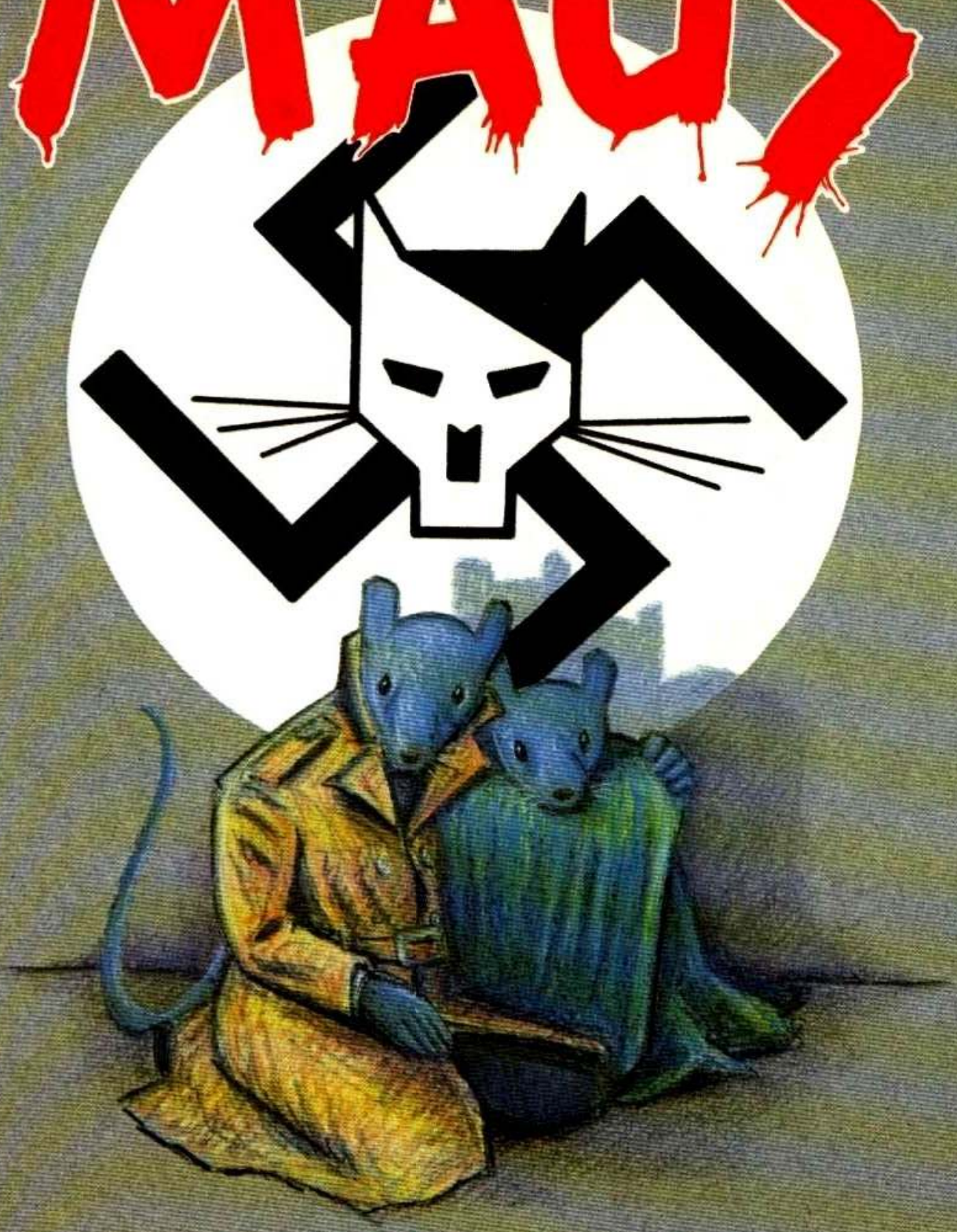
# MAUS



A SURVIVOR'S TALE

art spiegelman

*Maus* is the story of Vladek Spiegelman, a Jewish survivor of Hitler's Europe, and of his son, a cartoonist who tries to come to terms with his father, his father's terrifying story, and History itself. Its form, the cartoon (the Nazis are cats, the Jews mice) succeeds perfectly in shocking us out of any lingering sense of familiarity with the events described, approaching, as it does, the unspeakable through the diminutive. It is, as the *New York Times Book Review* has commented, "a remarkable feat of documentary detail and novelistic vividness...an unfolding literary event."

Moving back and forth from Poland to Rego Park, New York, *Maus* tells two powerful stories: The first is Spiegelman's father's account of how he and his wife survived Hitler's Europe, a harrowing tale filled with countless brushes with death, improbable escapes, and the terror of confinement and betrayal. The second is the author's tortured relationship with his aging father as they try to lead a normal life of minor arguments and passing visits against a backdrop of history too large to pacify. At all levels, this is the ultimate survivor's tale—and that, too, of the children who somehow survive even the survivors.

*Maus* takes Spiegelman's parents to the gates of Auschwitz and him to the edge of despair (with a sequel to come). Put aside all your preconceptions. These cats and mice are not Tom and Jerry, but something quite different. This is a new kind of literature.

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"In its effect on the reader, on a par with Kafka." —David Levine

# MAUS

## A SURVIVOR'S TALE

art spiegelman

PENGUIN BOOKS

"The Jews are undoubtedly a race,

but they are not human."

Adolf Hitler

Rego Park, N.Y. c. 1958

ARTIE! COME TO HOLD THIS A MINUTE WHILE I SAW.
SNRK?
WHY DO YOU CRY, ARTIE? HOLD BETTER ON THE WOOD.
I-I FELL, AND MY FRIENDS SKATED AWAY W-WITHOUT ME.
He stopped sawing.
FRIENDS? YOUR FRIENDS?...
IF YOU LOCK THEM TOGETHER IN A ROOM WITH NO FOOD FOR A WEEK....
...THEN YOU COULD SEE WHAT IT IS, FRIENDS!...

# MY FATHER BLEEDS HISTORY

(MID-1930s TO WINTER 1944)

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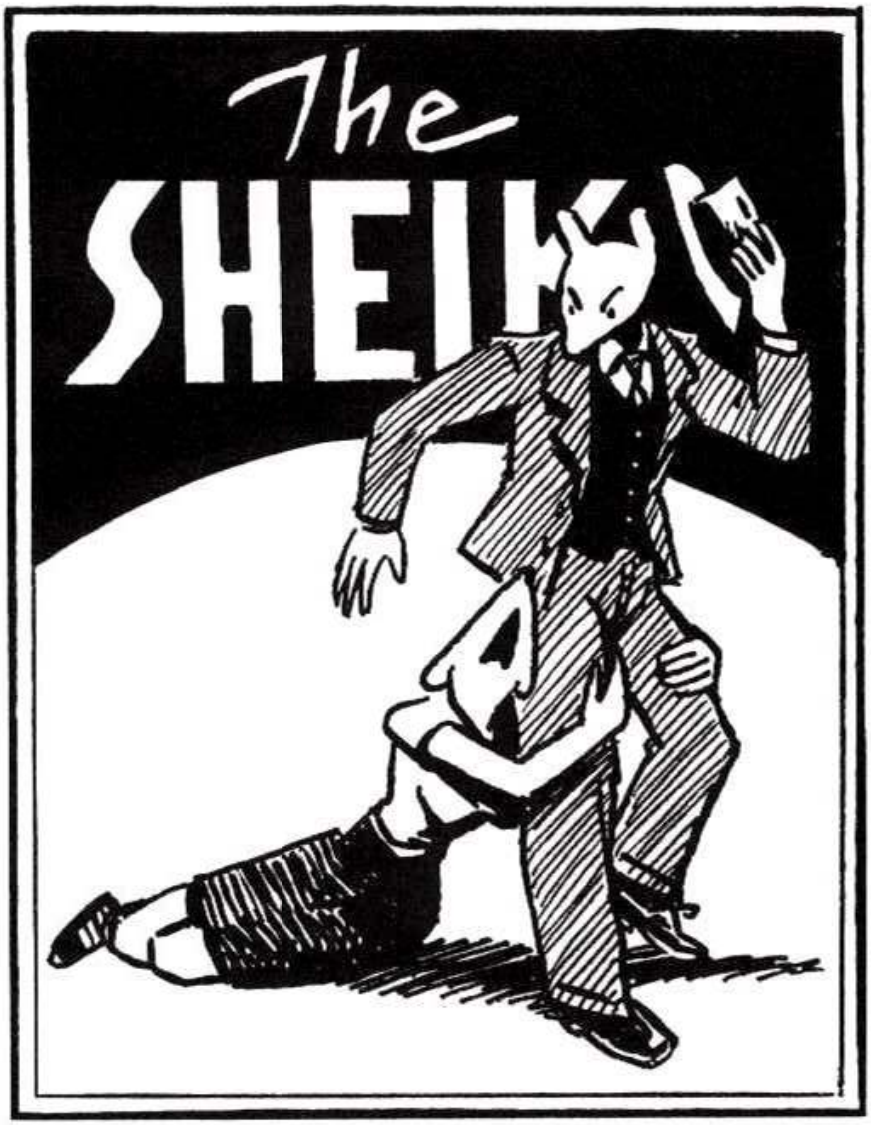
# CHAPTER ONE



I went out to see my Father in Rego Park. I hadn't seen him in a long time- we weren't that close.

After dinner he took me into my old room...
COME-WE'LL TALK WHILE I PEDAL...
IT'S GOOD FOR MY HEART, THE PEDALING. BUT, TELL ME, HOW IS IT BY YOU? HOW IS GOING THE COMICS BUSINESS?
I STILL WANT TO DRAW THAT BOOK ABOUT YOU...
THE ONE I USED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT..
ABOUT YOUR LIFE IN POLAND, AND THE WAR.
IT WOULD TAKE MANY BOOKS, MY LIFE, AND NO ONE WANTS ANYWAY TO HEAR SUCH STORIES.
I WANT TO HEAR IT. START WITH MOM... TELL ME HOW YOU MET.
BETTER YOU SHOULD SPEND YOUR TIME TO MAKE DRAWINGS WHAT WILL BRING YOU SOME MONEY...
BUT, IF YOU WANT, I CAN TELL YOU...I LIVED THEN IN CZESTOCHOWA, A SMALL CITY NOT FAR FROM THE BORDER OF GERMANY...
I WAS IN TEXTILES-BUYING AND SELLING-I DIDNT MAKE MUCH, BUT ALWAYS I COULD MAKE A LIVING.

EVENTUALLY, I TOOK LUCIA TO DANCE...

WHEREVER I WENT - I LOOKED AROUND - AND LUCIA GREENBERG WOULD BE ALSO THERE ...
VLADEK! - WHICH WAY ARE YOU GOING?
JUST TO THE MARKET.
ME TOO - LET'S WALK TOGETHER.
BUT, POP... MOM'S NAME WAS ANNA ZYLBERBERG! ...
ALL THIS WAS BEFORE I MET ANJA - JUST LISTEN, YES?
WHY DONT YOU EVER INVITE ME TO YOUR HOME? ... ARE YOU ASHAMED OF IT?
SHE KEPT INSISTING ME TO SHOW HER MY APARTMENT...
- SO FINALLY, I INVITED HER...
EVERYTHING'S SO NEAT AND CLEAN!
I LIKE TO KEEP THINGS IN ORDER.
YOU MUST HAVE ANOTHER GIRL-FRIEND WHO CLEANS FOR YOU - NO?
NO.
...I DIDN'T WANT TO BE MORE CLOSER WITH HER, BUT SHE REALLY WOULDN'T LET ME GO.

WAS SHE THE FIRST GIRL YOU -UH-
YES...WE WERE MORE INVOLVED, SO LIKE THE YOUTHS HERE TODAY
WE SAW EACH OTHER TOGETHER FOR MAYBE THREE OR FOUR YEARS.
LETS GET ENGAGED, VLADEK.
IT'S LATE. I'LL TAKE YOU HOME.
NOT YET, PLEASE
COME ON- YOUR PARENTS WOULD WORRY.
HER FAMILY WAS NICE, BUT HAD NO MONEY, EVEN FOR A DOWRY.
CZESTOCHOWA 1939
WELL, EVERY HOLIDAY I WENT TO VISIT MY FAMILY... IT WAS MAYBE A JOURNEY OF 35 OR 40 MILES.
DECEMBER 1939
COUSIN VLADEK!
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN. LISTEN...
THERE'S A GIRL IN MY CLASS- I WANT YOU TO MEET US TOMORROW- HER NAME IS ANJA.
SHE'S INCREDIBLY CLEVER, FROM A RICH FAMILY... A VERY GOOD GIRL...

THE NEXT MORNING WE ALL MET TOGETHER. MY COUSIN AND ANJA SPOKE SOMETIMES IN ENGLISH.
HOW YOU LIKE HIM?
HE'S A HANDSOME BOY AND SEEMS VERY NICE.
THEY COULDN'T KNOW I UNDERSTOOD.
WELL - I PROMISED TO BE HOME EARLY... I'LL LEAVE YOU TWO ALONE
YOU KNOW, YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL SPEAKING ENGLISH - A "STRANGER" COULD UNDERSTAND.
Y-YOU KNOW ENGLISH?
DID YOU STUDY IT IN SCHOOL?
I HAD TO QUIT SCHOOL AT ABOUT 14 TO WORK.
...BUT I TOOK PRIVATE LESSONS... I ALWAYS DREAMED OF GOING TO AMERICA.
IT'S A SHAME YOU HAVE TO RETURN TO CZESTOCHOWA SO SOON.
YES - BUT I HAVE MY BUSINESS.
HAVE YOU A PHONE AT HOME?
AS SOON I CAME BACK TO CZESTOCHOWA, SHE CALLED - ONCE A DAY... TWICE... EVERY DAY WE TALKED.

IT PASSED MAYBE A WEEK UNTIL LUCIA AGAIN CAME AND SAW THE PHOTO...

IT WAS NOT SO EASY TO GET FREE FROM LUCIA.

ANJA'S PARENTS WERE ANXIOUS SHE SHOULD BE MARRIED. SHE WAS 24; I WAS THEN 30.

THE ZYLBERBERGS HAD A HOSIERY FACTORY—ONE OF THE BIGGEST IN POLAND... BUT WHEN I CAME IN TO THEIR HOUSE IT WAS SO LIKE A KING CAME...

WELCOME, WELCOME.

ANJA—VLADEK IS HERE!

MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE WHILE I HELP WITH THE DINNER.

TO SEE WHAT A HOUSEKEEPER SHE WAS, I PEEKED INTO ANJA'S CLOSET.

EVERYTHING IS NEAT AND STRAIGHT JUST THE WAY I LIKE IT!

BUT WHAT'S THIS—PILLS?!

I WROTE DOWN EVERY PILL.

IF SHE WAS SICK, THEN WHAT DID I NEED IT FOR?

DINNER IS READY!

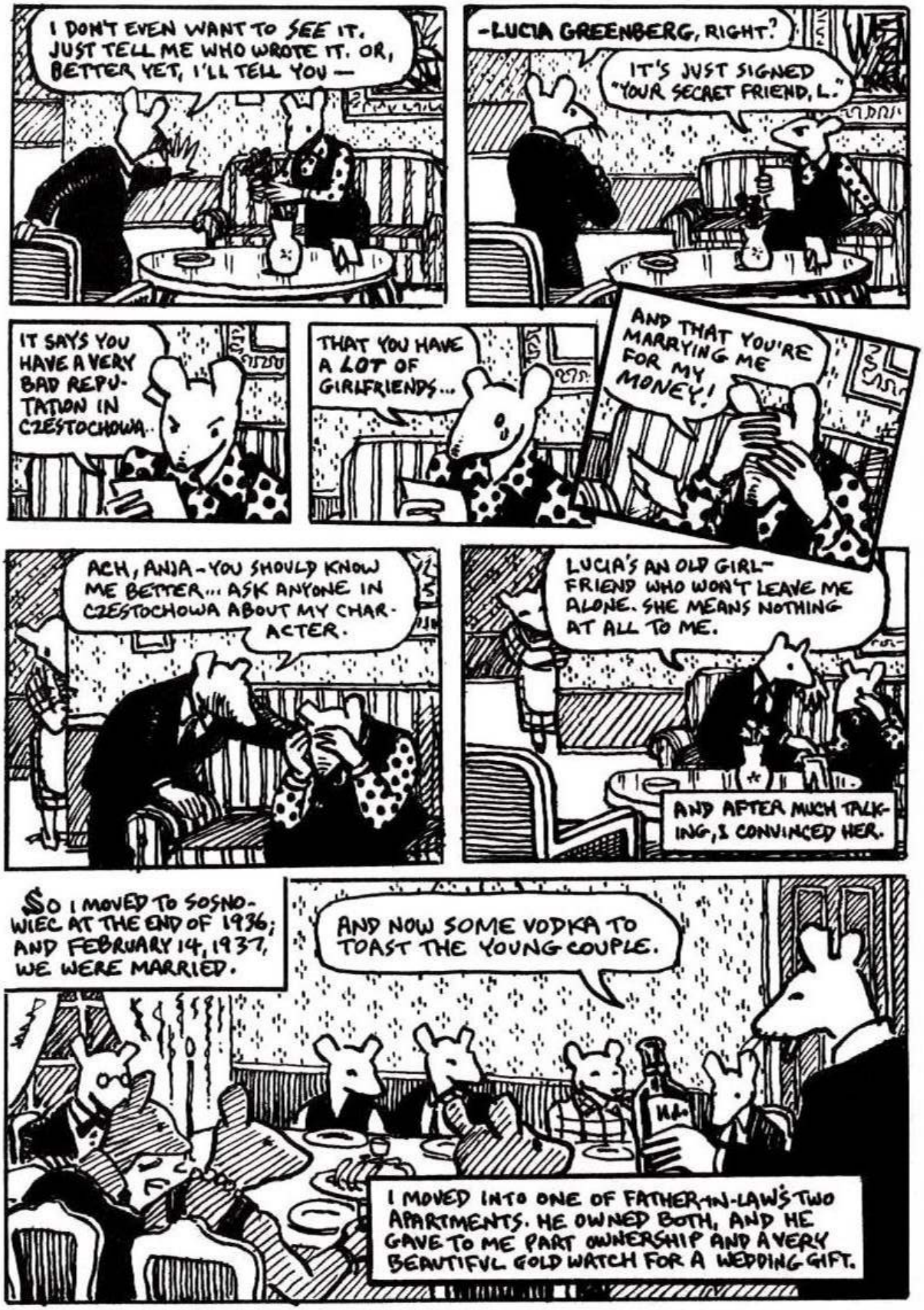
LATER, A FRIEND, A DRUGGIST, TOLD ME THE PILLS WERE ONLY BECAUSE SHE WAS SO SKINNY AND NERVOUS.

HOW ABOUT SOME MORE GEFILTE FISH, VLADEK?

SO, TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT, BY THE END OF 1936 WE WERE ENGAGED AND I MOVED FROM CZESTOCHOWA TO SOSNOWIEC.

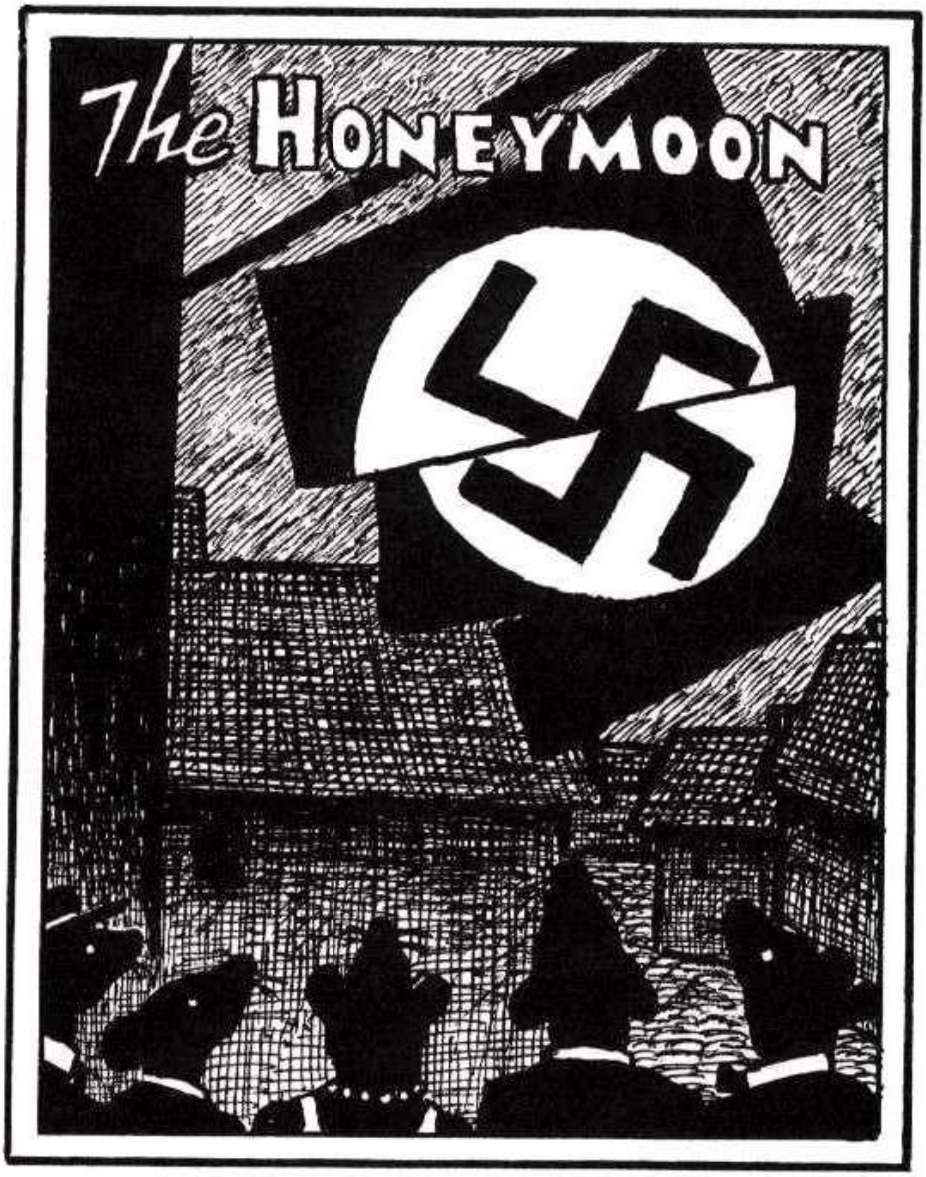
ACH! HERE I FORGOT TO TELL SOMETHING FROM BEFORE I MOVED TO SOSNOWIEC BUT AFTER OUR ENGAGEMENT WAS MADE.
ONE EVENING THE BELL RANG ...
LUCIA
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? I'M ON MY WAY OUT.
I-I'LL COME WITH YOU.
NO, YOU CAN'T COME WI-
PLEASE, VLADEK!
SHE FELL ON THE FLOOR AND HELD STRONG MY LEGS.
DON'T RUN AWAY!
I SAW NOW THAT I WENT TOO FAR WITH HER.
SLAM!
I RAN OUT TO MY FRIEND WHAT INTRODUCED US. HE WENT TO CALM HER DOWN AND TOOK HER HOME.

