels, they were covered with blood, and bad uncles shouted at them, “Jude, Jude!”

The mother embraced the girl and took her home.

For a long time people stood at the door of the unfortunate woman, comforted her and offered some help.

Emma hugged Sara tightly and said:

– I beg you, not a step into the street, and if anything, run, hide. Please!

– Mum, – Sara cried – I’m scared!

Arthur stood by in silence, not knowing how to help these people.

He too had heard the horror stories about the massacre several times, and he was the witness of them.

Now in front of him a picture of that terrible day surfaced when he stumbled upon a half-dead, in torn clothes woman who was completely torn by.

Arthur only leaned toward her to help to get up, then he heard a terrible cry:

– Well, get away, or you will experience the hard way.

Burly men stood in front of him.

The one of them came close to Arthur, he took him as a puppy by the scruff and flung aside.

Then men talking among themselves began to take off with the victim’s rings, shoes and shove in their pockets, and then, just for their entertainment, tore a dress on her, so much so that it’s pieces were thrown around.

The woman was moaning and begging for mercy, and these bastards giggled and spat on her. She lay in stocking feet and underwear.

When the men left with the loot, Arthur ran up to the woman and helped her up.

He took off his shirt and threw it over the unfortunate and walked her home.

The new home of Sara and Emma was damp and miserable.

In addition, two young girls were settled to them.

The entrance to the cellar was littered with waste.

Emma decided to clear the passage immediately.

Everybody began to help her.

Suddenly they heard a woman’s scream followed men’s screams and laughter.

Emma quickly commanded the girls to hide behind the cellar door.

It could be seen through the slit that from the corner of the house there was a woman, all torn, in her underwear.

She was wearing only a bra, belt, which supported the stockings.

She even didn’t have shoes and she ran in stockings with cries for help, and after her, urging her with sticks and guns were the German henchmen and Germans, photographing their victim.

They were laughing, clung on gums on her stockings, pulled them, and then abruptly let of, then the friendly laughter sounded.

Banish the poor through the yard, they walked along the main street with the shots and shouts:

– The Jews! Do not hide, we are good today! Crawl out of their holes!

Emma with the girls did not dare to go out for a long time, even to the yard.
The food, which Arthur brought to Sara and her mother, they divided into four.
Emma often refused of her portions.
She cooked half-rotten potatoes that still remained after winter and ate it by herself.
They lived day by day worse and worse.

In the basement it was very damp, not enough food, it was possible to go out only in the dark, and they were afraid of every rustle.

But they had to leave at least for some water. Emma did it by herself – she took care of the girls.

And then one day...

...It was very quiet. The rain has just stopped.

Emma looked out of the door – all was quiet, there were no policemen, and she decided quickly run to the tap to take water.

On the way back, a couple of steps to her house, suddenly out of the corner two police officers appeared, they were dressed in black uniforms with white armbands.

They shouted with a commanding tone:

– Wait.

Emma was confused and dropped the bucket of water from hands.

It was scary, not for herself but for her daughter.

A lot of scary images in one moment flashed in her head. Emma was tormented by the thoughts, “What will happen to her daughter?”

The policemen slowly and nobly approached to Emma, looking at her from head to toe.

At this time Sara and girls were looking through the door slot.

Sara almost ran to her mother, but the neighbors stopped her:

– Sara! – They whispered excitedly, – do not try, you will not help, and for your mother it will be easier without you to get out somehow, may still be all right.

Sara was shivering, her eyes were streaming with tears, she clenched her fists with wild force and whispered:

– Mummy, Mummy, Mummy...

The policemen ordered Emma to follow them, they said that they would only register her and then let her go.

Emma tried to explain to them that this is a misunderstanding, she is already registered, and even she has a house, instead of her apartment.

But one of the policemen began to lose his temper.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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