I DIDN'T HEAR MORE FROM LUCIA - BUT ALSO I STOPPED HEARING FROM ANJA ...
NO TELEPHONE CALLS, NO LETTERS, NOTHING! WHAT HAPPENED?
HELLO, MRS. ZYLBERBERG. COULD I SPEAK TO ANJA?
SHE SAYS SHE WON'T SPEAK TO YOU!
BUT WHY?
SHE GOT A LETTER FROM SOMEONE IN CZESTOCHOWA. MY GOD! IT SAYS THE WORST THINGS IN THE WORLD ABOUT YOU!
WELL, I CAN'T CONVINCE HER ON THE PHONE. I'LL COME DOWN BY TRAIN ON FRIDAY AFTER WORK.
IT WASN'T EVEN A HOLIDAY, BUT I WENT ANYWAY TO SOSNOWIEC.
SO, TELL ME, ANJA - WHAT HAVE I DONE THAT'S SO HORRIBLE?
YOU SHOULD KNOW - JUST READ THIS!

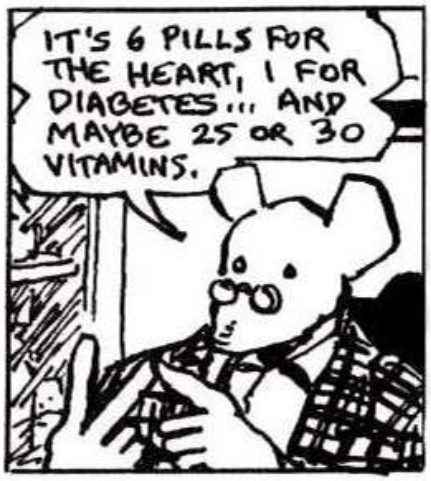

I DON'T EVEN WANT TO SEE IT. JUST TELL ME WHO WROTE IT. OR, BETTER YET, I'LL TELL YOU —
—LUCIA GREENBERG, RIGHT?
IT'S JUST SIGNED "YOUR SECRET FRIEND, L."
IT SAYS YOU HAVE A VERY BAD REPUTATION IN CZESTOCHOWA..
THAT YOU HAVE A LOT OF GIRLFRIENDS...
AND THAT YOU'RE MARRYING ME FOR MY MONEY!
ACH, ANJA - YOU SHOULD KNOW ME BETTER... ASK ANYONE IN CZESTOCHOWA ABOUT MY CHARACTER.
LUCIA'S AN OLD GIRLFRIEND WHO WON'T LEAVE ME ALONE. SHE MEANS NOTHING AT ALL TO ME.
AND AFTER MUCH TALKING, I CONVINCED HER.
SO I MOVED TO SOSNOWIEC AT THE END OF 1936; AND FEBRUARY 14, 1937, WE WERE MARRIED.
AND NOW SOME VODKA TO TOAST THE YOUNG COUPLE.
I MOVED INTO ONE OF FATHER-IN-LAW'S TWO APARTMENTS. HE OWNED BOTH, AND HE GAVE TO ME PART OWNERSHIP AND A VERY BEAUTIFUL GOLD WATCH FOR A WEDDING GIFT.

BUT THIS WHAT I JUST TOLD YOU-ABOUT LUCIA AND SO-I DON'T WANT YOU SHOULD WRITE THIS IN YOUR BOOK.
WHAT? WHY NOT?
IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HITLER, WITH THE HOLOCAUST!
BUT POP- IT'S GREAT MATERIAL. IT MAKES EVERYTHING MORE REAL-MORE HUMAN.
I WANT TO TELL YOUR STORY, THE WAY IT REALLY HAPPENED.
BUT THIS ISN'T SO PROPER, SO RESPECTFUL.
... I CAN TELL YOU OTHER STORIES, BUT SUCH PRIVATE THINGS, I DON'T WANT YOU SHOULD MENTION.
OKAY, OKAY- I PROMISE.

CHAPTER TWO



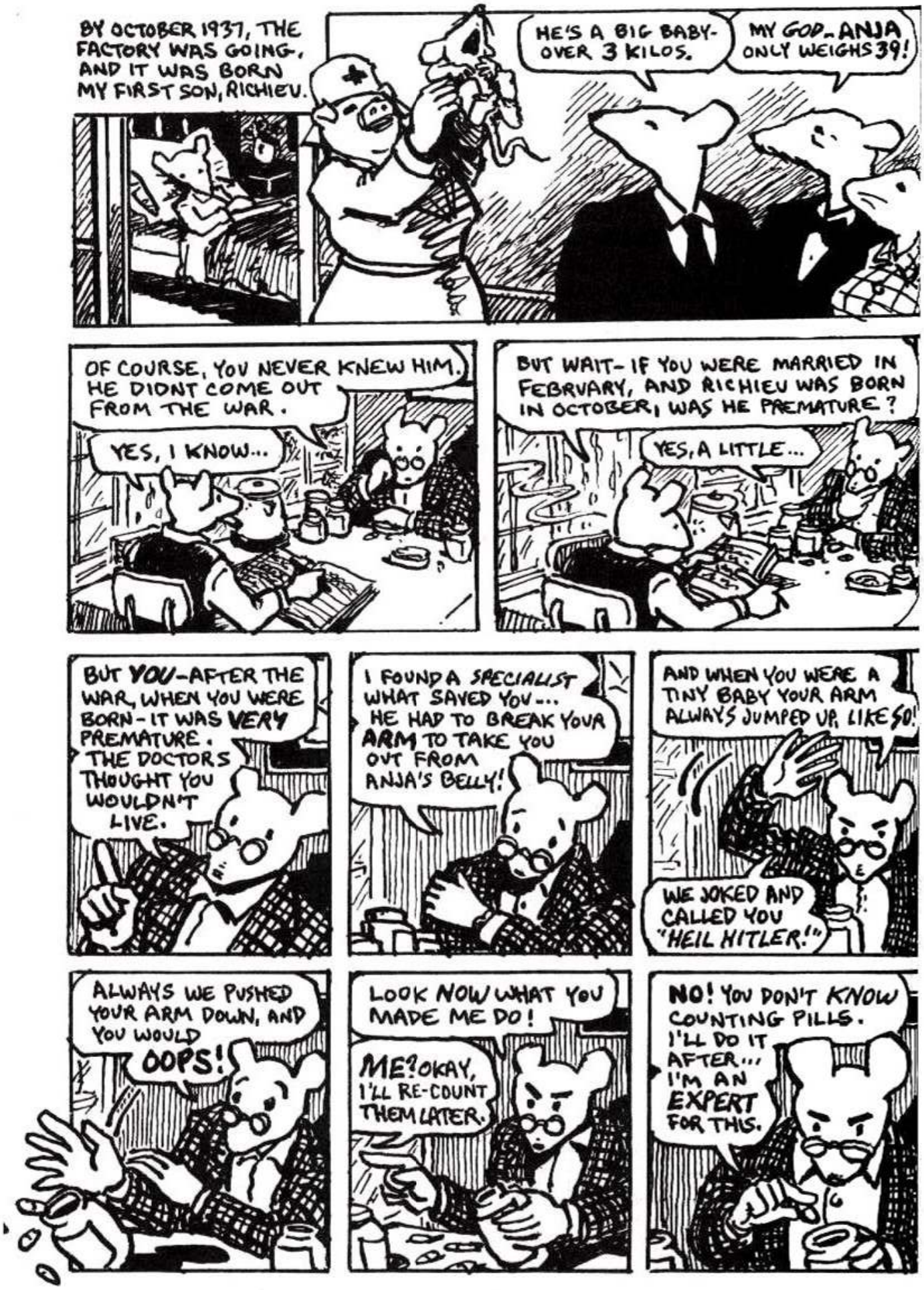
For the next few months I went back to visit my father quite regularly, to hear his story.



ANJA WAS INVOLVED IN CONSPIRATIONS!

A LITTLE BEFORE THE POLICE CAME, SHE GOT FROM FRIENDS A TELEPHONE CALL...
THEY SUSPECT YOU! HIDE THE PAPERS QUICKLY! BUT THEY'RE IMPORTANT-TRY NOT TO DESTROY THEM.
WHAT TO DO? SHE RAN TO THE SEAMSTRESS WHAT WAS ONE OF OUR TENANTS
MISS STEFANSKA-PLEASE! HIDE THIS PACKAGE FOR ME-DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT IT!
?
AND ANJA WAS A GOOD CUSTOMER, SO SHE AGREED.
THE POLICE WENT OVER OUR HOUSE TOP TO BOTTOM. IT WAS NOTHING TO FIND SO THEY SEARCHED THE NEIGHBORS.
OKAY-HOW DID YOU GET THIS PACKAGE?
I NEVER SAW IT BEFORE-ONE OF MY CUSTOMERS MUST HAVE LEFT IT!
ANJA WAS SAFE, BUT THE SEAMSTRESS THEY ARRESTED.

WHEN I FOUND OUT THIS STORY, I WAS READY TO BREAK THE MARRIAGE.
I TOLD HER "ANJA, IF YOU WANT ME YOU HAVE TO GO MY WAY...
IF YOU WANT YOUR COMMUNIST FRIENDS, THEN I CAN'T STAY IN THIS HOUSE!"
AND SHE WAS A GOOD GIRL, AND OF COURSE SHE STOPPED ALL SUCH THINGS.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SEAMSTRESS?
MISS STEFANSKA SAT IN PRISON FOR A LONGER TIME - MAYBE 3 MONTHS.
IT WASN'T ENOUGH EVIDENCE AND FINALLY THE POLICE LEFT HER GO.
FATHER-IN-LAW PAID THE COST FROM THE LAWYERS AND GAVE TO HER SOME MONEY - IT COST MAYBE 15,000 ZLOTYS.
THAT'S A LOT, HUH?
JA, BUT NOT ONLY THIS. AT THE SAME TIME HE DID FOR US EVEN MORE...
YOU KNOW, VLADEK, WHEN YOU AND ANJA GIVE ME A GRANDCHILD, I WANT HIM TO BE WELL-OFF.
WELL, I ALMOST HAVE ENOUGH FROM MY SALES TRIPS TO START UP A TEXTILE SHOP...
A SHOP? PFUI! YOU OUGHT TO HAVE A TEXTILE FACTORY!
THAT WOULD COST A FORTUNE!!
PLEASE - I CAN GIVE YOU THE MONEY AND PLENTY OF CREDIT.
I STARTED A FACTORY IN BIELSKO, AND VISITED TO ANJA EVERY WEEK-END.


BY OCTOBER 1937, THE FACTORY WAS GOING, AND IT WAS BORN MY FIRST SON, RICHIEU.
HE'S A BIG BABY- OVER 3 KILOS.
MY GOD- ANJA ONLY WEIGHS 39!
OF COURSE, YOU NEVER KNEW HIM. HE DIDNT COME OUT FROM THE WAR.
YES, I KNOW...
BUT WAIT- IF YOU WERE MARRIED IN FEBRUARY, AND RICHIEU WAS BORN IN OCTOBER, WAS HE PREMATURE?
YES, A LITTLE...
BUT YOU- AFTER THE WAR, WHEN YOU WERE BORN- IT WAS VERY PREMATURE. THE DOCTORS THOUGHT YOU WOULDN'T LIVE.
I FOUND A SPECIALIST WHAT SAVED YOU... HE HAD TO BREAK YOUR ARM TO TAKE YOU OUT FROM ANJA'S BELLY!
AND WHEN YOU WERE A TINY BABY YOUR ARM ALWAYS JUMPED UP, LIKE SO!
WE JOKED AND CALLED YOU "HEIL HITLER!"
ALWAYS WE PUSHED YOUR ARM DOWN, AND YOU WOULD
OOPS!
LOOK NOW WHAT YOU MADE ME DO!
ME? OKAY, I'LL RE-COUNT THEM LATER.
NO! YOU DON'T KNOW COUNTING PILLS. I'LL DO IT AFTER... I'M AN EXPERT FOR THIS.

SO... ANJA STAYED WITH THE FAMILY AND I WENT TO LIVE IN BIELSKO FOR MY FACTORY BUSINESS AND TO FIND FOR US AN APARTMENT...

RIGHT AWAY, WE WENT. THE SANITARIUM WAS INSIDE CZECHOSLOVAKIA, ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE AND BEAUTIFUL IN THE WORLD.
I REMEMBER WHEN WE WERE ALMOST ARRIVED, WE PASSED A SMALL TOWN.
OI!
EVERYBODY - EVERY JEW FROM THE TRAIN - GOT VERY EXCITED AND FRIGHTENED.
LOOK!
IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF 1938 - BEFORE THE WAR - HANGING HIGH IN THE CENTER OF TOWN, IT WAS A NAZI FLAG..
HERE WAS THE FIRST TIME I SAW, WITH MY OWN EYES, THE SWASTIKA.

I TELL YOU, THERE'S A POGROM GOING ON IN GERMANY TODAY!
ONE FELLOW TOLD US OF HIS COUSIN WHAT WAS LIVING IN GERMANY...

...HE HAD TO SELL HIS BUSINESS TO A GERMAN AND RUN OUT FROM THE COUNTRY WITHOUT EVEN THE MONEY.

I AM A FILTHY JEW
IT WAS VERY HARD THERE FOR THE JEWS-TERRIBLE!

ANOTHER FELLOW TOLD US OF A RELATIVE IN BRANDENBERG-THE POLICE CAME TO HIS HOUSE AND NO ONE HEARD AGAIN FROM HIM.

This town is Jew Free
IT WAS MANY, MANY SUCH STORIES-SYNAGOGUES BURNED, JEWS BEATEN WITH NO REASON, WHOLE TOWNS PUSHING OUT ALL JEWS-EACH STORY WORSE THAN THE OTHER.

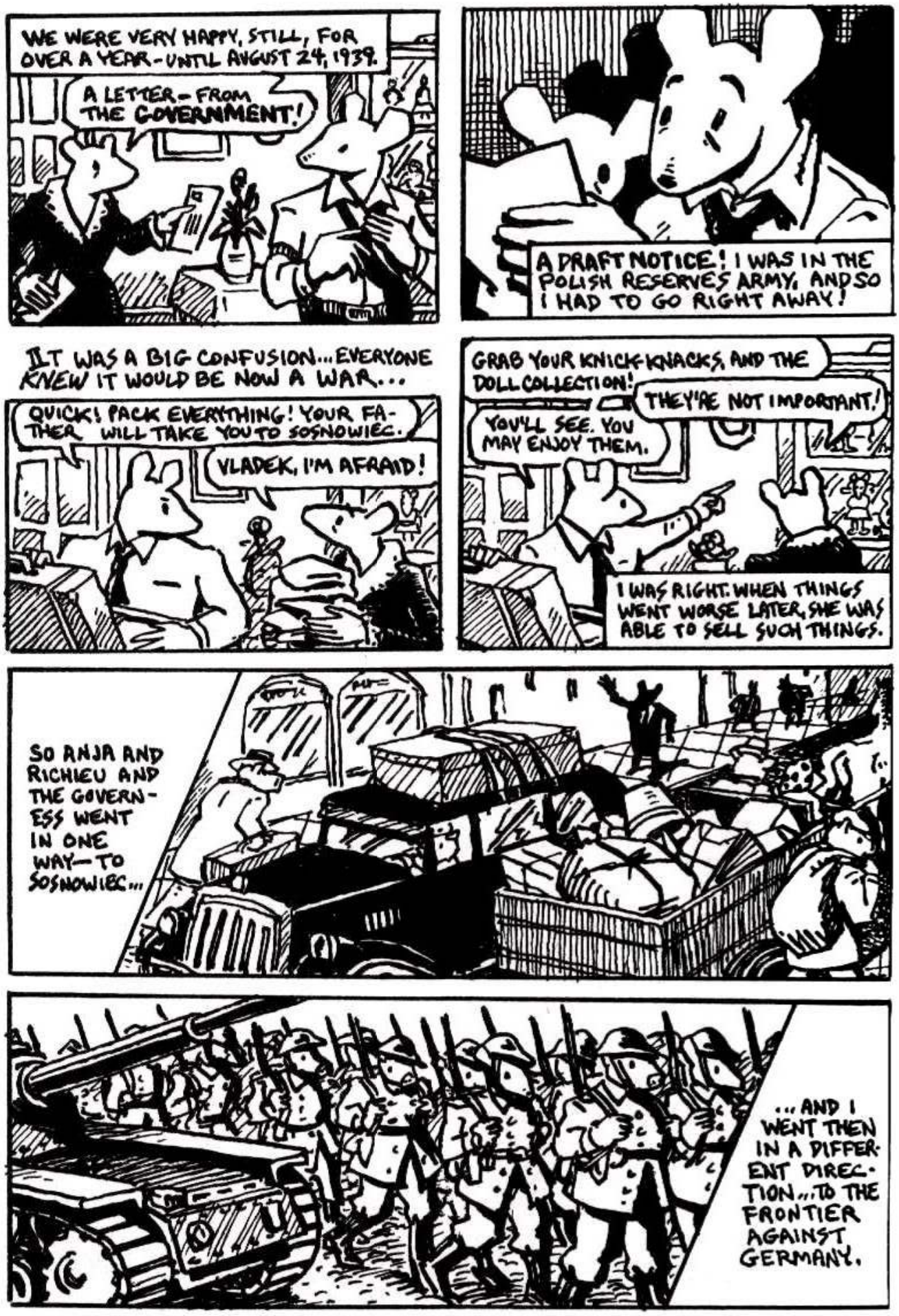
LET'S HOPE THOSE NAZI GANGSTERS GET THROWN OUT OF POWER!
JUST PRAY THAT THEY DON'T START A WAR!!

AND EACH FEW DAYS I TALKED TO THE BIG SPECIALIST AT THE CLINIC.

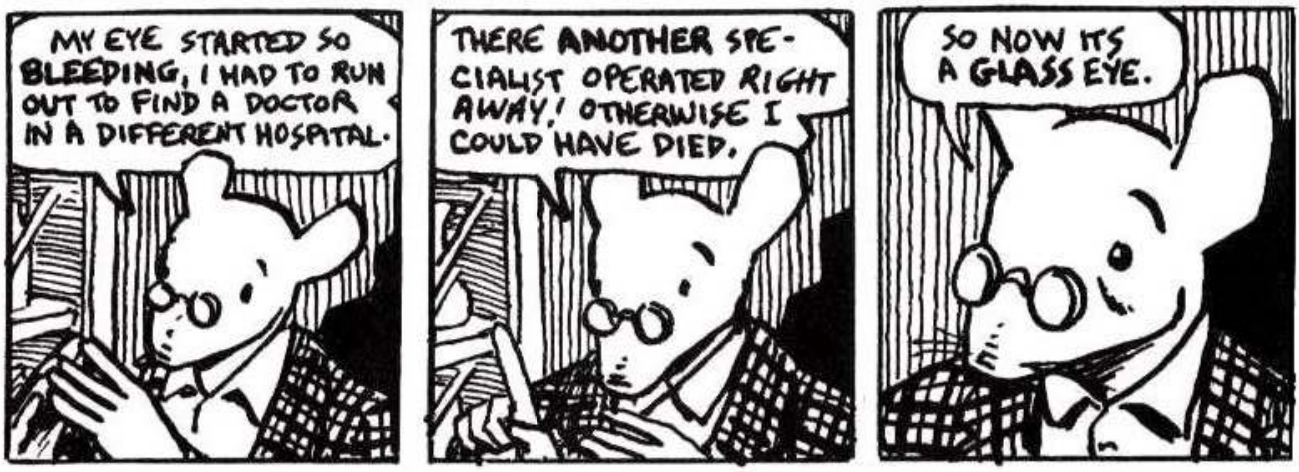
AND SHE WAS SO LAUGHING AND SO HAPPY, SO HAPPY, THAT SHE APPROACHED EACH TIME AND KISSED ME, SO HAPPY SHE WAS.

WE STAYED MAYBE 3 MONTHS, AND WHEN WE CAME BACK, ANJA WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM WHEN SHE LEFT.
YOO HOO, POPPA!
ANJA! YOU LOOK LIKE A MILLION!
LISTEN, VLADEK... I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO WORRY WHILE YOU WERE AT THE SANITARIUM, BUT –
-BRACE YOURSELF- THE BIELSKO FACTORY HAS BEEN ROBBED!
WHAT!
IT HAPPENED LAST MONTH. THEY TOOK EVERYTHING!
AI! AI! AI!
I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO INSURE IT BEFORE WE LEFT.
WELL, AT LEAST I CAN HELP YOU BUILD IT UP AGAIN.
WERE YOU LOOTED AS PART OF SOME KIND OF ANTI-SEMITIC ACTIVITY?
I DON'T THINK THIS WAS IT. JUST A ROBBERY...
...LIKE WHEN THEY ROBBED US IN REGO PARK HERE, LAST YEAR.
WELL... IN BIELSKO, FATHER-IN-LAW HELPED US AGAIN TO ESTABLISH OURSELVES...

IN A COUPLE MONTHS WE WERE WELL-OFF— QUITE WELL-OFF... A WORKING FACTORY, A 2 BEDROOM APARTMENT, A POLISH GOVERNESS, AND EVEN A MAID.
LOOK, RICHIEU, POPPA'S HOME!
YOU LOOK UPSET, VLADEK.
THERE WAS ANOTHER RIOT DOWNTOWN TODAY.
...EVERYONE YELLING, "JEWS OUT! JEWS OUT!"... EVEN TWO PEOPLE KILLED. THE POLICE JUST WATCHED!
IT'S THOSE NAZIS STIRRING EVERYBODY UP!
WHEN IT COMES TO JEWS, THE POLES DON'T NEED MUCH STIRRING UP!
MRS. SPIEGELMAN— HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH A THING. I THINK OF YOU AS PART OF MY OWN FAMILY!
I'M SORRY, JANINA. I DIDN'T MEAN YOU! I'M JUST WORRIED!
MAYBE WE SHOULD MOVE AWAY, LIKE SOME OTHERS HAVE.
IF THINGS GET REALLY BAD WE'LL RUN BACK TO SOSNOWIEC.
WHY WOULD SOSNOWIEC BE ANY SAFER THAN BIELSKO?
WE THOUGHT THEN, THAT HITLER WANTED ONLY THE PARTS FROM POLAND, LIKE BIELSKO, WHAT USED TO BE PARTS FROM GERMANY BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR.


WE WERE VERY HAPPY, STILL, FOR OVER A YEAR - UNTIL AUGUST 24, 1939.
A LETTER - FROM THE GOVERNMENT!
A DRAFT NOTICE! I WAS IN THE POLISH RESERVES ARMY, AND SO I HAD TO GO RIGHT AWAY!
IT WAS A BIG CONFUSION... EVERYONE KNEW IT WOULD BE NOW A WAR...
QUICK! PACK EVERYTHING! YOUR FATHER WILL TAKE YOU TO SOSNOWIEC.
VLADEK, I'M AFRAID!
GRAB YOUR KNICK-KNACKS, AND THE DOLL COLLECTION!
THEY'RE NOT IMPORTANT!
YOU'LL SEE. YOU MAY ENJOY THEM.
I WAS RIGHT. WHEN THINGS WENT WORSE LATER, SHE WAS ABLE TO SELL SUCH THINGS.
SO ANJA AND RICHIEU AND THE GOVERNESS WENT IN ONE WAY — TO SOSNOWIEC...
...AND I WENT THEN IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION... TO THE FRONTIER AGAINST GERMANY.

..AND ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1939, THE WAR CAME. I WAS ON THE FRONT, ONE OF THE FIRST TO
ACH!
SO-TWICE I SPILLED MY DRUGSTORE!
IT'S MY EYES.
EVER SINCE I GOT IN MY LEFT EYE THE HEMORRHAGING AND THE GLAUCOMA, IT HAD TO BE TAKEN OUT FROM ME. AND NOW I DON'T SEE SO WELL.
AND NOW I HAVE A CATARACT INSIDE MY ONE GOOD EYE. YOU SEE HOW I HAVE TO SUFFER?
I TOLD YOU ABOUT THE BIG-SHOT SPECIALIST WHAT WAS GOING TO OPERATE ME?
UH-HUH.
HE LAST YEAR PUT ME INTO THE HOSPITAL FOR AN IMMEDIATE OPERATION...
AND THEN HE JUST LEFT ME.. HE WENT SOMEWHERE AWAY TO GIVE LECTURES ON THE TELEVISION!


MY EYE STARTED SO BLEEDING, I HAD TO RUN OUT TO FIND A DOCTOR IN A DIFFERENT HOSPITAL.
THERE ANOTHER SPECIALIST OPERATED RIGHT AWAY! OTHERWISE I COULD HAVE DIED.
SO NOW ITS A GLASS EYE.

HE DID A GOOD JOB, NO? ONE TIME, EVEN, A YOUNG DOCTOR CAME TO MY BED THERE IN THE HOSPITAL...

HE LOOKED WITH A LIGHT A LONG TIME IN MY EYES AND TOLD: "MR. SPIEGELMAN, YOUR LEFT EYE IS PERFECT!..

"...BUT IN YOUR RIGHT EYE IS CATARACTS."
HE DIDN'T KNOW, OF COURSE, THAT THE LEFT EYE IS GLASS...

AND I DIDN'T TELL ANYTHING TO HIM. I DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE HIM AN EMBARRASSMENT.
UH-HUH- YOU TOLD ME ABOUT THAT.

WELL, IT'S ENOUGH FOR TODAY, YES? I'M TIRED AND I MUST COUNT STILL MY PILLS.
OKAY, GOOD IDEA... MY HAND IS SORE FROM WRITING ALL THIS DOWN.

# CHAPTER THREE

I visited my father more often in order to get more information about his past..

FORTUNATELY FOR ME, MOM WOULD EVENTUALLY FEED ME SOMETHING I LIKED, AND THROW AWAY THE OLD FOOD WHILE YOU WEREN'T LOOKING.
YES. ANJA WAS TOO EASY WITH YOU ALWAYS.
HMMH.
THANKS FOR THE DINNER, MALA. IT WAS DELICIOUS.
PFEH – THE CHICKEN WAS, I THOUGHT, TOO DRY. COME, WE'LL TALK BETTER IN THE LIVING ROOM.
OKAY – I'LL GET MY NOTEBOOK.
... I TELL YOU, WITH MALA I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. SHE –
PLEASE, POP! I'D RATHER NOT HEAR ALL THAT AGAIN. TELL ME ABOUT 1939, WHEN YOU WERE DRAFTED.
1939? YES... WE WERE GIVEN ARMY TRAININGS FOR A FEW DAYS AND THEN, BY THE START OF SEPTEMBER WE WERE ON THE FRONTIER.
... WE WERE ALL DIGGED INTO TRENCHES NEAR A RIVER. ON THE OTHER SIDE IT WAS GERMANS.

IT WAS EVERYTHING QUIET UNTIL NEAR MORNING...
WAIT A MINUTE. THEY ONLY TRAINED YOU FOR A FEW DAYS BEFORE SENDING YOU INTO COMBAT!
WELL, THE FIRST TIME I WENT INTO THE ARMY FOR 18 MONTHS WHEN I WAS 21. THEN EVERY 4 YEARS I WENT TO LUBLIN FOR A MONTH TO TRAIN.

YOU KNOW, MY FATHER TRIED TO KEEP ALL HIS CHILDREN OUT FROM THE ARMY..

..BECAUSE WHEN HE WAS YOUNG, HE HAD THEN TO GO INTO THE RUSSIAN ARMY.
...AND THERE THEY TOOK YOU FOR 25 YEARS.
...TO SIBERIA!

MY FATHER PULLED OUT 14 OF HIS TEETH TO ESCAPE. IF YOU MISSED 12 TEETH THEY LEFT YOU GO.

SO WHEN MY BROTHER MARCUS GOT 21 YEARS, FATHER PUT HIM ON A STARVATION DIET. ALWAYS MARCUS WAS SICKLY-SO THIN.
AND WHEN HE WENT FOR THE ARMY EXAMINATION...THEY DIDN'T TAKE HIM.

A YEAR LATER WHEN IT CAME MY TURN, FATHER WANTED TO MAKE TO ME THE SAME THING.
IT WAS SOMETHING TERRIBLE!...

THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE EXAMINATION HE STARTED WITH ME...
WAKE UP, VLADEK! YOU'RE SLEEPING TOO MUCH!
ONLY THREE HOURS A NIGHT?
STOP, VLADEK. YOU MUSTN'T EAT SO MUCH!
BUT I'M HUNGRY!
OKAY- HAVE ONE MORE HERRING.
FOR THREE MONTHS I ATE ONLY SALTED HERRING AND NO WATER TO LOSE WEIGHT.
AND A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE EXAM, NO SLEEP AND NO FOOD...
GOOD BOY-JUST A LITTLE MORE COFFEE!
ONLY A GALLON COFFEE A DAY FOR MY HEART.
AND WHEN FINALLY I WENT FOR MY MEDICAL EXAMINATION...
HERE'S A HEALTHY ONE.
UM!...
NO...THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIM.
BUILD YOURSELF UP FOR A YEAR, YOUNG MAN, AND WE'LL REVIEW YOUR CASE AGAIN.

...THE NEXT YEAR FATHER WANTED I WOULD AGAIN DO THE SAME THING. BUT I BEGGED HIM AND WENT IN 1922 TO THE ARMY...
BUT LET'S GET BACK TO 1939!
YES. YOU SEE HOW YOU MIX ME UP? ...IN 1939 WE WERE ON THE FRONTIER, DIGGED INTO TRENCHES BY A RIVER.
IT WAS QUIET UNTIL NEAR MORNING. THEN I HEARD SHOOTING ON BOTH SIDES.
AN OFFICER SNEAKED OVER TO ME.
DIG IN DEEPER. YOU'LL GET KILLED.
YOUR GUN IS COLD! WHY AREN'T YOU SHOOTING?
I DIDN'T SEE AT WHAT TO SHOOT...
KPOK! KPOK! KPOK!
...BUT I DIGGED DEEPER AND STARTED TO SHOOT!

THEN BULLETS CAME IN MY DIRECTION.

I DUG DEEPER MY TRENCH BUT I STOPPED TO SHOOT.

BUT WHEN I LOOKED IN MY GUN, I SAW... A TREE!...

AND THE TREE WAS ACTUALLY MOVING!

WELL, IF IT MOVED, I HAD TO SHOOT!

IT HELD UP A HAND TO SHOW IT WAS HURT. TO SURRENDER.

BUT I KEPT SHOOTING AND SHOOTING. UNTIL FINALLY THE TREE STOPPED MOVING. WHO KNOWS; OTHERWISE HE COULD HAVE SHOT ME!

AFTER TWO HOURS OF FIGHTING, THE NAZIS OVERCAME OUR SIDE OF THE RIVER.
GET UP!
GIVE ME YOUR GUN!
IT'S HOT! YOU WERE SHOOTING AT US!
MY COMMANDER MADE ME SHOOT. I ONLY FIRED IN THE AIR!
I ANSWERED IN GERMAN AND HIS PARTNER STOPPED HIM FROM BEATING ME.
THEY MARCHED ME TO WHERE IT WAS MORE LIKE ME. WAR PRISONERS.
AND ALL FROM US WHAT WEREN'T INJURED THEY MARCHED OVER TO THEIR SIDE OF THE RIVER TO LOOK FOR DEAD SOLDIERS.

ATTENTION! ALL PRISONERS WILL CARRY OUR DEAD AND WOUNDED TO THE WAITING RED CROSS TRUCKS.
YOU! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
I-I THOUGHT I SAW A BODY OVER BY THE RIVER!
I KNEW WHERE THE ONE I SHOT SHOULD BE LAYING.
YES. HERE!
ER VERBLUTETE! HIS BLOOD RAN OUT!
CARRY HIM OVER TO THE TRUCK WITH THE OTHERS.
HIS NAME WAS JAN...
... AND I KNEW THAT I KILLED HIM.
AND I SAID TO MYSELF: "WELL, AT LEAST I DID SOMETHING."

THEY TOOK US TO A PLACE NEAR NUREMBERG WHERE IT WAS MANY WAR PRISONERS. THE JEWS THEY MADE TO STAND SEPARATE.
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, THIS WAR!
WE SHOULD HANG YOU RIGHT HERE ON THIS SPOT!
OF COURSE, NOBODY OF US SAID A WORD.
PUT DOWN ALL YOUR VALUABLES!
HE CAME UP TO ME... I HAD MAYBE 300 ZLOTYS.
WHY SO MUCH MONEY, JEW?
MANY OTHERS HAD ONLY 5 OR 6 ZLOTYS.
DO YOU EXPECT TO DO SOME BUSINESS HERE? SHOW ME YOUR HANDS!
YOU NEVER WORKED A DAY IN YOUR LIFE!
LIKE YOU, ARTIE, MY HANDS WERE ALWAYS VERY DELICATE.
WELL, JEW, DON'T WORRY. WE'LL FIND WORK FOR YOU!
AND THEY DID.

ANOTHER GERMAN TOOK 4 OR 5 FROM US TO A STABLE.
SEE THIS MESS? IT BETTER BE SPOTLESSLY CLEAN IN ONE HOUR. UNDERSTAND!
IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DO IT IN ONE HOUR!
WE REALLY WORKED VERY HARD. BUT, AN HOUR LATER...
SO!
NOT FINISHED YET?
THIS WILL COST YOU YOUR SOUP, YOU LAZY BASTARDS!
AND SOMEHOW WE DID MAKE THE JOB IN ONLY AN HOUR AND A HALF. BUT LOOK WHAT YOU DO, ARTIE!
HUH?
YOU'RE DROPPING ON THE CARPET CIGARETTE ASHES. YOU WANT IT SHOULD BE LIKE A STABLE HERE?
OOPS. SORRY.
CLEAN IT, YES? OTHERWISE I HAVE TO DO IT. MALA COULD LET IT SIT LIKE THIS FOR A WEEK AND NEVER TOUCH IT.
AND SHE KNOWS HOW WITH MY SICKNESSES IT'S HARD NOW FOR ME TO DO SUCH THINGS.
OKAY, OKAY. IT'S CLEAN.

TO KEEP WARM WE HAD ONLY OUR SUMMER UNIFORMS AND A THIN BLANKET.

MANY OTHERS GOT FROSTBITE WOUNDS. IN THE WOUNDS WAS PUS, AND IN THE PUS WAS LICE.

EVERY DAY I BATHED AND DID GYMNASTICS TO KEEP STRONG. ...AND EVERY DAY WE PRAYED.
מה־טבו אהליך יעקב, משכנתיך ישראל.
I WAS VERY RELIGIOUS, AND IT WASN'T ELSE TO DO.
OFTEN WE PLAYED CHESS TO KEEP OUR MINDS BUSY AND MAKE THE TIME GO.
I HAD A SET MADE FROM STONES AND BREAD CRUMBS.
AND ONE TIME A WEEK WE COULD WRITE LETTERS THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS.
Dear Anja. I am fine. I miss you.
ONLY IN GERMAN. AND VERY CAREFUL.
AND THROUGH THIS IT CAME A PACKAGE...
CHOCOLATE BARS! CIGARETTES! JAM!
IT WAS SO TREASURING FOR ME THIS PACKAGE.
I HAD A SIGN MY FAMILY WAS SAFE, AND – BECAUSE I NEVER SMOKED – I HAD CIGARETTES TO TRADE FOR FOOD.
AND SO THINGS WENT FOR MAYBE SIX WEEKS, THEN...
LOOK! THERE'S AN ANNOUNCEMENT OUTSIDE!
WORKERS NEEDED
War Prisoners may volunteer for labor assignments to replace German workers called to the front. Housing and abundant food will be supplied.
IT'S A TRICK!
NEVER VOLUNTEER!
IF WE HAVE TO DIE, LET'S DIE HERE!
NO!
I DIDN'T AGREE!
I'M NOT GOING TO DIE, AND I WON'T DIE HERE! I WANT TO BE TREATED LIKE A HUMAN BEING!

WHEN MY COMRADES SAW I WAS GOING; THEY TOO REGISTERED.
WE WERE RIGHT AWAY SENT TO A BIG GERMAN COMPANY.
WE WERE TAKEN TO NICE WOODEN HOUSES. WE GOT SOUP AND WE GOT BREAD...
LOOK! A STOVE!
AND REAL BEDS!
WITH SHEETS AND PILLOWS!
AND FOR A WHOLE DAY WE ONLY RESTED AND GOT BACK OUR STRENGTH.

AH- IT SEEMS LIKE YEARS SINCE I'VE FELT WARM OR BEEN IN A BED!

YES- FUNNY, ISN'T IT? IT'S ONLY A LITTLE OVER 2 MONTHS SINCE WE WERE DRAFTED.

I'M WORRIED THOUGH, VLADEK- WHO KNOWS WHAT KIND OF WORK THEY'LL GIVE US.
IT DOESN'T MATTER..

..ANYTHING IS BETTER THAN ROTTING IN THOSE TENTS.
I SUPPOSE.

THE NEXT DAY WE WERE GIVEN SHOVELS AND PICKS...
...THINGS WHAT WE NEVER HELD IN OUR HANDS BEFORE.

AND THE WORK WAS REALLY VERY HARD– WE HAD TO MOVE MOUNTAINS.
MOUNTAIN
VALLEY
THE HILLS WERE MAYBE 3 OR 4 YARDS HIGH. WE HAD TO MAKE IT LEVEL.
SOME COMPLAINED – THOSE WHAT WERE TOO OLD OR WEAK FOR SUCH WORK:
I-I CANT TAKE ANYMORE.
WORTHLESS JEW!
IF YOU'RE UNHAPPY – GO BACK TO THE P.O.W. CAMP.
IT'S OKAY – WE'LL HELP YOU WHEN NO ONE IS LOOKING.
WE TRIED TO HELP, BUT – WHAT YOU THINK? – SOME WENT BACK TO THE TENTS TO FREEZE AND TO STARVE.
BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM, I DON'T KNOW.
STILL, EIGHTY PER CENT STAYED. THERE WAS ENOUGH TO EAT, AND A WARM BED. IT WAS BETTER TO STAY...

...ALWAYS I WENT TO SLEEP EXHAUSTED. AND ONE NIGHT I HAD A DREAM...
"DON'T WORRY...
A VOICE WAS TALKING TO ME. IT WAS, I THINK, MY DEAD GRANDFATHER...
"...DON'T WORRY, MY CHILD..."
IT WAS SO REAL, THIS VOICE...
"YOU WILL COME OUT OF THIS PLACE - FREE! ...ON THE DAY OF PARSHAS TRUMA."
I WOKE UP RIGHT AWAY. AND WHEN I WENT TO SLEEP, AGAIN IT WAS: "PARSHAS TRUMA! PARSHAS TRUMA!"
SO WHAT'S PARSHAS TRUMA?
EACH WEEK, ON SATURDAY, WE READ A SECTION FROM THE TORAH.
THIS IS SO CALLED - A PARSHA... AND ONE WEEK EACH YEAR IT IS PARSHAS TRUMA.
BEFORE WORK A FEW FROM US PRAYED. IT WAS A RABBI THERE WITH US.
ONE MOMENT, RABBI. WHEN WILL WE READ PARSHAS TRUMA?
PARSHAS TRUMA?..
...IN THE MIDDLE OF FEBRUARY - ALMOST THREE MONTHS FROM NOW. WHY?
THREE MONTHS - AND EVERY DAY WAS FOR US A YEAR!
I TOLD HIM MY DREAM...
LET'S HOPE IT'S TRUE. I'M AFRAID WE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF HERE.

UNTIL, ONE TIME...

IT CAME VERY MANY GESTAPO AND WEHRMACHT.

I STOOD ALWAYS IN THE SECOND LINE.

SOMEONE SNEAKED NEXT TO ME...

THEY MARCHED US TO THE MAIN COURTYARD AND LINED US BY ALPHABET AT TABLES...
NAME AND RANK?
SPIEGELMAN, VLADEK. CORPORAL.
DESTINATION UPON RELEASE?
SOSNOWIEC..
THIS THE GERMANS DID VERY GOOD...
...TO MY WIFE AND CHILD.
...ALWAYS THEY DID EVERYTHING VERY SYSTEMATIC.
VERY WELL- SIGN THIS RELEASE FORM.
...AND IT WAS ALL DONE IN ONE DAY.
YOU MEAN YOUR 'PARSHAS TRUMA' DREAM ACTUALLY CAME TRUE?
YES-THIS IS FOR ME A VERY IMPORTANT DATE...
I CHECKED LATER ON A CALENDAR. IT WAS THIS PARSHA ON THE WEEK I GOT MARRIED TO ANJA.
...AND THIS WAS THE PARSHA IN 1948, AFTER THE WAR, ON THE WEEK YOU WERE BORN!..
AND SO IT CAME OUT TO BE THIS PARSHA YOU SANG ON THE SATURDAY OF YOUR BAR MITZVAH!
THE NEXT MORNING EACH FROM US GOT A RED CROSS PACKAGE, AND THEY LOADED US ON A TRAIN TO POLAND.

DURING THE JOURNEY I SAT WITH THE RABBI.

YOU SEE, THE NAZIS DIVIDED POLAND INTO PIECES: **PROTECTORATE** AND **REICH**, WITH A GUARDED BORDER BETWEEN.

THE TRAIN WENT COMPLETELY *PAST* MY PART OF POLAND – THE **REICH** – AND STOPPED ONLY IN THE **PROTECTORATE**.

AND, WHEN IT STOPPED IN WARSAW, THE RABBI GOT OUT.

IN LUBLIN, THEY TOOK US TO BIG TENTS..
AND THERE WE SAT.

EVENTUALLY CAME SOME PEOPLE TO SEE US FROM THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES...
WHY ARE WE BEING KEPT HERE?
IT'S A VERY BAD SITUATION... JUST BEFORE YOU ARRIVED, THERE WAS ANOTHER GROUP OF RELEASED WAR PRISONERS...

...TWO DAYS AGO THE NAZIS MARCHED THEM TO A FOREST,...
...AND THEY SHOT ALL OF THEM-THEY KILLED 600 PEOPLE!
WE WERE THE NEXT PARTY!

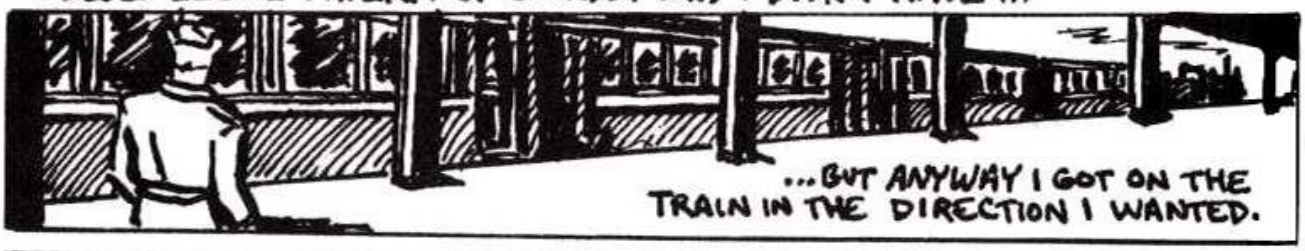
I THOUGHT YOU WERE RELEASED AS A PRISONER OF WAR!
EXACTLY SO..

INTERNATIONAL LAWS PROTECTED US A LITTLE AS POLISH WAR PRISONERS.
BUT A JEW OF THE REICH, ANYONE COULD KILL IN THE STREETS!

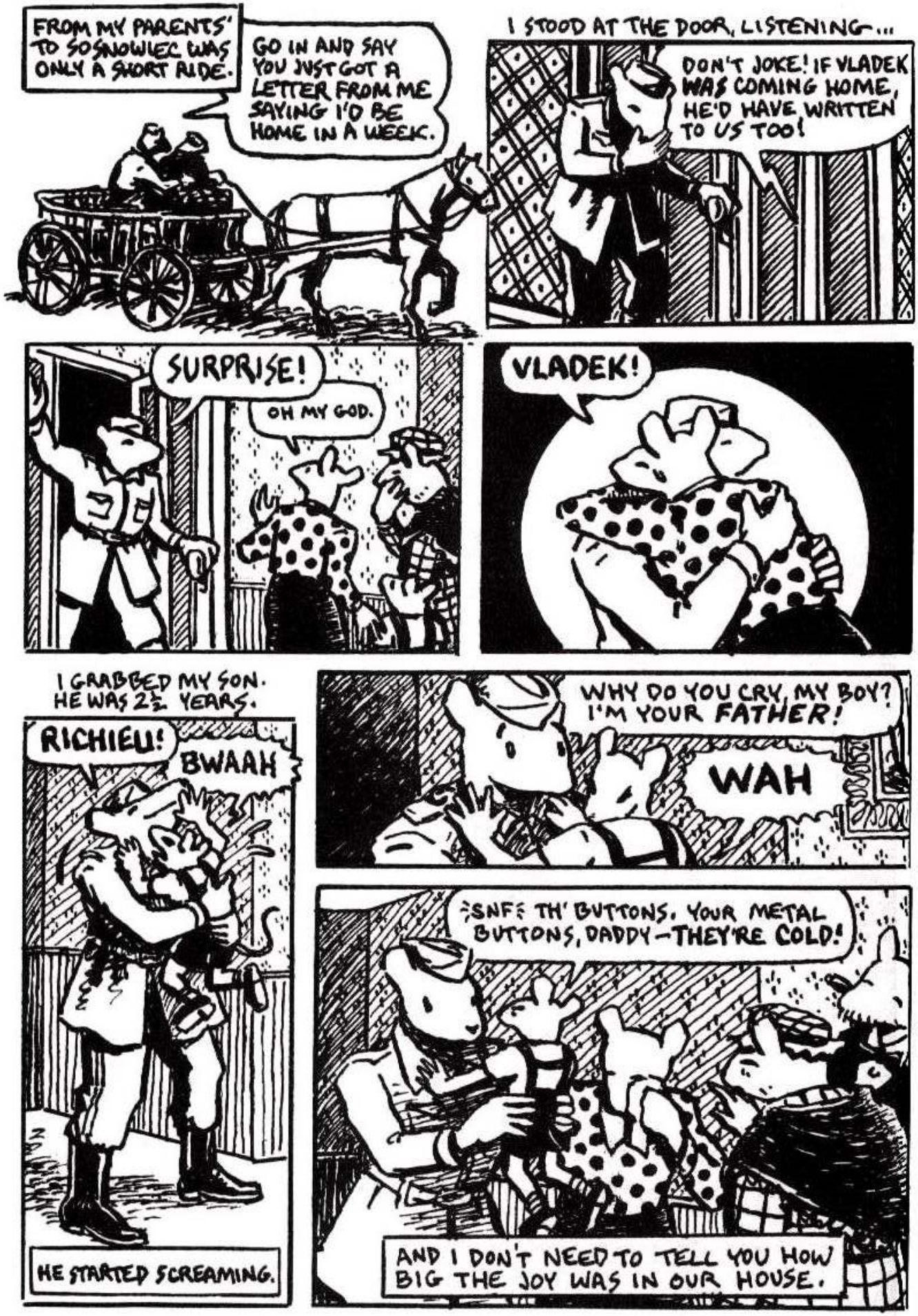
I WAS VERY FRIGHTENED.
THEN WE HEARD SOMETHING TO GIVE US A LITTLE HOPE...
WE'VE BRIBED THE GERMANS TO RELEASE PRISONERS INTO THE HOMES OF LOCAL JEWS WHO WILL CLAIM YOU AS RELATIVES.
MY NAME'S SPIEGELMAN. THERE'S A FRIEND OF MY FAMILY NAMED ORBACH IN LUBLIN. I MET HIM WHEN I WAS HERE FOR ARMY TRAINING.
FINE! WE'LL TRY TO REGISTER YOU AS HIS COUSIN.
THAT NIGHT I WENT OUT FROM THE TENT...
I HAD TO URINATE.
I RAN QUICK INSIDE....
AND THOUGHT ALL NIGHT DIFFERENT THINGS WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO US.
AND A GUARD BEGAN SHOOTING TO ME.

THEN AS SOON AS IT WAS LIGHT...
SPIEGELMAN!.. SPIEGELMAN!..
VLADEK!
ORBACH! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!
AND IN TEN MINUTES, I WAS FREE!
ORBACH WAS A FRIEND FROM MY UNCLE - HE HAD TWO BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS NEAR TO MY AGE.
I'M SORRY WE CAN'T OFFER YOU A BETTER MEAL, VLADEK - BUT THE JEWS OF LUBLIN GET VERY FEW FOOD COUPONS.
ONE MOMENT, GIRLS - I HAVE A GIFT FOR EACH OF YOU...
OH MY GOD! CHOCOLATE!
THESE I SAVED FROM A RED CROSS PACKAGE. ALWAYS I SAVED... JUST IN CASE!
EVENTUALLY, WHEN I CAME AGAIN TO SOSNOWIEC, WE SENT THEM FOOD PACKAGES...
... WE WERE FOR A WHILE A LITTLE BETTER OFF... AND THEY WROTE BACK VERY HAPPY HOW IT HELPED SURVIVE THEM...
...THEN THEY WROTE THAT THE GERMANS WERE KEEPING THE PACKAGES. AND THEN THEY STOPPED TO WRITE. FINISHED.
WITH ORBACHS' I STAYED A FEW DAYS RECUPERATING. BUT I WAS RESTLESS. HOW COULD I MANAGE TO SNEAK ACROSS THE BORDER TO MY FAMILY?

TRAINS WERE STILL GOING FROM PROTECTORATE TO REICH. ONLY, ONE NEEDED LEGAL PAPERS. OF COURSE, THIS I DIDN'T HAVE ...

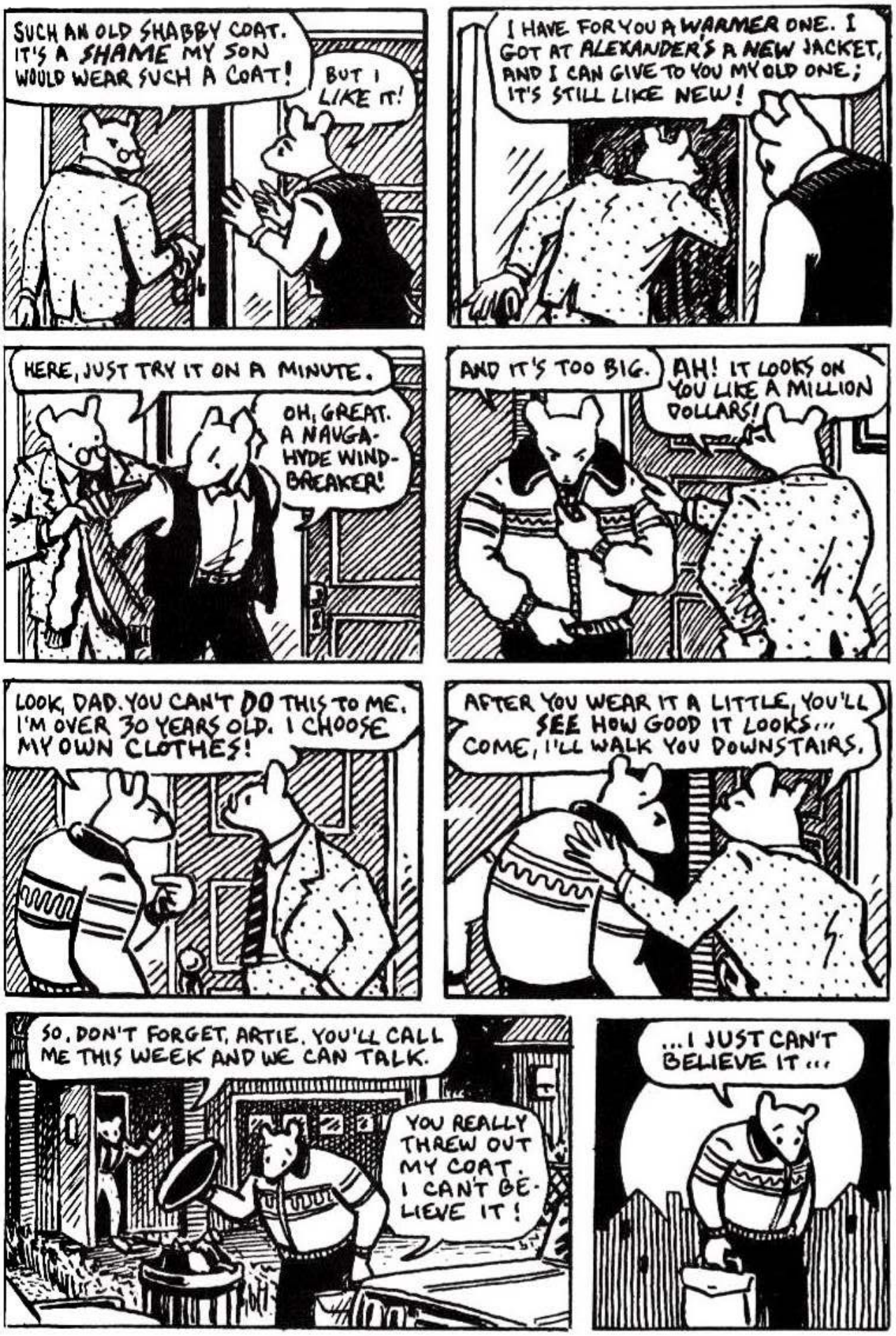


MY SON! THANK GOD YOU'RE SAFE!
AND IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING, YOU LOOK HEALTHY!
I'M STRONG, MOTHER. BUT YOU LOOK SICK!
IT'S BECAUSE I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
BUT IT WASN'T ONLY THIS. SHE WAS SICK OF CANCER.
...AND A MONTH OR TWO LATER, SHE DIED.
SHE NEVER KNEW HOW TERRIBLE EVERYTHING WOULD SOON BE!
-AND, FATHER! YOUR BEARD! WHAT HAPPENED? YOU SHAVED IT OFF?!??
IT'S GROWING BACK, NOW...
HE WAS VERY RELIGIOUS - SO LIKE A RABBI - AND, OF COURSE, HE ALWAYS HAD A BIG BEARD.
IN SEPTEMBER THE GERMAN SOLDIERS GRABBED MANY JEWS IN THE STREET...
THEY MADE US SING PRAYERS WHILE THEY LAUGHED AND BEAT US.
...AND BEFORE LETTING US GO, THEY CUT OFF OUR BEARDS.
AND NOW THE DEMONS HAVE TAKEN AWAY MY SELTZER FACTORY. THEY—
ENOUGH!
I MUST BRING VLADEK HOME TO ANJA BEFORE CURFEW.
AT 7:00 IT WAS A RULE. ALL JEWS HAD TO BE IN THEIR HOME AND ALL LIGHTS OUT.

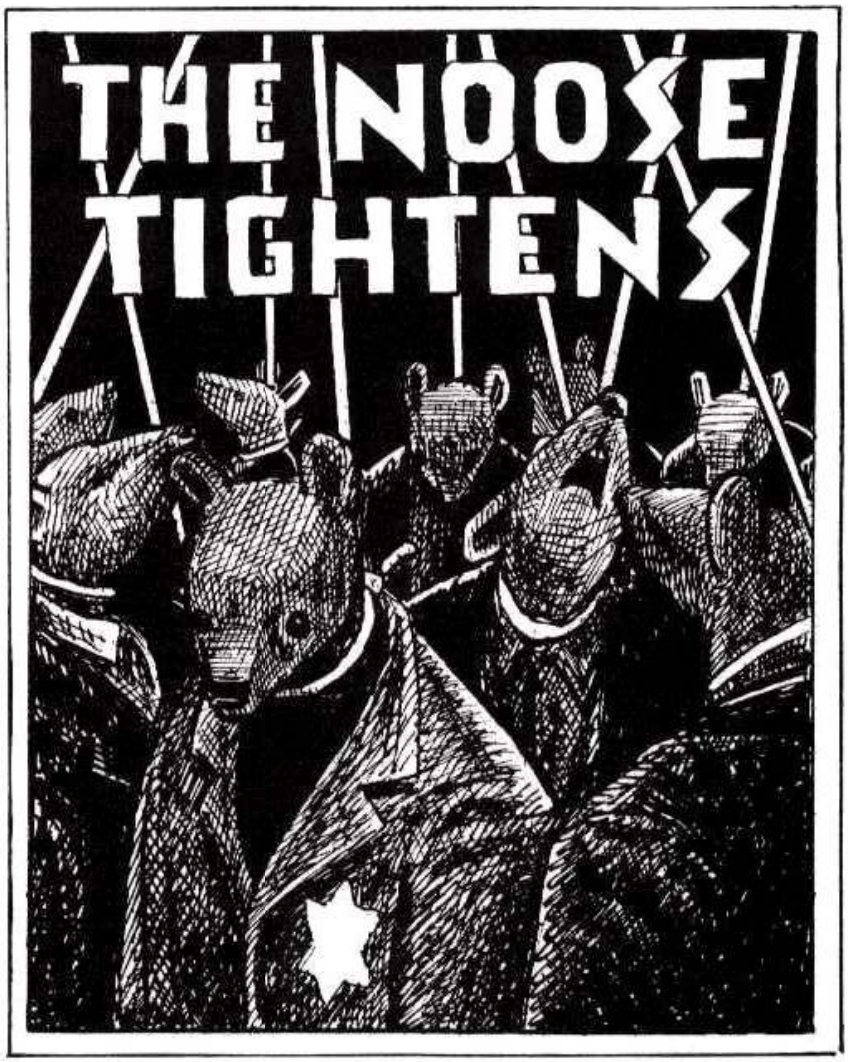

FROM MY PARENTS' TO SOSNOWIEC WAS ONLY A SHORT RIDE.
GO IN AND SAY YOU JUST GOT A LETTER FROM ME SAYING I'D BE HOME IN A WEEK.
I STOOD AT THE DOOR, LISTENING...
DON'T JOKE! IF VLADEK WAS COMING HOME, HE'D HAVE WRITTEN TO US TOO!
SURPRISE!
OH MY GOD.
VLADEK!
I GRABBED MY SON. HE WAS 2½ YEARS.
RICHIEU!
BWAAH
HE STARTED SCREAMING.
WHY DO YOU CRY, MY BOY? I'M YOUR FATHER!
WAH
SNF: TH' BUTTONS. YOUR METAL BUTTONS, DADDY—THEY'RE COLD!
AND I DON'T NEED TO TELL YOU HOW BIG THE JOY WAS IN OUR HOUSE.

EVEN THOUGH EVERYTHING WAS VERY TOUGH—AND IT WAS REALLY VERY TOUGH—WE WERE HAPPY ONLY TO BE TOGETHER.
..NOT SO LIKE IT IS NOW WITH ME AND MALA.
I TELL YOU, IF ANJA COULD BE ALIVE NOW, IT WOULD BE EVERYTHING DIFFERENT WITH ME!
MALA MAKES ME CRAZY. ONLY SHE TALKS ABOUT MONEY. ALWAYS ABOUT MY WILL—
PLEASE, POP!...
YOU ALWAYS TELL ME THE SAME THINGS. THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.
BUT I HAVEN'T WITH WHOM ELSE TO TALK!
AND IT'S FOR YOU I WATCH OUT MY MONEY!
JEEZ—LET'S TALK ABOUT IT NEXT TIME. I'LL CALL YOU!
BESIDES, IT'S GETTING LATE. I OUGHTA GET HOME BEFORE CURFEW!"
HMF.
HEY—WHERE'S MY COAT? I KNOW I PUT IT IN HERE!

MALA, DID YOU PUT MY COAT SOMEPLACE?
NO. ARE YOU GOING NOW?..
X-WORD PUZZLE
I'LL MAKE YOU SOME COFFEE.
NO THANKS. I'M NOT THIRSTY...
...AND YOU MAKE THE WORST COFFEE I'VE EVER TASTED.
BUT I STILL HAVE THAT BAG OF ESPRESSO YOU ONCE LEFT HERE.
BUT THAT WAS OVER 6 MONTHS AGO. THAT COFFEE'S COMPLETELY STALE!
SO... MAYBE SOME TEA?
NO, THANKS. JUST MY COAT.
OH, DAD - HAVE YOU SEEN MY COAT ANYWHERE?
YES...
..I THREW IT OUT.
WHAT?!? YOU'RE KIDDING!
sigh
GIVE IT BACK!
IT'S TOO LATE...
WHEN YOU WERE SITTING FIRST DOWN TO DINNER, I THREW IT OUTSIDE. BY NOW THE GARBAGE MEN TOOK IT AWAY.


SUCH AN OLD SHABBY COAT. IT'S A SHAME MY SON WOULD WEAR SUCH A COAT!
BUT I LIKE IT!
I HAVE FOR YOU A WARMER ONE. I GOT AT ALEXANDER'S A NEW JACKET, AND I CAN GIVE TO YOU MY OLD ONE; IT'S STILL LIKE NEW!
HERE, JUST TRY IT ON A MINUTE.
OH, GREAT. A NAUGA-HYDE WIND-BREAKER!
AND IT'S TOO BIG.
AH! IT LOOKS ON YOU LIKE A MILLION DOLLARS!
LOOK, DAD. YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME. I'M OVER 30 YEARS OLD. I CHOOSE MY OWN CLOTHES!
AFTER YOU WEAR IT A LITTLE, YOU'LL SEE HOW GOOD IT LOOKS... COME, I'LL WALK YOU DOWNSTAIRS.
SO, DON'T FORGET, ARTIE. YOU'LL CALL ME THIS WEEK AND WE CAN TALK.
YOU REALLY THREW OUT MY COAT. I CAN'T BE-LIEVE IT!
...I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT...

CHAPTER FOUR

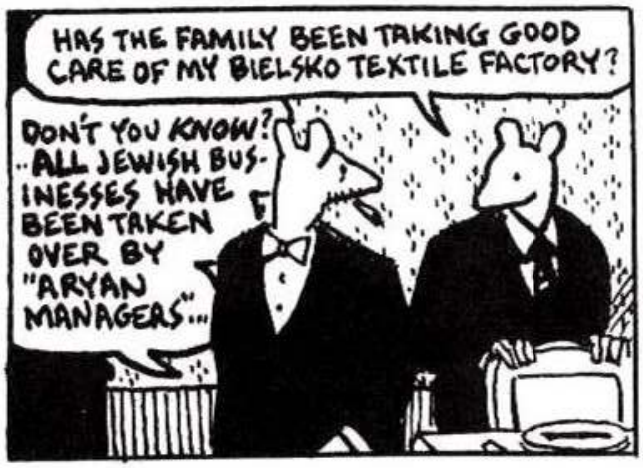


YOU'RE LATE!
NO I'M NOT-I SAID I'D BE BY AFTER DINNER.
WOODEN HANGER
NEW TRENCH COAT.
BUT NOW IS DARK OUT! I WANTED YOU WOULD CLIMB TO THE ROOF - IT'S A LEAK IN THE DRAIN PIPE.
HUH?
BUT I'M NO GOOD AT FIXING THAT KIND OF STUFF. WHY DON'T YOU HIRE SOMEBODY?
ACH!
YOU AND MALA! YOU BOTH THINK MONEY GROWS ON BUSHES. I'LL FIX IT MYSELF!
THAT'S CRAZY! YOU CAN'T CLIMB A TWO-STORY LADDER IN YOUR CONDITION....
IF YOU WANT, I'LL PAY FOR THE HANDYMAN.
NEVER MIND - FORGET I SAID ANYTHING! ... JUST COME SIT WITH ME. I HAVE TO PEDAL...
OTHERWISE I GET AT NIGHT A LEG CRAMP - WHAT YOU'RE HOLDING?
A NEW TAPE RECORDER... WRITING THINGS DOWN IS JUST TOO HARD.
SO, HOW MUCH YOU PAID?
ONLY 75 BUCKS! IT WAS ON SALE.
PSSH, AT KORVETTES YOU COULD FIND IT FOR -MAXIMUM- $35.00.
BUT - SKIP IT! TELL ME ABOUT WHEN YOU GOT BACK FROM THE P.O.W. CAMP IN 1940...

IT WAS TWELVE OF US LIVING IN FATHER-IN-LAW'S HOUSEHOLD...

AH, GRANDMOTHER - YOUR STEW IS EVEN TASTIER THAN I REMEMBERED.
NO - IT'S NOT LIKE BEFORE THE WAR, VLADEK - I CAN'T GET THE FOODS I NEED.
EACH OF US GETS COUPONS FOR 8 OUNCES OF BREAD A DAY, AND A TINY BIT OF MARGARINE, SUGAR AND JAM PER WEEK. THAT'S ALL!
SO HOW DO WE MANAGE?
I'VE DONATED A LOT TO THE GEMEINDE - THE JEWISH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION - AND WOLFE WORKS THERE... SO WE GET A LITTLE EXTRA.
AND THERE'S THE BLACK MARKET.
WITH MONEY YOU CAN ALWAYS GET ANYTHING!
IT'S DANGEROUS, THOUGH. THE NAZIS TAKE YOU OFF TO A WORK CAMP FOR BREAKING ANY MINOR LAW.
WORSE - EVEN IF YOU DON'T BREAK ANY LAWS!
...AND THOSE THAT ARE TAKEN AWAY - THEY'RE NEVER SEEN AGAIN!

WELL, WE SHOULD BE HAPPY WE'RE ALL TOGETHER WITH ENOUGH TO EAT.
BUT WE MUST REALLY TIGHTEN OUR BELTS UNTIL THE WAR ENDS.
COME - LET'S PLAY RUMMY WHILE THE LADIES CLEAR THE TABLE.


HAS THE FAMILY BEEN TAKING GOOD CARE OF MY BIELSKO TEXTILE FACTORY?
DON'T YOU KNOW? ..ALL JEWISH BUSINESSES HAVE BEEN TAKEN OVER BY "ARYAN MANAGERS"...

I WENT TO OUR FACTORY IN LODZ, AND THEY SAID, "BETTER GO HOME TODAY, OLD MAN...TOMORROW WE'LL CARRY YOU OUT.
WHAT?

BUT ISN'T ANY MONEY COMING IN?
NOT A SINGLE ZLOTY. AND THE FAMILY WANTS TO LIVE THE WAY IT DID BEFORE THE WAR!

OKAY, VLADEK - CUT THE CARDS.
BUT, WOLFE - WHAT KIND OF WORK ARE YOU DOING?

JUST A LITTLE OFFICE WORK FOR THE GEMEINDE... BUT A FEW MONTHS AGO FATHER-IN-LAW TOOK ALL HIS VALUABLES HOME FROM THE BANK SAFE.
HOW LONG CAN SAVINGS LAST?

DON'T WORRY SO MUCH, VLADEK. YOU'LL SEE... THE WAR WILL BE OVER LIKE LIGHTNING!
JA! LIKE LIGHTNING!
ACH!
WOLFE LOOKED ONLY TO PLAY CARDS.

I WENT THE NEXT DAY TO MODRZEJOWSKA STREET. HERE PEOPLE STILL MADE MONEY, FROM SECRET BUSINESSES - NOT SO LEGAL...

THE NOTE TOLD THAT I WORKED WITH HIM. SUCH A PAPER COULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE.

I WENT THEN TO SHOPS WHAT STILL OWED ME MONEY FROM BEFORE THE WAR...

I REMEMBER, FATHER-IN-LAW WAS SO HAPPY WITH ME.

I TALKED ABOUT IT TO FATHER-IN-LAW...

AND SO IT WENT...

I LEARNED HERE TO DO THINGS WHAT WERE USEFUL TO ME WHEN I CAME TO AUSCHWITZ.

FATHER-IN-LAW HAD A NICE NEW BEDROOM SET...

WOLFE AND I SHLEPPED EVERYTHING VALUABLE DOWNSTAIRS FOR A POLISH NEIGHBOR TO HIDE.

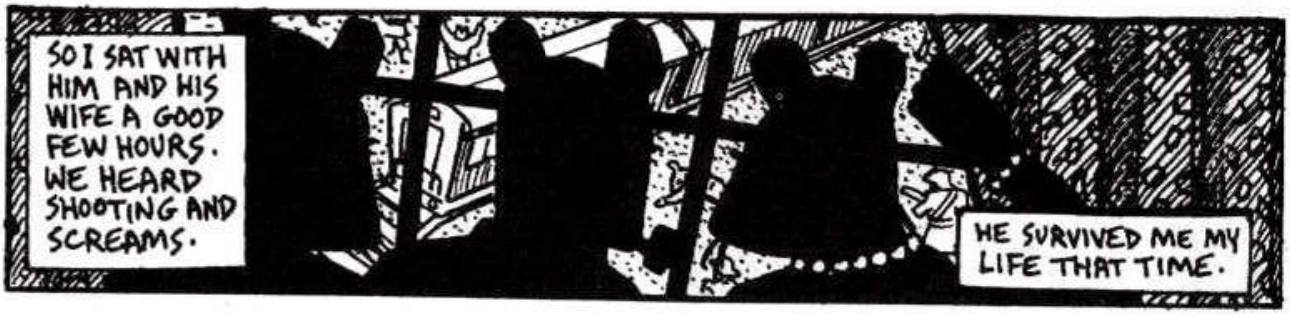
ANJA'S MOTHER HAD GALLSTONES. THE DAY THE GERMANS CAME SHE LAY IN THE BED.

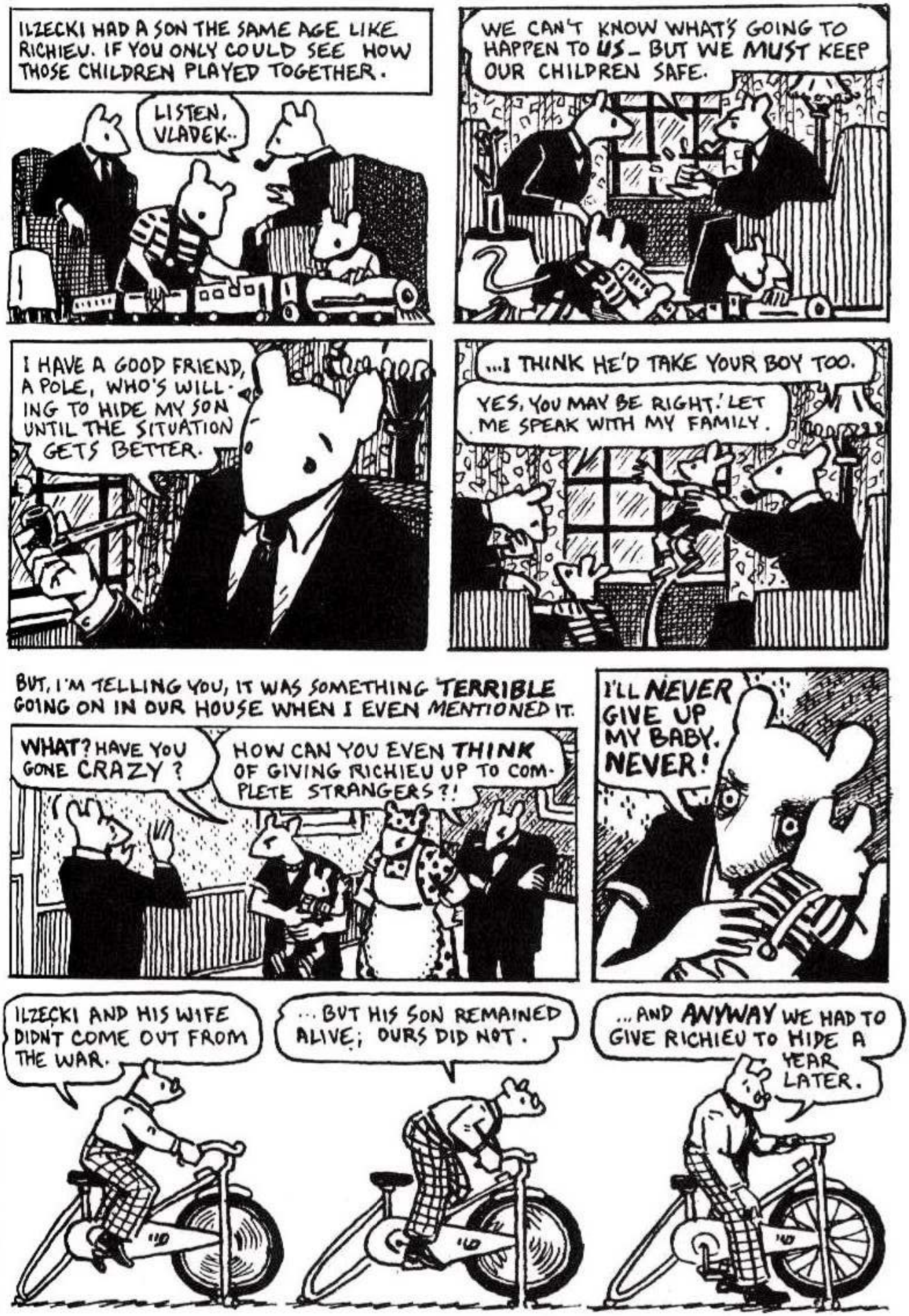
FATHER-IN-LAW HAD AN OLD FRIEND WHO CAME ALWAYS OVER TO PLAY CARDS.

HIDDEN. WE HAD NO USE FROM THE FURNITURE. SO WE SHLEPPED IT AGAIN UPSTAIRS TO SELL.

HE WAS SO UNHAPPY AFTER. SO UNHAPPY!

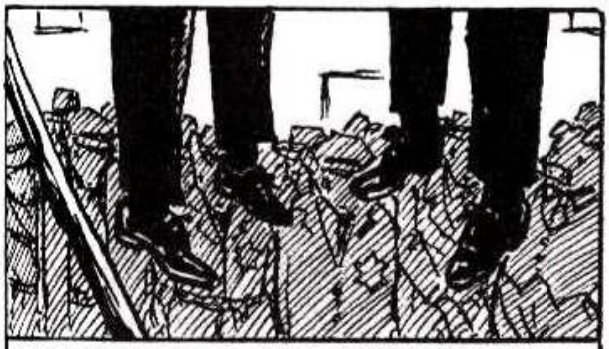
THEN FROM FAR, I SAW ILZECKI WALKING, SO I WENT HASTY OVER TO HIM.




ILZECKI HAD A SON THE SAME AGE LIKE RICHIEU. IF YOU ONLY COULD SEE HOW THOSE CHILDREN PLAYED TOGETHER.
LISTEN, VLADEK..
WE CAN'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO US – BUT WE MUST KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE.
I HAVE A GOOD FRIEND, A POLE, WHO'S WILLING TO HIDE MY SON UNTIL THE SITUATION GETS BETTER.
...I THINK HE'D TAKE YOUR BOY TOO.
YES, YOU MAY BE RIGHT! LET ME SPEAK WITH MY FAMILY.
BUT, I'M TELLING YOU, IT WAS SOMETHING TERRIBLE GOING ON IN OUR HOUSE WHEN I EVEN MENTIONED IT.
WHAT? HAVE YOU GONE CRAZY?
HOW CAN YOU EVEN THINK OF GIVING RICHIEU UP TO COMPLETE STRANGERS?!
I'LL NEVER GIVE UP MY BABY. NEVER!
ILZECKI AND HIS WIFE DIDN'T COME OUT FROM THE WAR.
... BUT HIS SON REMAINED ALIVE; OURS DID NOT.
... AND ANYWAY WE HAD TO GIVE RICHIEU TO HIDE A YEAR LATER.

WHEN WE WERE IN THE GHETTO, IN 1943, TOSHA TOOK ALL THE CHILDREN TO-
WAIT! PLEASE, DAD. IF YOU DON'T KEEP YOUR STORY CHRONOLOGICAL, I'LL NEVER GET IT STRAIGHT ... TELL ME MORE ABOUT 1941 AND 1942.
SO?... OKAY. I'LL MAKE IT SO HOW YOU WANT IT. 1941?... AT THE END OF 1941 THE GERMANS CAME WITH SOMETHING NEW. WOLFE RAN FROM THE GEMEINDER...
LOOK! THEY'RE PUTTING THESE UP ALL OVER TOWN.
ORDER
All Jews of Sosnowiec must be relocated into the Stara Sosnowiec quarter by January 1, 1942. Non-Jews will be moved into vacated premises.
Mauck Merin
ALL 12 OF OUR HOUSEHOLD WERE GIVEN NOW TO LIVE IN 2½ SMALL ROOMS...
REWARD
FOR EVERY UNREGISTERED JEW YOU FIND: 1 KILO of SUGAR
MOST PEOPLE GOT EVEN LESS SPACE. BUT FATHER-IN-LAW AND WOLFE HAD A LITTLE INFLUENCE...
BUT THIS WASN'T YET A REAL GHETTO. STILL YOU COULD GO INTO OTHER PARTS OF TOWN SO LONG YOU WERE HOME AT NIGHT-TIME
HOLD THE LADDER, ANJA.
I'M PUTTING UP A CURTAIN TO GIVE US SOME PRIVACY.
TOSHA INSISTED ON GETTING THE PART OF THE ROOM WITH THE WINDOW.
IT DOESN'T MATTER, VLADEK. I'M JUST GLAD THE WHOLE FAMILY CAN STAY TOGETHER.
IT WAS NO MORE THE LUXURY LIFE WE HAD BEFORE.

FOR A COUPLE MONTHS I DID HERE STILL MY BLACK MARKET BUSINESS. THEN CAME MORE BAD NEWS, VERY BAD...

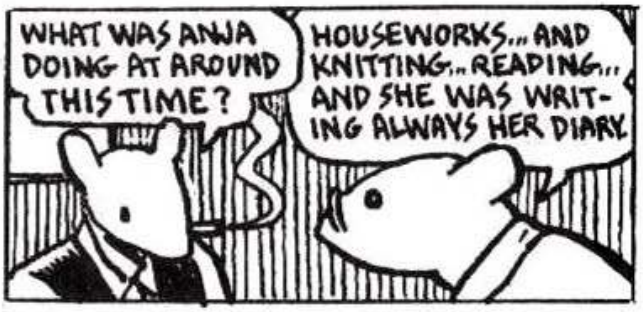


COHN HAD A DRY GOODS STORE. HE WAS KNOWN OVER ALL SOSNOWIEC. OFTEN HE GAVE ME CLOTH WITH NO COUPONS.

I TRADED ALSO WITH PFEFER, A FINE YOUNG MAN-A ZIONIST. HE WAS JUST MARRIED. HIS WIFE RAN SCREAMING IN THE STREET.

I WAS FRIGHTENED TO GO OUTSIDE FOR A FEW DAYS... I DIDN'T WANT TO PASS WHERE THEY WERE HANGING.
AND MAYBE ONE OF THEM COULD HAVE TALKED OF ME TO THE GERMANS TO TRY TO SAVE HIMSELF.

ACH. WHEN I THINK NOW OF THEM, IT STILL MAKES ME CRY... LOOK - EVEN FROM MY DEAD EYE TEARS ARE COMING OUT!


WHAT WAS ANJA DOING AT AROUND THIS TIME?
HOUSEWORKS... AND KNITTING... READING... AND SHE WAS WRITING ALWAYS HER DIARY.

I USED TO SEE POLISH NOTEBOOKS AROUND THE HOUSE AS A KID. WERE THOSE HER DIARIES?
YES, AND ALSO NO.

HER DIARIES DIDN'T SURVIVE FROM THE WAR. WHAT YOU SAW SHE WROTE AFTER: HER WHOLE STORY FROM THE START.
OHMIGOD! WHERE ARE THEY? I NEED THOSE FOR THIS BOOK!

COFF! PLEASE, ARTIE, STOP WITH THE SMOKING. IT MAKES ME SHORT WITH BREATH.
I THINK IT'S ALL YOUR PEDALING!

DON'T BE SO SMART! ...WHAT I WAS TELLING YOU? YES... AFTER THE HANGING I LOOKED FOR ANOTHER BUSINESS...

...I STARTED TO TRADE GOLD AND JEWELRY.
IT WAS EASIER TO HIDE THAN CLOTHINGS. I KEPT THINGS HIDDEN IN THE CHILD'S STROLLER, AND I MADE A FEW ZLOTYS.

FOR A WHILE I HAD ALSO A FOOD BUSINESS THAT I DIDN'T YET TELL YOU...
I MET SZKLARCZYK. HE HAD A BIG GROCERY ON MODRZEJOWSKA..
YOU'RE ZYLBERBERG'S SON-IN-LAW, RIGHT? COME INSIDE AND WAIT FOR THE RAIN TO STOP.
SO, TOGETHER, WE SAT AND SPOKE, AND HE HELPED, FROM TIME TO TIME, A CUSTOMER...
SORRY - YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH COUPONS TO BUY ½ KILO OF SUGAR.
STILL... SHE WENT OUT WITH ½ KILO. I SMELLED I COULD ARRANGE SOMETHING.
THEN A LITTLE MORE WE SPOKE AND HE MADE TO ME A PROPOSITION...
MAYBE YOU COULD SELL MY "EXTRA" ITEMS TO SMALL SHOPS IN THE AREA ...UNDER THE COUNTER.
IT WAS DANGEROUS TO CARRY THESE THINGS - BUT MAYBE I COULD BE LUCKY.
WHEN SOMEBODY IS HUNGRY HE LOOKS FOR BUSINESS...
ONE TIME I HAD 10 OR 15 KILOS SUGAR TO DELIVER...
HALT, JEW! WHAT ARE YOU CARRYING?
WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO SAY? FOR THIS I COULD REALLY HANG!
SUGAR.
...I'M TAKING IT OVER TO MY GROCERY STORE.
OH. YOU HAVE A SHOP?
I MADE SO THEY WOULD THINK IT WAS LEGAL.
I WENT TO THE BACK DOOR WHERE I HAD TO DELIVER...
OPEN UP, POLDEK!
..I'VE GOT OUR SUGAR.
?!
AND THEY LEFT ME GO WITHOUT EVEN CHECKING MY PAPERS!

BUT WHEN WE CAME TO STARA SOSNOWIEC, ALL MY BUSINESSES BECAME HARDER... IT WAS NOT SO EASY TO MOVE AROUND.
THE TIN SHOP FINISHED - THE OWNER WAS THE ONLY JEW THEY LET WORK THERE. I GOT THEN A JOB IN A GERMAN CARPENTRY SHOP.
FATHER-IN-LAW AND LOLEK WORKED ALREADY THERE, FOR REALLY NO MONEY. I DIDN'T NEED THIS BEFORE, BUT NOW I HAD TO HAVE THE WORK PAPER.
WOLFE COULD HAVE ARRANGED ME A JOB AT THE GEMEINDE... BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO PUT MY HANDS THERE WHERE JEWS WERE BEING TAKEN.
AND THEN IT CAME AGAIN SOMETHING NEW FROM THE GERMANS. WE GOT A NOTICE...
"ALL JEWS OVER 70 YEARS OLD WILL BE TRANSFERED TO THERESIENSTADT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON MAY 10, 1942...
"...A COMMUNITY BETTER PREPARED TO TAKE CARE OF THE ELDERLY THAN OURS IN SOSNOWIEC..."
IT DOESN'T LOOK TOO BAD!
LIKE A CONVALESCENT HOME.
NOTICE:
ANJA'S GRANDPARENTS HAD ABOUT 90 YEARS.
WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER - A FAMILY - FOR 70 YEARS. WE DON'T WANT TO BREAK APART NOW!
DON'T WORRY. WE WON'T LET THEM TAKE YOU.
WE DIDN'T YET KNOW OF AUSCHWITZ - OF THE OVENS - BUT WE WERE ANYWAY AFRAID.
...SO, IN THE YARD, WE MADE A HIDING PLACE, A BUNKER...
CUT-AWAY VIEW:
STORAGE SHEDS
FALSE WALL
GRAND-PARENTS
WE SNEAKED FOOD TO THEM, AND - WHEN IT WAS SAFE - WE TOOK THEM INSIDE A LITTLE.

SEVERAL TIMES CAME THE JEWISH POLICE TO OUR HOUSE...

AND A MONTH AFTER, THEY *AGAIN* CAME TO FATHER-IN-LAW.

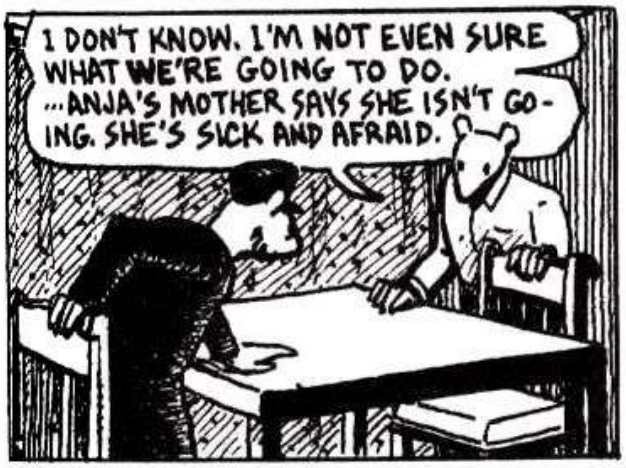
HE HAD STILL A LITTLE "PROTECTION" FROM THE *GEMEINDE*, SO THEY TOOK ONLY **HIM** AWAY - NOT HIS WIFE.

THEY THOUGHT IT WAS TO THERESIENSTADT THEY WERE GOING.

AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GRANDPARENTS, IT WAS A FEW MONTHS QUIET. THEN IT CAME POSTERS EVERYWHERE AND SPEECHES FROM THE GEMEINDE...

MY FATHER - HE HAD 62 YEARS - CAME BY STREETCAR TO ME FROM DABROWA, THE VILLAGE NEXT DOOR FROM SOSNOWIEC.

AFTER MY MOTHER DIED WITH CANCER, HE LIVED THERE IN THE HOUSE OF MY SISTER FELA, AND HER FOUR SMALL CHILDREN.



REALLY, I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO ADVISE HIM.

WHEN WE WERE EVERYBODY INSIDE, GESTAPO WITH MACHINE GUNS SURROUNDED THE STADIUM.

THEN WAS A SELECTION, WITH PEOPLE SENT EITHER TO THE LEFT, EITHER TO THE RIGHT.

ME AND ANJA CAME TO THE TABLE WHERE MY COUSIN WAS SITTING...

WE WERE SO HAPPY WE CAME THROUGH. BUT WE WORRIED NOW- WERE OUR FAMILIES SAFE?

BUT LATER SOMEONE WHO SAW HIM TOLD ME... HE CAME THROUGH THIS SAME COUSIN OVER TO THE GOOD SIDE.

HER, THEY SENT TO THE LEFT. FOUR CHILDREN WAS TOO MANY.

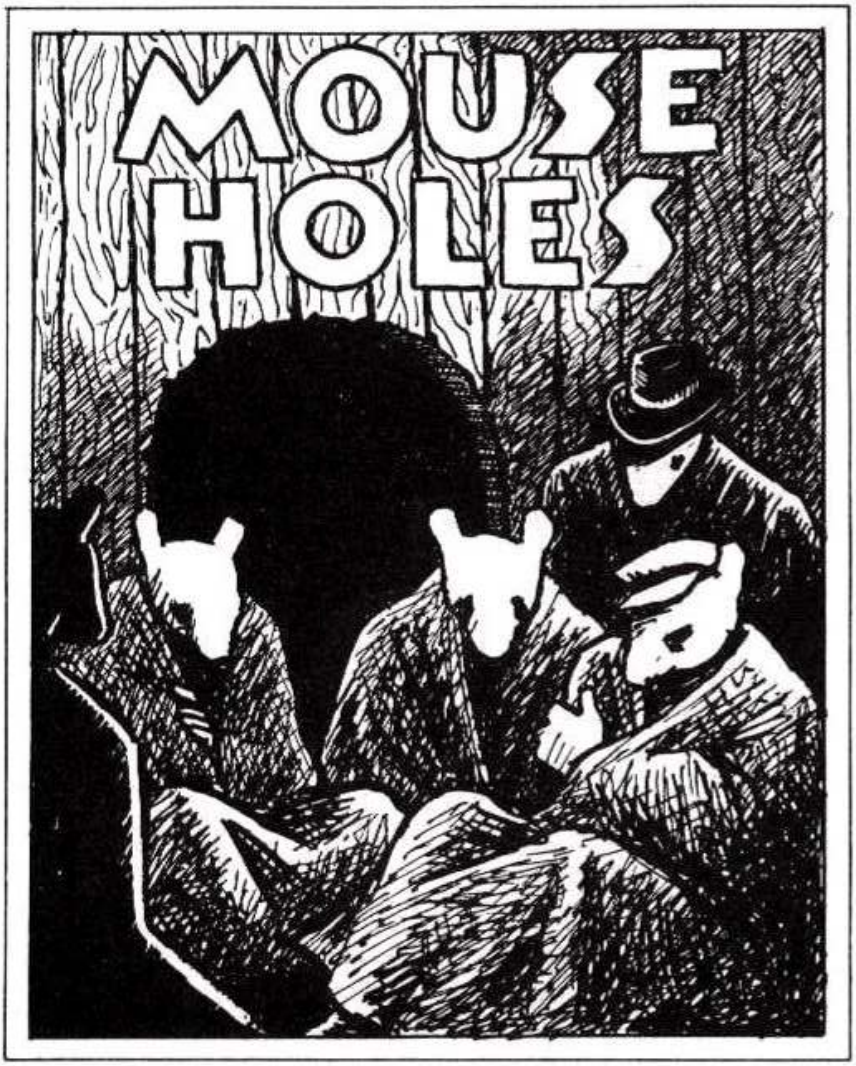
AND, WHAT DO YOU THINK? HE SNEAKED ON TO THE BAD SIDE!

THOSE WITH A STAMP WERE LET TO GO HOME. BUT THERE WERE VERY FEW JEWS NOW LEFT IN SOSNOWIEC...

WHOO-I OVERDID A LITTLE. I'M FEELING DIZZY.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD LIE DOWN A WHILE.
ARE YOU FINISHED?
UH-HUH. MY FATHER'S WORN OUT. HE'S TAKING A NAP.
HE WAS JUST TELLING ME ABOUT THE TIME EVERYONE IN SOSNOWIEC HAD TO GET HIS PASSPORT STAMPED.
IN THE STADIUM? YES... THEY GOT MY MOTHER THEN.
SHE WAS TAKEN, WITH EVERYBODY ELSE WHO WAS GOING TO BE DEPORTED, TO FOUR APARTMENT HOUSES THAT WERE EMPTIED TO MAKE A SORT OF PRISON...
THEY PUT THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE THERE... IT WAS SO CROWDED THAT SOME OF THEM ACTUALLY SUFFOCATED... NO FOOD... NO TOILETS. IT WAS TERRIBLE.
PEOPLE JUMPED OUT THE WINDOWS TO END THEIR MISERY A LITTLE QUICKER.
GOD.
BUT MY MOTHER SURVIVED THAT. HER BROTHER WAS ON THE JEWISH COMMITTEE, AND HE HID HER IN A COAL CELLAR 'TIL ALL THE TRANSPORTS LEFT.
THEN HE GOT ME A JOB SCRUBBING THE PEOPLE'S FILTH - VOMIT! EXCREMENT! - OUT OF SEVERAL APARTMENTS, AND I MANAGED TO SMUGGLE HER OUT.

EVENTUALLY SHE AND MY FATHER BOTH ENDED UP IN AUSCHWITZ. THEY DIED THERE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING? YOU DIDN'T DRINK YOUR COFFEE.
I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING. MY FATHER MENTIONED THAT ANJA USED TO KEEP A DIARY, AND I VAGUELY REMEMBER SEEING THEM ON HIS SHELVES IN THE DEN.
I DOUBT IT. I WOULD HAVE NOTICED THEM.
WELL, THERE'S SO MUCH JUNK IN THERE, IT'S WORTH A SHOT.
LOOK AT ALL THIS STUFF! ... OLD MENUS HE PICKED UP ON CRUISES. ... A PILE OF STATIONERY FROM THE PINES HOTEL...
INCREDIBLE! FOUR 1965 DRY DOCK SAVINGS BANK CALENDARS... I'LL BET HE NEVER EVEN HAD AN ACCOUNT THERE.
HE DRIVES ME CRAZY! HE WON'T EVEN LET ME THROW OUT THE PLASTIC PITCHER HE TOOK FROM HIS HOSPITAL ROOM LAST YEAR!
HE'S MORE ATTACHED TO THINGS THAN TO PEOPLE!
I REALLY DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I CAN TAKE HIM. I REALLY DON'T.
I BETTER BE GETTING HOME. I'LL LOOK FOR THOSE DIARIES NEXT TIME.
WAIT! PUT EVERYTHING BACK EXACTLY LIKE IT WAS, OR I'LL NEVER HEAR THE END OF IT!
OKAY... OKAY... RELAX.

CHAPTER FIVE



MNF?
HELLO, ARTIE? I'M TELLING YOU, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FATHER-HE JUST CLIMBED ONTO THE ROOF!..
UNH? MALA?
HE INSISTED ON FIXING THE DRAIN-PIPE AND GOT DIZZY! I DON'T KNOW HOW I EVER GOT HIM DOWN!
WHAT TIME IS IT?
NOW HE WANTS TO CLIMB BACK UP! WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?!
PLEASE DON'T SHOUT.
WHY DON'T YOU CALL A HANDYMAN? JEEZ, MALA, IT'S ONLY 7:30 AM. FRANÇOISE AND I WERE UP 'TIL 4:00! YOU KNOW WE DON'T GET UP 'TIL-
HELLO? ARTIE? IT'S POPPA HERE.
I'M TELLING YOU, MALA MAKES ME MESHUGAH! I WANT THAT MAYBE YOU COULD COME NOW TO QUEENS TO HELP ME.
WHAT? YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING!
WHEN I WAS YOUNG I COULD DO BY MY-SELF THESE THINGS. BUT NOW, DARLING I NEED IT YOUR HELP FOR THE DRAINPIPE!
UM-LOOK, POP.. I'LL CALL YOU BACK AFTER I'VE HAD SOME COFFEE.
WHEW. MAYBE I WAS DREAMING.
WUZZIT? YOUR FATHER AGAIN?

UH-HUH. HE WANTS ME TO GO HELP HIM FIX HIS ROOF OR SOMETHING. SHIT! EVEN AS A KID I HATED HELPING HIM AROUND THE HOUSE.
HE LOVED SHOWING OFF HOW HANDY HE WAS... AND PROVING THAT ANYTHING I DID WAS ALL WRONG.
HE MADE ME COMPLETELY NEUROTIC ABOUT FIXING STUFF.
I MEAN, I DIDN'T EVEN OWN A HAMMER BEFORE WE MOVED INTO THIS PLACE!
ONE REASON I BECAME AN ARTIST WAS THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS IMPRACTICAL-JUST A WASTE OF TIME...
...IT WAS AN AREA WHERE I WOULDN'T HAVE TO COMPETE WITH HIM.
SO... ARE YOU GOING OUT TO QUEENS?
NO WAY-I'D RATHER FEEL GUILTY! BESIDES, I'M TOO BUSY, AND HE CAN EASILY AFFORD TO HIRE SOMEBODY.
UH, HELLO POP. LISTEN... ABOUT THAT DRAINPIPE... I DON'T THINK I CAN COME. I-
SO? NEVER MIND ARTIE...
I TALKED JUST NOW TO FRANK, WHAT LIVES NEXT DOOR. HE AGREED HE WOULD FIX WITH ME OVER THE WEEKEND.
THAT'S GREAT!
YES. OF COURSE, BETTER IT WOULD BE FIXED TODAY-BUT AT LEAST SOMEBODY WILL HELP ME!
JUST GREAT.

About a week later, early afternoon...

HI, MALA.
OY! YOU SCARED ME, ARTIE. MY NERVES ARE COMPLETELY SHOT, LIVING WITH YOUR FATHER.
HE SEEMED A LITTLE UPSET WHEN I SAW HIM DOWNSTAIRS.. DO YOU THINK HE'S ANGRY THAT I DIDN'T COME HELP HIM LAST WEEK?
I DON'T THINK SO..
BUT KEEPING THIS HOUSE FIXED UP IS TOO MUCH FOR HIM NOW. I KEEP TELLING HIM TO SELL IT AND BUY A CONDO IN MIAMI.
HE SEEMS DEPRESSED.
IT COULD BE THAT COMIC STRIP YOU ONCE MADE - THE ONE ABOUT YOUR MOTHER.
WHAT?
VLADEK SAW IT FOR THE FIRST TIME A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT "PRISONER ON THE HELL PLANET"?
MY FRIEND, RUTHIE, HAS A SON IN COLLEGE. HE READS ALL THE COMICS. HE SHOWED IT TO HER, AND SHE GAVE ME A COPY.
SHIT!...
I KNEW IT WOULD UPSET YOUR FATHER, SO I KEPT IT HIDDEN. BUT, SOMEHOW HE FOUND IT.
I DREW THIS STORY YEARS AGO.
IT APPEARED IN AN OBSCURE UNDERGROUND COMIC BOOK. I NEVER THOUGHT VLADEK WOULD SEE IT.
PRISONER ON THE HELL PLANET

MY FATHER FOUND HER WHEN HE GOT HOME FROM WORK... HER WRISTS SLASHED AND AN EMPTY BOTTLE OF PILLS NEARBY...

I WAS LIVING WITH MY PARENTS, AS I AGREED TO DO ON MY RELEASE FROM THE STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL 3 MONTHS BEFORE.

I'D JUST SPENT THE WEEKEND WITH MY GIRLFRIEND, ISABELLA (MY PARENTS DIDN'T LIKE HER.) I WAS LATE GETTING HOME...

I SUPPOSE THAT IF I'D GOTTEN HOME WHEN EXPECTED, I WOULD HAVE FOUND HER BODY...

WHEN I SAW THE CROWD I HAD A PANG OF FEAR... I SUSPECTED THE WORST, BUT DIDN'T LET MYSELF KNOW

A COUSIN HERDED ME AWAY FROM THE SCENE.

DOCTOR ORENS LIVED NEARBY...

I COULD AVOID THE TRUTH NO LONGER—THE DOCTOR'S WORDS CLATTERED INSIDE ME.... I FELT CONFUSED, I FELT ANGRY, I FELT NUMB!... I DIDN'T EXACTLY FEEL LIKE CRYING, BUT FIGURED I SHOULD!....

WE WENT HOME... MY FATHER HAD COMPLETELY FALLEN APART! ....

I WAS EXPECTED TO COMFORT HIM!

SOMEHOW THE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE...

THAT NIGHT WAS BAD... MY FATHER INSISTED WE SLEEP ON THE FLOOR-AN OLD JEWISH CUSTOM, I GUESS. HE HELD ME AND MOANED TO HIMSELF ALL NIGHT. I WAS UNCOMFORTABLE... WE WERE SCARED!
THE NEXT DAY AT THE FUNERAL HOME WAS WORSE-
יתגדל ויתקדש שמה רבא בעלמא-
MY FATHER FOUGHT FOR SELF-CONTROL AND PRAY
I WAS PRETTY SPACED OUT IN THOSE DAYS-I R
TO MY MOTHER FROM THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE
די ברא כרעותה וימליך....
"O NOBLY BORN... IN YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH THE LESS VOID, REMEMBER UNITY OF ALL LIVING THI
AMNA AMNA AN
IT WAS TOO MUCH - I HAD TO LEAVE...
A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY FOUND ME OUT IN THE HALL....
NOW YOU CRY! BETTER YOU CRIED WHEN YOUR MOTHER WAS STILL ALIVE!
I FELT NAUSEOUS .... THE GUILT WAS OVERWHELMING!
FUNERAL
FUN

THE NEXT WEEK WE SPENT IN MOURNING... MY FATHER'S FRIENDS ALL OFFERED ME HOSTILITY MIXED IN WITH THEIR CONDOLENCES...

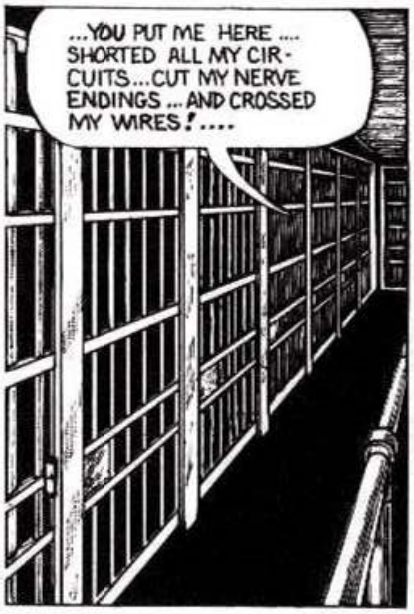
...BUT, FOR THE MOST PART, I WAS LEFT ALONE WITH MY THOUGHTS...

I REMEMBERED THE LAST TIME I SAW HER...

SHE CAME INTO MY ROOM... IT WAS LATE AT NIGHT....

...I TURNED AWAY, RESENTFUL OF THE WAY SHE TIGHTENED THE UMBILICAL CORD...

WELL, MOM, IF YOU'RE LISTENING...



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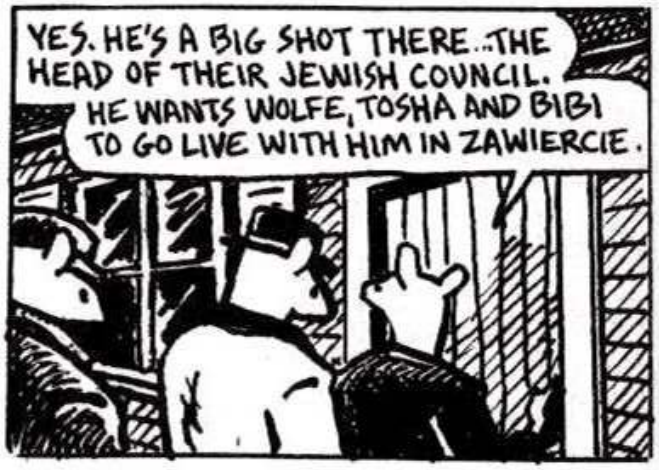
GEE. I'M SURPRISED THAT VLADEK READ THIS WHEN HE FOUND IT. HE NEVER READS COMICS...
HE DOESN'T EVEN LOOK AT MY WORK WHEN I STICK IT UNDER HIS NOSE.
BUT THIS ISN'T LIKE OTHER COMICS...
I TELL YOU, WHEN RUTHIE SHOWED IT TO ME I THOUGHT I'D FAINT, I WAS SO SHOCKED.
IT WAS SO... SO PERSONAL!
...BUT VERY ACCURATE... OBJECTIVE. I SPENT A LOT OF TIME HELPING OUT HERE AFTER ANJA'S FUNERAL. IT WAS JUST AS YOU SAID.
SO, ARTIE. I'M READY.
LET'S WALK NOW TO THE BANK TOGETHER.
MALA JUST TOLD ME THAT YOU SAW MY COMIC ...THE ONE ABOUT MOM.
YES. I FOUND IT WHEN I LOOKED FOR THE THINGS YOU ASKED ME LAST TIME. HOO! I SAW THE PICTURE THERE OF MOM, SO I READ IT... AND I CRIED.
I-I'M SORRY.
IT'S GOOD YOU GOT IT OUTSIDE YOUR SYSTEM.
BUT FOR ME IT BROUGHT IN MY MIND SO MUCH MEMORIES OF ANJA.
...OF COURSE I'M THINKING ALWAYS ABOUT HER ANYWAY.
YES. YOU KEEP PHOTOS OF HER ALL AROUND YOUR DESK - LIKE A SHRINE!
WHAT HAVE I TO DO, MALA? IN THE GARBAGE PUT THEM? OF YOU ALSO I HAVE A PHOTO ON THE DESK!
ACH! DON'T DO ME ANY FAVORS!

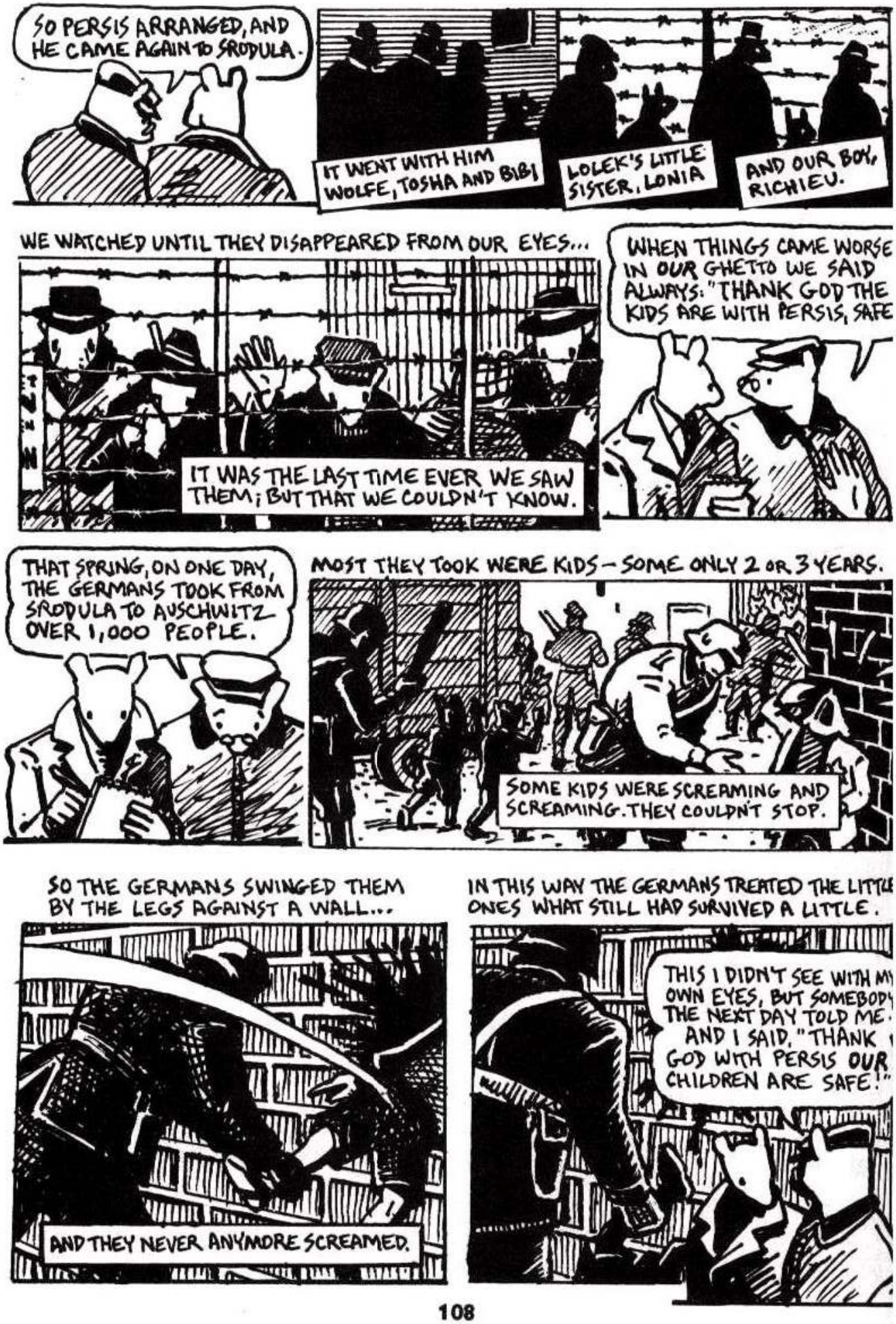
YOU SEE WHAT I HAVE WITH HER? ALWAYS, WHATEVER I DO IS NO GOOD.
DID YOU FIND MOM'S DIARY?
SO FAR THIS DIDN'T SHOW UP. I LOOKED, BUT I CAN'T FIND.
I'VE GOT TO HAVE THAT!
ANOTHER TIME I'LL AGAIN LOOK. BUT NOW BETTER WE GO TO THE BANK.
OKAY.
..EVERY DAY I WALK, OTHERWISE IN MY LEGS THE CIRCULATION MAKES ME A CRAMP- IT'S SOMETHING TERRIBLE AND I CAN'T SLEEP.
BUT FOR MY HEART, I MUST WALK SLOW.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AND ANJA AFTER THE BIG SELECTION AT THE STADIUM?
WELL, FOR A TIME IT WAS EVERYTHING QUIET. THEN IN 1943 CAME AN ORDER: ALL JEWS WHAT ARE LEFT IN SOSNOWIEC MUST GO TO LIVE IN AN OLD VILLAGE NEARBY CALLED SRODULA.
AND THE POLES OF SRODULA, WE JEWS HAD TO PAY TO MOVE THEM TO OUR HOUSES IN SOSNOWIEC... AND HERE IN SRODULA WOULD BE OUR GHETTO TO LIVE EVER AFTER.
OUR FAMILY GOT A COTTAGE-LESS SPACE THAN BEFORE, BUT WE HAD AT LEAST WHERE TO LIVE. MANY LIVED ONLY IN THE STREET.

...AND EVERY NIGHT THEY MARCHED US BACK, COUNTED US, AND LOCKED US IN.

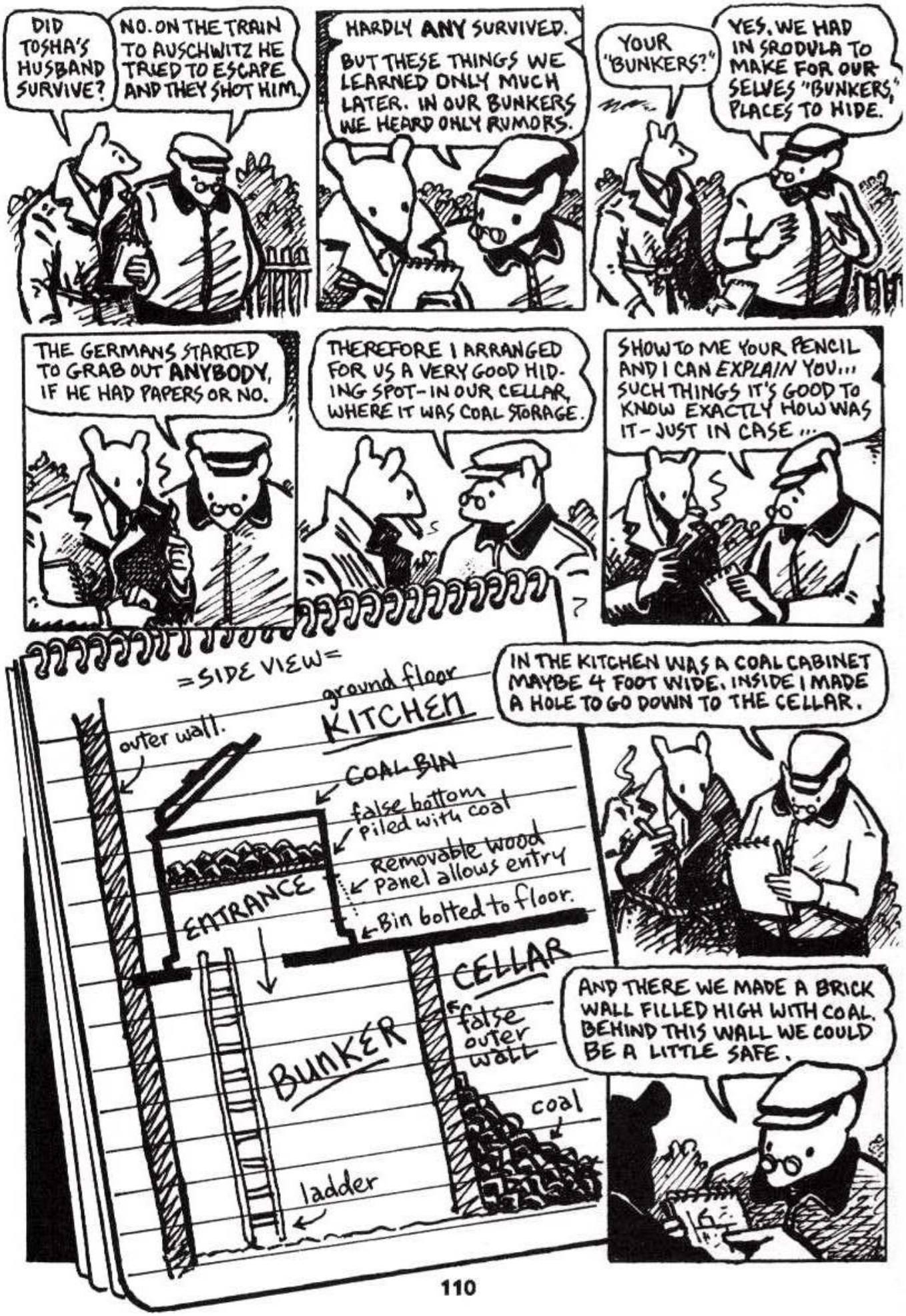


NINETY! THIS WAS 1943! IT WASN'T LEFT ANY OTHER JEWS WHAT HAD NINETY YEARS!

ANJA'S MOTHER DIDN'T LIKE TO LOOK AT THE FACTS. BUT FINALLY EVEN SHE AGREED.


SO PERSIS ARRANGED, AND HE CAME AGAIN TO SRODULA.
IT WENT WITH HIM WOLFE, TOSHA AND BIBI
LOLEK'S LITTLE SISTER, LONIA
AND OUR BOY, RICHIEU.
WE WATCHED UNTIL THEY DISAPPEARED FROM OUR EYES...
IT WAS THE LAST TIME EVER WE SAW THEM; BUT THAT WE COULDN'T KNOW.
WHEN THINGS CAME WORSE IN OUR GHETTO WE SAID ALWAYS: "THANK GOD THE KIDS ARE WITH PERSIS, SAFE
THAT SPRING, ON ONE DAY, THE GERMANS TOOK FROM SRODULA TO AUSCHWITZ OVER 1,000 PEOPLE.
MOST THEY TOOK WERE KIDS – SOME ONLY 2 OR 3 YEARS.
SOME KIDS WERE SCREAMING AND SCREAMING. THEY COULDN'T STOP.
SO THE GERMANS SWINGED THEM BY THE LEGS AGAINST A WALL...
AND THEY NEVER ANYMORE SCREAMED.
IN THIS WAY THE GERMANS TREATED THE LITTLE ONES WHAT STILL HAD SURVIVED A LITTLE.
THIS I DIDN'T SEE WITH MY OWN EYES, BUT SOMEBODY THE NEXT DAY TOLD ME. AND I SAID, "THANK GOD WITH PERSIS OUR CHILDREN ARE SAFE!"

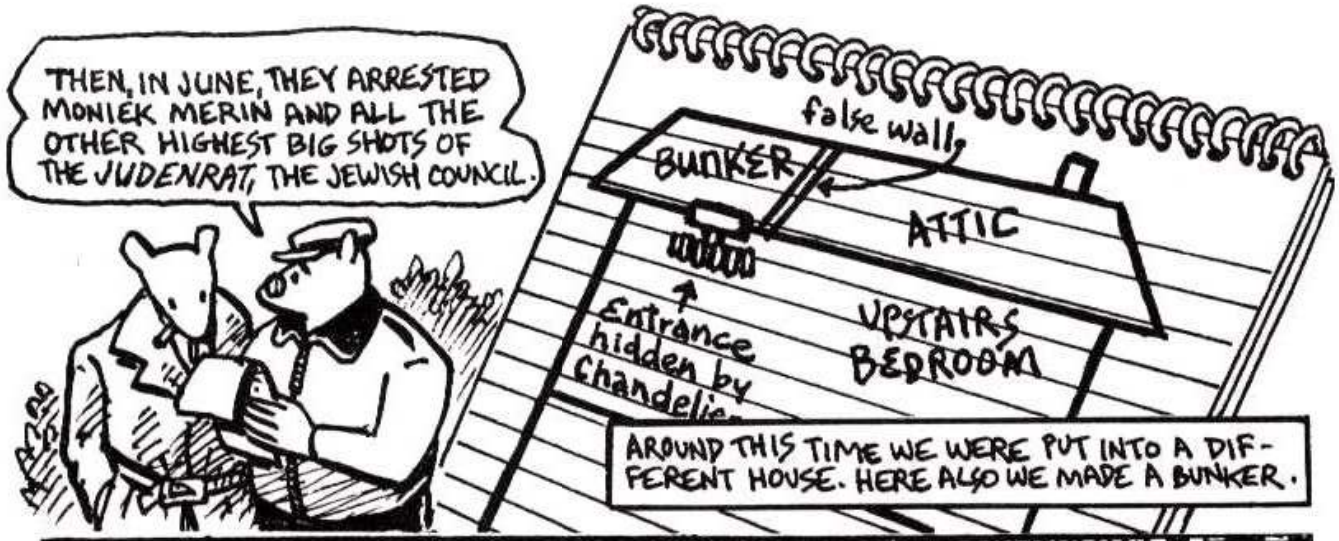
SO.. WHAT HAPPENED TO RICHIEU?
ACH! OUR BEAUTIFUL BOY. WE ONLY FOUND OUT MUCH LATER.
A FEW MONTHS AFTER WE SENT RICHIEU TO ZAWIERCIE, THE GERMANS DECIDED THEY WOULD FINISH OUT THAT GHETTO.
BANG BANG
MORE GUNSHOTS! WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT'S HORRIBLE, TOSHA!...
ALL THE GESTAPO IN THE GHETTO HAVE BEEN REPLACED BY OTHERS FROM OPOLE. THEY JUST SHOT PERSIS AND THE REST OF THE JEWISH COUNCIL!..
WHAT?
THEY'RE EVACUATING ZAWIERCIE. WE'RE ALL SUPPOSED TO GO TO THE SQUARE WITH OUR BAGGAGE RIGHT AWAY. THEY'RE SENDING ALL OF US OUT - TO AUSCHWITZ!
OH MY GOD.
NO!
I WON'T GO TO THEIR GAS CHAMBERS!...
AND MY CHILDREN WON'T GO TO THEIR GAS CHAMBERS.
BIBI! LONIA! RICHIEU! COME HERE QUICKLY!
ALWAYS TOSHA CARRIED AROUND HER NECK SOME POISON... SHE KILLED NOT ONLY HERSELF, BUT ALSO THE 3 CHILDREN.
I'M TELLING YOU, IT WAS A TRAGEDY AMONG TRAGEDIES. HE WAS SUCH A HAPPY, BEAUTIFUL BOY!


DID TOSHA'S HUSBAND SURVIVE?
NO. ON THE TRAIN TO AUSCHWITZ HE TRIED TO ESCAPE AND THEY SHOT HIM.
HARDLY ANY SURVIVED. BUT THESE THINGS WE LEARNED ONLY MUCH LATER. IN OUR BUNKERS WE HEARD ONLY RUMORS.
YOUR "BUNKERS?"
YES, WE HAD IN SRODULA TO MAKE FOR OUR SELVES "BUNKERS," PLACES TO HIDE.
THE GERMANS STARTED TO GRAB OUT ANYBODY, IF HE HAD PAPERS OR NO.
THEREFORE I ARRANGED FOR US A VERY GOOD HIDING SPOT - IN OUR CELLAR, WHERE IT WAS COAL STORAGE.
SHOW TO ME YOUR PENCIL AND I CAN EXPLAIN YOU... SUCH THINGS IT'S GOOD TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW WAS IT - JUST IN CASE...
=SIDE VIEW=
ground floor
KITCHEN
outer wall.
COAL BIN
false bottom piled with coal
Removable wood panel allows entry
ENTRANCE
Bin bolted to floor.
CELLAR
BUNKER
false outer wall
coal
ladder
IN THE KITCHEN WAS A COAL CABINET MAYBE 4 FOOT WIDE. INSIDE I MADE A HOLE TO GO DOWN TO THE CELLAR.
AND THERE WE MADE A BRICK WALL FILLED HIGH WITH COAL. BEHIND THIS WALL WE COULD BE A LITTLE SAFE.

EVEN WHEN THEY CAME WITH DOGS TO SMELL US OUT - AND THEY KNEW THAT JEWS ARE LAYING HERE - BUT STILL THEY COULDN'T FIND.
THE DOGS RAN UP AND DOWN LIKE MAD. BUT IN THE COAL BIN WAS ONLY COAL. IT LOOKED FULL AND THEY COULDNT LIFT IT. AND THE CELLAR, IT WAS ONLY A CELLAR.

IS IT SAFE TO GO OUT YET? I CAN'T STAND ALL THESE WORMS CRAWLING OVER ME.
THE GERMANS ARE LEAVING!
WE HAD WORMS THERE IN THAT BUNKER.

WE'VE GOT ENOUGH FOOD TO STAY HERE A COUPLE OF DAYS. WE'D BETTER WAIT'TIL THINGS QUIET DOWN.
WE SURVIVED THERE A FEW ACTIONS. BUT OTHERS, WHAT DIDN'T HAVE SUCH A GOOD PLACE LIKE WHAT I MADE, THEY KEPT BEING TAKEN AWAY.

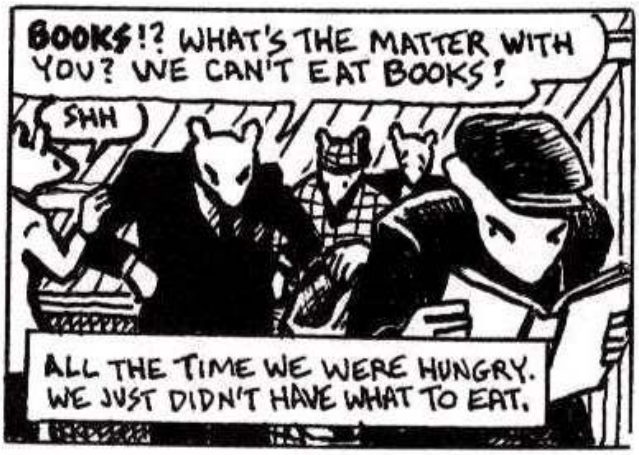

THEN, IN JUNE, THEY ARRESTED MONIEK MERIN AND ALL THE OTHER HIGHEST BIG SHOTS OF THE JUDENRAT, THE JEWISH COUNCIL.
false wall
BUNKER
ATTIC
Entrance hidden by chandelier
UPSTAIRS BEDROOM
AROUND THIS TIME WE WERE PUT INTO A DIFFERENT HOUSE. HERE ALSO WE MADE A BUNKER.

BY THE END OF JULY THE NAZIS MADE TO LIQUIDATE COMPLETELY OUR GHETTO - IT WAS 10,000 JEWS TAKEN AWAY IN ONE WEEK.
EXCEPT TO SNEAK FOR FOOD, WE STAYED MOSTLY IN THE BUNKER.

LOLEK! THANK GOD YOU'RE SAFE!
IT'S LIKE A BATTLEFIELD OUTSIDE!

THERE'S HARDLY ANYONE LEFT IN SRODULA. EVERYONE HAS BEEN DEPORTED OR SHOT.
FROM ALL THE JEWS OF ALL SOSNOWIEC IT WAS LEFT MAYBE 1,000 IN THE GHETTO.

AT LEAST YOUR BAG IS FULL... YOU FOUND A LOT OF FOOD, YES?
JUST A FEW OLD TURNIPS... AND SOME BOOKS.


BOOKS!? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? WE CAN'T EAT BOOKS!
SHH
ALL THE TIME WE WERE HUNGRY. WE JUST DIDN'T HAVE WHAT TO EAT.

ONE NIGHT WE WENT TO SNEAK FOR FOOD...

WE DRAGGED HIM UP TO OUR BUNKER

IN THE MORNING WE GAVE A LITTLE FOOD TO HIM AND LEFT HIM GO TO HIS FAMILY...

WE WERE MAYBE 200 PEOPLE TOGETHER WAITING... EACH WEDNESDAY WENT VANS TO AUSCHWITZ. WHEN WE WERE CAUGHT, IT WAS THEN MAYBE A THURSDAY.
LOOK, ANJA! THAT'S MY COUSIN, JAKOV SPIEGEL-MAN, IN THE COURTYARD.
HEY! JAKOV! HELP! JAKOV-HELP US!
VLADEK?! THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO!
I MADE SIGNS TO SHOW I COULD PAY.
SOME GOLD I HID IN THE CHIMNEY OF OUR BUNKER WHEN THEY TOOK US. BUT A FEW VALUABLES I HAD STILL WITH ME.
OKAY. DON'T WORRY! HASKEL WILL COME HELP YOU!
HASKEL SPIEGELMAN WAS ANOTHER COUSIN.
WOULDN'T THEY HAVE HELPED YOU EVEN IF YOU COULDN'T PAY? I MEAN, YOU WERE FROM THE SAME FAMILY..
HAH! YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND...
AT THAT TIME IT WASN'T ANYMORE FAMILIES. IT WAS EVERYBODY TO TAKE CARE FOR HIMSELF!

THE NEXT DAY CAME IN TWO GIRLS CARRYING FOOD. WITH THEM CAME HASKEL, A CHIEF OF THE JEWISH POLICE.

THE TWO GIRLS HE SENT BACK TO THE KITCHEN.

FROM THE WINDOW WE SAW LOLEK GO.

THE DAY AFTER, ANJA AND I CARRIED PAST THE GUARDS THE EMPTY PAILS.

SO MOM'S PARENTS DIED IN AUSCHWITZ?
NU? WHAT ELSE? RIGHT AWAY THEY WENT TO THE GAS.
HASKEL WAS HAPPY TO TAKE FROM FATHER-IN-LAW THE JEWELS-BUT THE RISK TO SAVE THEM, THIS HE WAS NOT SO HAPPY TO TAKE.
ALWAYS HASKEL WAS SUCH A GUY: A KOMBINATOR.
A WHAT?
A GUY WHAT MAKES KOMBINACYA, A SCHEMER--A CROOK.
WHAT DID YOU PICK UP?
TELEPHONE WIRE. THIS IT'S VERY HARD TO FIND.
INSIDE IT'S LITTLE WIRES. IT'S GOOD FOR TYING THINGS.
YOU ALWAYS PICK UP TRASH! CAN'T YOU JUST BUY WIRE?
PSSH. WHY ALWAYS YOU WANT TO BUY WHEN YOU CAN FIND!? ANYWAY, THIS WIRE THEY DON'T HAVE IT IN ANY STORES.
I'LL GIVE TO YOU SOME WIRE. YOU'LL SEE HOW USEFUL IT IS
NO THANKS! JUST TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED WITH HASKEL.
THERE ARE ONLY ABOUT A THOUSAND JEWS LEFT HERE. MOST WORK AT THE BRAUN SHOE SHOP.
HASKEL WAS A VERY BIG MAN IN THE GHETTO THEN, WHEN SRODULA WAS FINISHING.
I'LL REGISTER YOU BOTH THERE, AND - GOOD AFTERNOON, SERGEANT!
HOW ARE YOU, HERR SPIEGELMAN?
HASKEL PLAYED VERY OFTEN, CARDS WITH THE GESTAPO.
WE'LL SEE YOU TONIGHT, YES?
NATURALLY. I JUST HOPE YOU WON'T BE AS LUCKY AS LAST TIME.
HE LOST TO THEM BIG AMOUNTS OF MONEY, SO THEY WOULD LIKE HIM.

HASKEL HAD 2 BROTHERS, PESACH AND MILOCH. PESACH WAS ALSO A *KOMBINATOR*. BUT MILOCH, HE WAS A FINE FELLOW.

HASKEL IS ALIVE STILL IN POLAND, WITH A POLISH WOMAN, A JUDGE, WHAT KEPT HIM HIDDEN WHEN HYAAK!
MMY HEART - ARTIE! QUICK! TAKE FROM MY POCKET A NITROSTAT PILL.
H-HERE...YOU OKAY?
HOOSH
I-I'LL BE FINE NOW. I HAVE ONLY TO CATCH MY BREATH STILL FOR A MINUTE.
LET'S SIT ON THAT STOOP.
JUST RELAX. DON'T TALK FOR A WHILE.
HOOH! I MADE TOO FAST, OUR WALKING!
THANK GOD, WITH THE NITROSTAT IT'S COMPLETELY OVER RIGHT AWAY! WHAT WAS I TELLING YOU ?
YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY?
WELL... YOU WERE SAYING THAT HASKEL SURVIVED THE WAR.
YES. EVEN A FEW YEARS AGO I SENT HIM PACKAGES.
GIFTS? WHY? HE SOUNDS LIKE A ROTTEN GUY!
YES. I DON'T KNOW WHY. I KNOW ONLY THAT I SENT.
YOU KNOW, ONE TIME I WAS IN THE GHETTO WALKING AROUND...
HALT, JEW!
GIVE ME YOUR I.D. PAPERS - I'M GOING TO BLOW YOUR BRAINS OUT.
AH. I SEE YOU'RE A MEMBER OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS SPIEGELMAN FAMILY... GO ON YOUR WAY THEN, AND GIVE HASKEL MY REGARDS.
.... SUCH FRIENDS HASKEL HAD.

I TOLD HASKEL AND MILOCH LATER ABOUT THIS.

BUT COUSIN PESACH WAS REALLY SELLING CAKE! EVERYONE WHAT COULD AFFORD IT STOOD ON LINE TO BUY A PIECE...

SOME OF THE FLOUR PESACH FOUND - IT WASN'T *REALLY* FLOUR, ONLY LAUNDRY SOAP, WHAT HE PUT IN THE CAKE BY MISTAKE.

BEFORE THE WAR PESACH HAD A RESORT HOTEL IN ZAKOPANE...
IN THOSE DAYS ALSO HE FOUND ALWAYS SCHEMES.
ALL GUESTS HAD TO PAY BIG POLISH TAXES... SO PESACH TOOK BRIBES TO NOT REGISTER THEM.
BUT IF AN INSPECTOR CAME, THE GUESTS HAD TO HIDE THEMSELVES AWAY.
ONE TIME HIS WIFE MADE NOT ENOUGH DESSERTS TO GIVE TO EVERYBODY...
SO PESACH RAN INTO THE DINING ROOM AND YELLED, "INSPECTORS ARE COMING!"
IT WAS NO INSPECTOR, OF COURSE. BUT 40% OF THE GUESTS RAN FAST FROM THE ROOM.
... PESACH HAD ENOUGH DESSERTS LEFT OVER EVEN FOR THE NEXT DAY!
COME.
ARE YOU READY TO WALK AGAIN?
YES, IT'S TOO DIRTY TO SIT! ..BUT, REALLY, IF I DIDN'T HAVE MY NITROSTAT, IT COULD HAVE BEEN JUST NOW SOMETHING TERRIBLE.
MILOCH SPIEGELMAN-HE SURVIVED THE WAR WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILD AND THEY MOVED TO AUSTRALIA. ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO HE GOT A BIG HEART ATTACK...
AND LAST YEAR, HE GOT ON THE STREET A SEIZURE-LIKE WHAT I HAD JUST NOW... BUT HE DIDN'T HAVE WITH HIM HIS PILLS. HIS WIFE RAN TO FIND A DRUG STORE.
WHEN SHE CAME BACK MILOCH WAS DEAD!
NU? SO LIFE GOES.
BUT I MUST FINISH QUICK TO TELL YOU THE REST ABOUT SRODULA, BECAUSE WE WILL COME SOON OVER TO THE BANK.
SALE

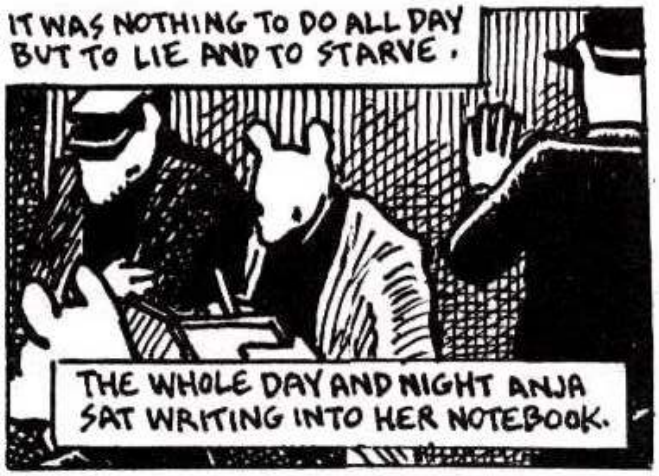
IT WAS EARLY AND NOBODY WAS THERE...

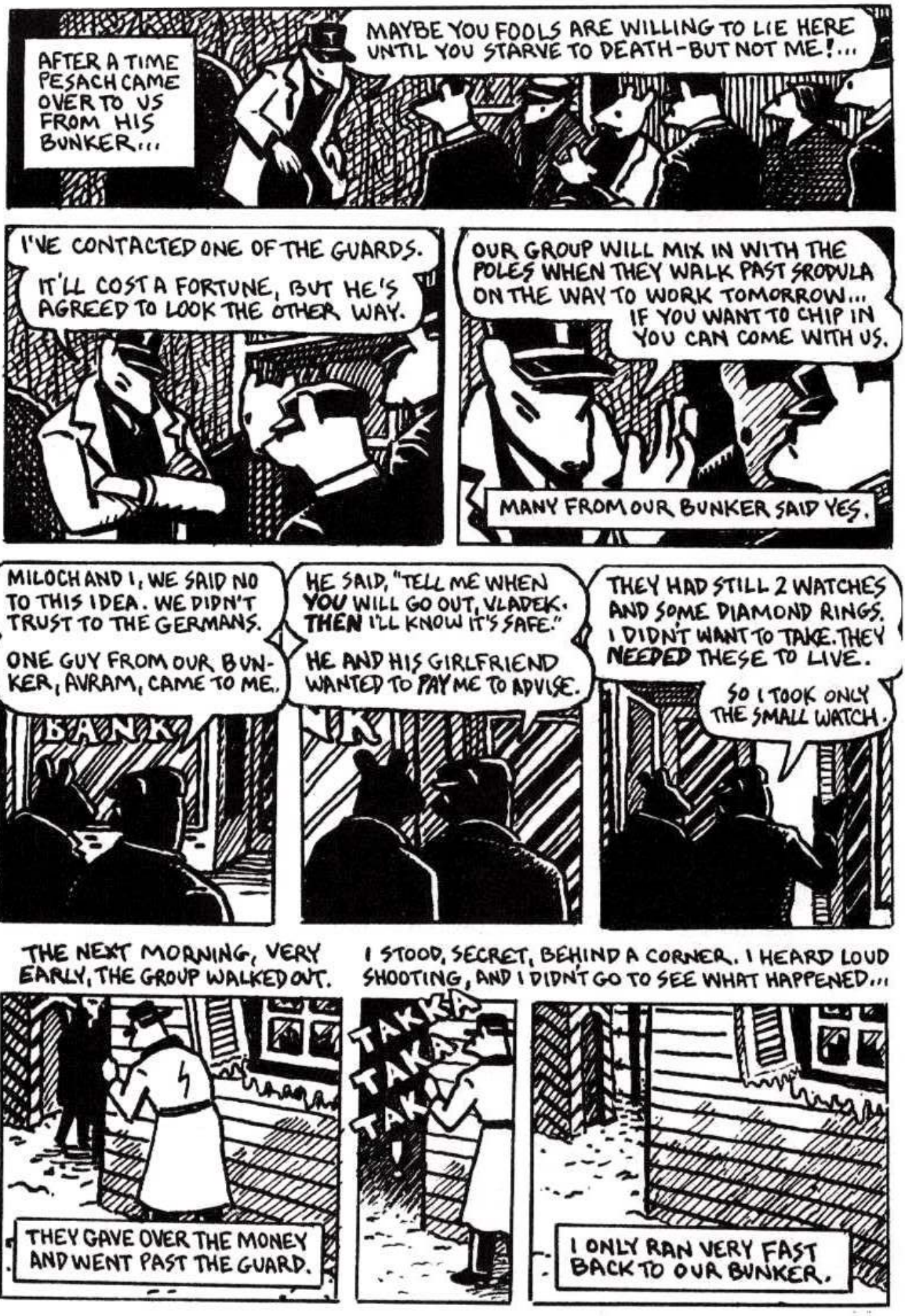
...AND TOOK ME INSIDE A TUNNEL...

WE CAME OUT TO A BUNKER...

...BUT WHEN ANJA AND I APPROACHED TO DISCUSS THIS BUNKER WITH LOLEK...
NO THANKS, FORGET IT!
BUT MILOCH ORGANIZED EVERYTHING!
I'M SICK OF HIDING!
OUR NEPHEW WAS THEN ONLY 15. HE WAS WORKING AS AN ELECTRICIAN.
ALWAYS LOLEK WAS A LITTLE MESHUGA...
I'M A SKILLED WORKER. WHEREVER THEY TAKE ME, I'LL BE OKAY.
YOU'RE CRAZY! YOU'RE GOING STRAIGHT TO THE OVENS!
AND HE DID GET PUT INTO ONE OF THE NEXT TRANSPORTS TO AUSCHWITZ.
ANJA BECAME COMPLETELY HYSTERICAL.
THE WHOLE FAMILY IS GONE! GRANDMA AND GRANDPA! POPPA! MOMMA! TOSHA! BIBI! MY RICHIEU!! NOW THEY'LL TAKE LOLEK!
IT WAS ALSO AROUND THIS TIME THAT WE HEARD FIRST THE BAD NEWS FROM ZAWIERCIE-ABOUT TOSHA AND RICHIEU.
OH GOD. LET ME DIE TOO!
COME, ANJA. GET UP!
WHY ARE YOU PULLING ME, VLADEK? LET ME ALONE! I DON'T WANT TO LIVE!
NO, DARLING! TO DIE, IT'S EASY...
BUT YOU HAVE TO STRUGGLE FOR LIFE!
UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT WE MUST STRUGGLE TOGETHER! I NEED YOU!
AND YOU'LL SEE THAT TOGETHER WE'LL SURVIVE.
THIS ALWAYS I TOLD TO HER.

THE GHETTO FINISHED OUT SO LIKE MILOCH SAID. ABOUT TWELVE FROM US RAN INTO HIS BUNKER WITH HIM, HIS WIFE AND HIS THREE-YEARS-OLD BABY BOY.




AFTER A TIME PESACH CAME OVER TO US FROM HIS BUNKER...
MAYBE YOU FOOLS ARE WILLING TO LIE HERE UNTIL YOU STARVE TO DEATH - BUT NOT ME!...
I'VE CONTACTED ONE OF THE GUARDS.
IT'LL COST A FORTUNE, BUT HE'S AGREED TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY.
OUR GROUP WILL MIX IN WITH THE POLES WHEN THEY WALK PAST SRODULA ON THE WAY TO WORK TOMORROW... IF YOU WANT TO CHIP IN YOU CAN COME WITH US.
MANY FROM OUR BUNKER SAID YES.
MILOCH AND I, WE SAID NO TO THIS IDEA. WE DIDN'T TRUST TO THE GERMANS.
ONE GUY FROM OUR BUNKER, AVRAM, CAME TO ME.
HE SAID, "TELL ME WHEN YOU WILL GO OUT, VLADEK. THEN I'LL KNOW IT'S SAFE."
HE AND HIS GIRLFRIEND WANTED TO PAY ME TO ADVISE.
THEY HAD STILL 2 WATCHES AND SOME DIAMOND RINGS. I DIDN'T WANT TO TAKE. THEY NEEDED THESE TO LIVE.
SO I TOOK ONLY THE SMALL WATCH.
THE NEXT MORNING, VERY EARLY, THE GROUP WALKED OUT.
THEY GAVE OVER THE MONEY AND WENT PAST THE GUARD.
I STOOD, SECRET, BEHIND A CORNER. I HEARD LOUD SHOOTING, AND I DIDN'T GO TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED...
TAKKA TAKKA TAKKA!
I ONLY RAN VERY FAST BACK TO OUR BUNKER.

ONLY A FEW OF US REMAINED.

A LITTLE BEFORE DAWN WE WENT OUT FROM SRODULA...

WE MIXED WITH THE POLES GOING TO WORK.

THAT GUY, AVRAM, HIS WOMAN HAD FRIENDS TO KEEP THEM.

ANJA AND I DIDN'T HAVE WHERE TO GO.

IN CASE ANYTHING BAD HAPPENS TO ME YOU MUST RUN RIGHT AWAY OVER HERE.
THEREFORE I ARRANGED FOR YOU THIS KEY.
TAKE EVERYTHING OUT FROM THE SAFE. OTHERWISE IT CAN GO ONLY TO TAXES. OR MALA WILL GRAB IT.
PLEASE, POP...
TALKING ABOUT YOUR ESTATE JUST MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE.
YOU'RE NOW OLD ENOUGH SO WE MUST THINK OF THESE THINGS.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST ENJOY YOUR SAVINGS WHILE YOU STILL CAN?
I'LL KEEP IN MY DESK YOUR COPY OF THE KEY. YOU ONLY WOULD LOSE IT!
LOOK, YOU SEE WHAT I HAVE HERE? THIS CIGARETTE CASE AND THE LADY'S POWDER CASE - IT'S 14 KARATS GOLD.
UH HUH
THESE THINGS I HAD WITH ME THEN - IN SRODULA, IN THE CHANDELIER BUNKER.
REALLY? HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY STILL HAVE THEM?
WHEN THE GESTAPO FOUND US I DROPPED QUICK A FEW THINGS INTO THE CHIMNEY... IF THEY FOUND THE REST OF MY JEWELS, AT LEAST THESE MIGHT REMAIN.
AFTER I CAME OUT FROM THE CAMPS IN 1945 I SNEAKED BACK TO SRODULA AND - AT NIGHT, WHILE THE PEOPLE INSIDE SLEPT - I DIGGED THESE THINGS OUT FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE CHIMNEY.
GOSH.

YOU SEE THIS DIAMOND? THIS I GAVE TO ANJA WHEN FIRST WE CAME TO THE U.S.
EVEN WHEN YOU WERE A LITTLE BOY, ANJA WANTED THAT THIS RING SHOULD BE FOR YOUR WIFE.
BUT IF I GIVE IT TO YOU, MALA WILL DRIVE ME CRAZY. SHE WANTS EVERYTHING ONLY FOR HER.
SHE WANTS THAT I GIVE NOTHING FOR MY BROTHER IN ISRAEL, AND NOTHING FOR YOU—THREE TIMES ALREADY SHE MADE ME CHANGE OVER MY WILL.
C'MON—MALA'S OKAY!
YOU ONLY CAN'T KNOW! EVEN RIGHT AFTER MY LAST HEART ATTACK, WHEN STILL I WAS IN BED, SHE STARTED AGAIN ABOUT CHANGING THE WILL!
I SAID, "MALA, YOU SEE HOW SICK I AM. LET ME A LITTLE BIT HAVE SOME PEACE. WHAT YOU WANT FROM ME?"
AND SHE SCREAMED, "I WANT THE MONEY! THE MONEY. THE MONEY!"
WHY, ARTIE? WHY I EVER REMARRIED?
OY, ANJA! ANJA! ANJA!
EASY, POP... LET'S GO HOME.

# CHAPTER SIX

Another visit...

I'M GONNA GET SOME JUICE. WANT SOME?
NO. I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING-WHEN WE FIRST GOT MARRIED, I NEEDED CLOTHES...
IT WAS A YEAR AND A HALF AFTER ANJA DIED. HE TOOK ME TO HER CLOSET, AND SAID: "ALL THESE ARE FOR YOU!"
I SAID I WOULDN'T TOUCH HER THINGS!
..MY GOD, HOW THAT MAN CARRIED ON! I SWEAR, SOMETIMES I THINK HE MARRIED ME BECAUSE I'M THE SAME SIZE AS ANJA!
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN -UH- PRAGMATIC.
PRAGMATIC? CHEAP!! IT CAUSES HIM PHYSICAL PAIN TO PART WITH EVEN A NICKEL!
UH-HUH
I USED TO THINK THE WAR MADE HIM THAT WAY...
FAH! I WENT THROUGH THE CAMPS...
ALL OUR FRIENDS WENT THROUGH THE CAMPS. NOBODY IS LIKE HIM!
MM..
...IT'S SOMETHING THAT WORRIES ME ABOUT THE BOOK I'M DOING ABOUT HIM...
IN SOME WAYS HE'S JUST LIKE THE RACIST CARICATURE OF THE MISERLY OLD JEW.
HAH! YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!

I MEAN, I'M JUST TRYING TO PORTRAY MY FATHER ACCURATELY!...
EVEN FOR HIMSELF HE WON'T SPEND ANY MONEY..
HE HAS HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN THE BANK, AND HE LIVES LIKE A PAUPER!...
LOOK! HE GRABS PAPER TOWELS FROM REST ROOMS SO HE WON'T HAVE TO BUY NAPKINS OR TISSUES!
I WISH I GOT MOM'S STORY WHILE SHE WAS ALIVE. SHE WAS MORE SENSITIVE... IT WOULD GIVE THE BOOK SOME BALANCE.
YOUR MOTHER!..
...I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW SHE COULD STAND LIVING WITH HIM...
...I DON'T KNOW HOW I CAN STAND IT!
SO-HI, "KIDS"..
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU ARE UPSTAIRS HERE. I WAS WATERING DOWNSTAIRS THE GARDEN.
MALA AND I WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT MY BOOK...
I'VE ALREADY STARTED TO SKETCH OUT SOME PARTS.
I'LL SHOW YOU..

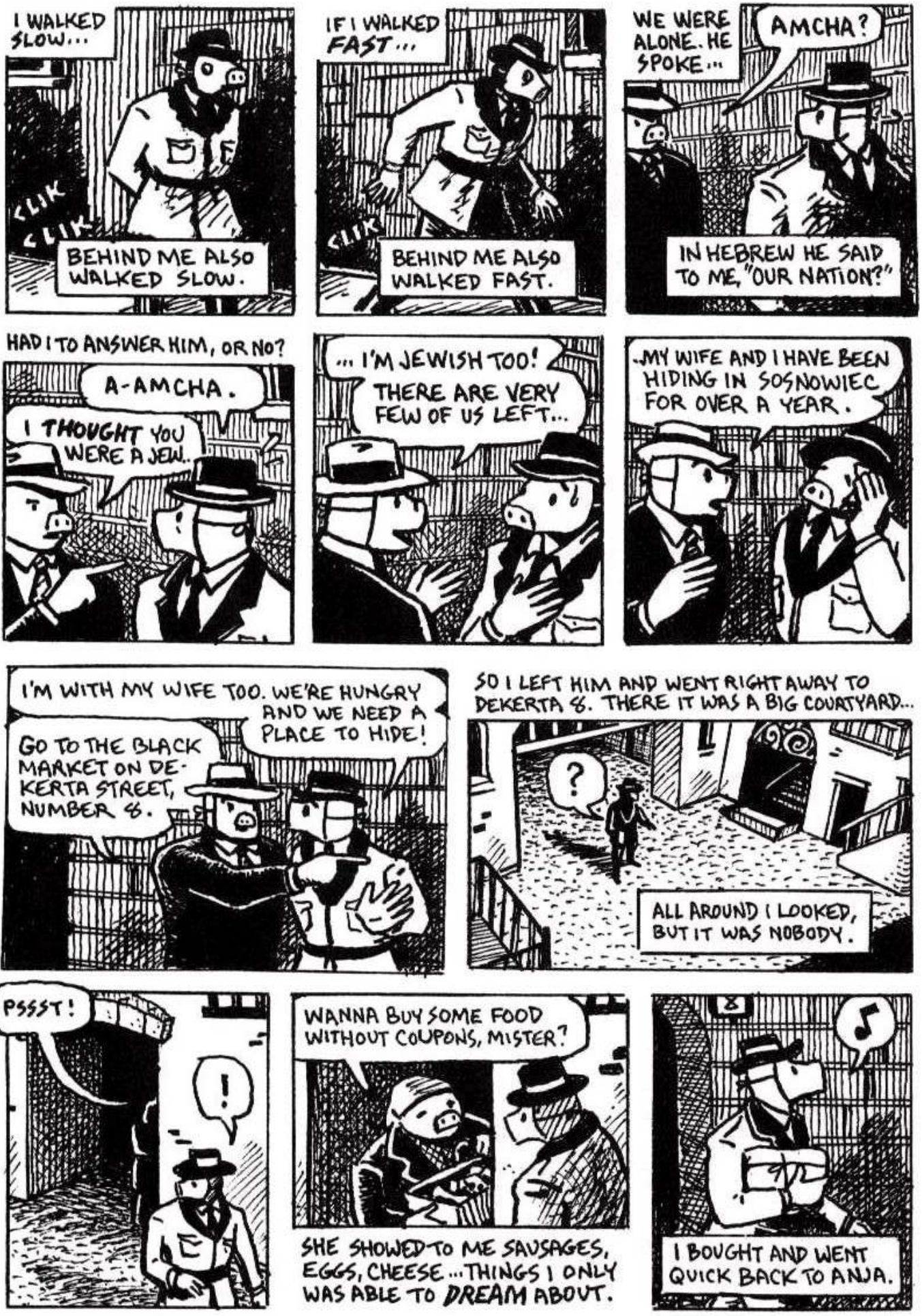
...SEE, HERE ARE THE BLACK MARKET JEWS THEY HANGED IN SOSNOWIEC...
ACH.
AND HERE'S YOU, SAYING: "ACH. WHEN I THINK OF THEM, IT STILL MAKES ME CRY!"
YES. STILL IT MAKES ME CRY!
IT'S AN IMPORTANT BOOK. PEOPLE WHO DON'T USUALLY READ SUCH STORIES WILL BE INTERESTED.
YES. I DON'T READ EVER SUCH COMICS, AND EVEN I AM INTERESTED.
OF COURSE YOU ARE INTERESTED. IT'S YOUR STORY!
YES. I KNOW ALREADY MY STORY BY HEART, AND EVEN I AM INTERESTED!
IT SHOULD BE VERY SUCCESSFUL.
YAH. SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE FAMOUS, LIKE ...WHAT'S-HIS-NAME?
HUH? "FAMOUS LIKE WHAT'S-HIS-NAME?!"
YOU KNOW... THE BIG-SHOT CARTOONIST...
WHAT CARTOONIST COULD YOU KNOW? ...WALT DISNEY??
YAH! WALT DISNEY!
WAIT! WHERE DO YOU GO, ARTIE?
...TO GET A PENCIL... I'VE JUST GOTTA WRITE THIS CONVERSATION DOWN BEFORE I FORGET IT!

COME. WE'LL ALL OF US GO TO THE GARDEN...YOU'LL SEE HOW NICE IT LOOKS, THE BUSHES.
YOU GO! I'VE GOT TO GET READY...
...I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT AT THE HAIRDRESSER'S.
AGAIN TO THE HAIRDRESSER? ONLY A WEEK AGO YOU WENT!
SHE SEES MORE OFTEN THE HAIRDRESSER THAN SHE SEES ME!
YOU SEE HOW IT IS? ANY TIME I WANT TO GO OUT FOR A FEW MINUTES HE TRIES TO MAKE ME FEEL GUILTY!
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE AT HIS CONSTANT BECK AND CALL!
WHAT I SAID THAT'S SO TERRIBLE? BELIEVE ME, YOU'D HAVE MORE FRESH AIR FROM THE GARDEN THAN FROM A HUNDRED HAIRDRESSERS!
OI, VLADEK. STOP IT!
YOU SEE HOW SHE IS? WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH HER?
C'MON, POP. LET'S GO SIT IN THE GARDEN.
IF I SAY ONLY ONE WORD TO HER, SHE MAKES RIGHT AWAY AN ARGUMENT!
SHE SAYS SHE WANTS TO LEAVE ME! I TELL TO HER: "SO? HERE IS THE DOOR. BUT, REMEMBER, IT'S ONLY ONE WAY... IF YOU GO OUT, YOU CAN'T COME BACK!"

MAYBE YOU SHOULD BOTH SEE A MARRIAGE COUNSELOR.
ACH! I DON'T WANT THAT A STRANGER SHOULD MIX INTO OUR PRIVATE STORIES.
TO A LAWYER I TALKED, YEARS AGO... AND RIGHT AWAY HE WARNED TO ME: "VLADEK-WATCH OUT. I SEE THAT THIS WOMAN IS MONEY-CONSCIOUS!"
AND ONCE MALA AND I SAT WITH AUNT HELEN TO HELP AGREE US FOR A NEW WILL... BUT A MONTH AFTER, MALA WANTED AGAIN TO CHANGE IT.
DON'T SEE A THERAPIST ABOUT YOUR WILL... TALK ABOUT HOW TO GET ALONG BETTER.
WITH MALA, IT'S NOT TO GET ALONG. ONLY IT'S THE MONEY!
I GIVE UP... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
YOU SEE? I ALSO DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!
LOOK. I CAN'T STAY LONG. I NEED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU AND ANJA..
IT'S CHILLY... TAKE ALSO HERE A BLANKET.
NO THANKS.
WHAT HAPPENED IN 1944, AFTER YOU LEFT SRODULA?
WE SNEAKED TOWARD SOSNOWIEC...
IT WAS STILL DARK OUTSIDE... WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO HIDE OURSELVES...

JANINA LIVES OVER THERE.
RICHIEU'S GOVERNESS ALWAYS OFFERED SHE WOULD HELP US.
WE CAME TO HER HOUSE NEAR TOWN...
OPEN UP, JANINA! QUICK!
W-WHO'S THERE?
MY GOD! IT'S THE SPIEGELMANS!
YOU'LL BRING TROUBLE! GO AWAY! QUICKLY!
SLAM
I'M FRIGHTENED, VLADEK.
MAYBE WE SHOULD TRY MY FATHER'S OLD HOUSE. THE JANITOR HAS KNOWN OUR FAMILY FOR YEARS.
LET'S TRY. WE'VE GOT TO GET OFF THE STREETS BEFORE DAWN!
I WAS A LITTLE SAFE. I HAD A COAT AND BOOTS, SO LIKE A GESTAPO WORE WHEN HE WAS NOT IN SERVICE. BUT ANJA-HER APPEARANCE-YOU COULD SEE MORE EASY SHE WAS JEWISH. I WAS AFRAID FOR HER.
WAKE UP, MR. LUKOWSKI. LET US IN. PLEASE!!
HUH? W-WHO IS IT?
ANJA! ANJA ZYLBERBERG!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, CHILD? IT ISN'T SAFE! WAIT- I'LL UNLOCK THE GATE.

GO THROUGH THE COURTYARD TO THE SHED IN THE BACK. I'LL BRING YOU SOME FOOD.
THANK GOD THERE ARE STILL SOME KIND PEOPLE LEFT. I THOUGHT—
A JEWESS!
THERE'S A JEWESS IN THE COURTYARD! POLICE!
HURRY!
AN OLD WITCH RECOGNIZED ANJA FROM HER WINDOW.
WE RAN FAST TO THE SHED AND HID IN THE STRAW.
IT'S OKAY FOR NOW...
I DON'T THINK ANYONE HEARD HER... SHE'S A LITTLE SENILE ANYWAY.
BUT YOU MUST LOOK FOR A BETTER PLACE TO STAY. SOMEONE HERE IS BOUND TO RECOGNIZE YOU!
IT'S ALMOST MORNING. WAIT HERE. I'M GOING OUT TO SCOUT AROUND.
B-BE CAREFUL.
I WALKED, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO GO.
CLIK CLIK
AND I HEARD SOON IT WAS SOMEBODY FOLLOWING BEHIND ME.


I WALKED SLOW...
<LIK
<LIK
BEHIND ME ALSO WALKED SLOW.
IF I WALKED FAST...
<LIK
BEHIND ME ALSO WALKED FAST.
WE WERE ALONE. HE SPOKE...
AMCHA?
IN HEBREW HE SAID TO ME, "OUR NATION?"
HAD I TO ANSWER HIM, OR NO?
A-AMCHA.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE A JEW..
... I'M JEWISH TOO!
THERE ARE VERY FEW OF US LEFT...
..MY WIFE AND I HAVE BEEN HIDING IN SOSNOWIEC FOR OVER A YEAR.
I'M WITH MY WIFE TOO. WE'RE HUNGRY AND WE NEED A PLACE TO HIDE!
GO TO THE BLACK MARKET ON DE-KERTA STREET, NUMBER 8.
SO I LEFT HIM AND WENT RIGHT AWAY TO DEKERTA 8. THERE IT WAS A BIG COURTYARD...
?
ALL AROUND I LOOKED, BUT IT WAS NOBODY.
PSSST!
!
WANNA BUY SOME FOOD WITHOUT COUPONS, MISTER?
SHE SHOWED TO ME SAUSAGES, EGGS, CHEESE...THINGS I ONLY WAS ABLE TO DREAM ABOUT.
I BOUGHT AND WENT QUICK BACK TO ANJA.

GOOD MORNING.
VLADEK! YOU WERE GONE SO LONG.

I HAD TO GET BREAKFAST!... WANT SOME SAUSAGES? ...OR EGGS?..OR WOULD YOU PREFER CHOCOLATE?
WHAT?

IT'S A MIRACLE! HOW DID YOU MANAGE IT?
I'M A MAGICIAN! HAVE SOME MILK.

I WENT AGAIN BACK TO DEKERTA. THERE I COULD CHANGE JEWELRY FOR MARKS-AND MARKS FOR FOOD, OR A PLACE TO STAY.

THIS TIME IT WAS MORE PEOPLE...THERE EVEN, I SAW SOME JEWISH BOYS I KNEW FROM BEFORE THE WAR.
VLADEK SPIEGELMAN?!
I HARDLY RECOGNIZED YOU. SO YOU'RE STILL ALIVE, EH?
LEO? YES. I'M WITH ANJA.

WE NEED A HIDING PLACE.
HOW ABOUT MRS. KAWKA?

SHE HAS A SMALL FARM ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN..

SHE MIGHT TAKE YOU IN, IF YOU CAN PAY.

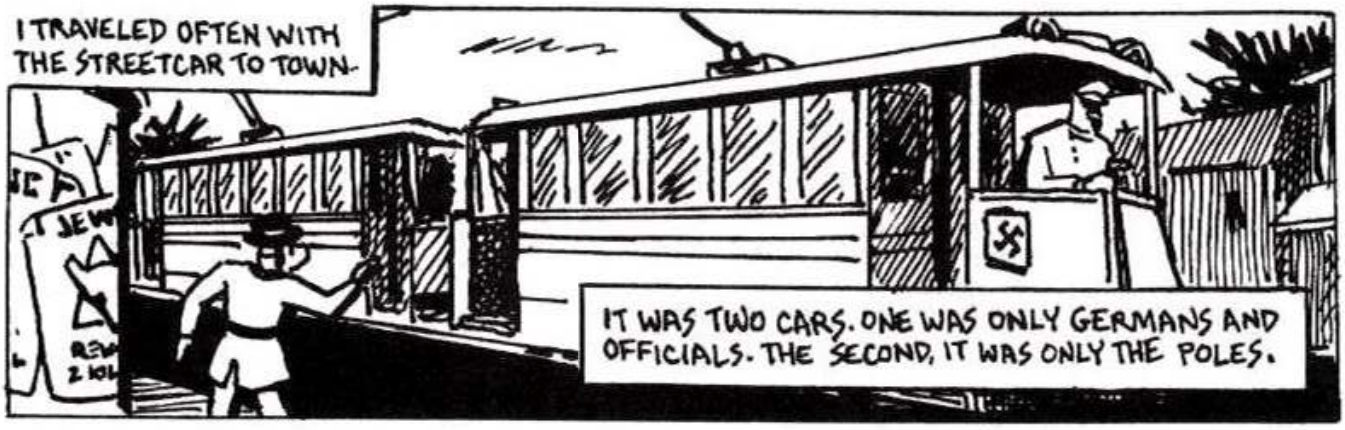
IT WAS NOT SO FAR TO GO TO KAWKA'S FARM...
ALRIGHT THEN, MR. SPIEGELMAN. YOU AND YOUR WIFE CAN STAY IN MY BARN.
WE'LL COME LATE TONIGHT.

BUT, REMEMBER-IF YOU'RE FOUND THERE, I DON'T KNOW YOU! ... YOU MUST SAY THAT THE BARN DOOR WAS OPEN AND YOU JUST SNEAKED IN.
DON'T WORRY...WE WON'T BETRAY YOU!

AND SO WE CAME THERE TO LIVE WITH KAWKA'S COW.
IT'S ALMOST DAWN - WHEN MRS. KAWKA COMES TO MILK HER COW, SHE'LL BRING YOU SOME COFFEE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO DEKERTA.
DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE AGAIN. I'M TERRIFIED WHILE YOU'RE GONE.

DON'T WORRY, ANJA. I'LL BE SAFE. IF I DIDN'T GO OUT WE WOULDN'T HAVE FOOD... WE WOULDN'T HAVE THIS PLACE!...

AND WE'VE GOT TO FIND A WARMER PLACE FOR THE WINTER... AWAY FROM SOSNOWIEC IF POSSIBLE...
I-I'LL BE OKAY. COME BACK QUICK.


I TRAVELED OFTEN WITH THE STREETCAR TO TOWN.
IT WAS TWO CARS. ONE WAS ONLY GERMANS AND OFFICIALS. THE SECOND, IT WAS ONLY THE POLES.

ALWAYS I WENT STRAIGHT IN THE OFFICIAL CAR...
HEIL HITLER.

THE GERMANS PAID NO ATTENTION OF ME... IN THE POLISH CAR THEY COULD SMELL IF A POLISH JEW CAME IN.

AT THE BLACK MARKET I SAW SEVERAL TIMES A NICE WOMAN, WHAT I MADE A LITTLE FRIENDS WITH HER...

THE NEXT EVENING SHE CAME WITH HER 7-YEARS-OLD BOY TO KAWKA'S FARMHOUSE...

WE HAD HERE A LITTLE COMFORTABLE...WE HAD WHERE TO SIT.
REMEMBER, LITTLE ONE - NEVER TELL ANYBODY THERE ARE JEWS HERE. THEY'LL SHOOT US ALL!
YES, AUNT ANJA.
THE LITTLE BOY WAS VERY SMART AND HE LOVED VERY MUCH ANJA.
YOU HAD TO PAY MRS. MOTONOWA TO KEEP YOU, RIGHT?
OF COURSE I PAID... AND WELL I PAID.
...WHAT YOU THINK? SOMEONE WILL RISK THEIR LIFE FOR NOTHING?
...I PAID ALSO FOR THE FOOD WHAT SHE GAVE TO US FROM HER SMUGGLING BUSINESS.
BUT, ONE TIME I MISSED A FEW COINS TO THE BREAD...
I'LL PAY YOU THE REST TOMORROW, AFTER I GO OUT AND CASH SOME VALUABLES.
SORRY...I WASN'T ABLE TO FIND ANY BREAD TODAY.
ALWAYS SHE GOT BREAD, SO I DIDN'T BELIEVE... BUT, STILL, SHE WAS A GOOD WOMAN.
IN HIS SCHOOL THE BOY WAS VERY BAD IN GERMAN. SO ANJA TUTORED TO HIM.
ICH BIN... DU BIST.. ER IST...
SHE KNEW GERMAN LIKE AN EXPERT.
AND SOON HE CAME OUT WITH VERY GOOD GRADES.
MY TEACHER ASKED ME HOW I IMPROVED SO MUCH...
SO I TOLD HIM MY MOTHER WAS HELPING ME.
WHEW
HE WAS REALLY A CLEVER BOY.

BUT IT WAS A FEW THINGS HERE NOT SO GOOD... HER HOME WAS VERY SMALL AND IT WAS ON THE GROUND FLOOR...

STILL, EVERYTHING HERE WAS FINE, UNTIL ONE SATURDAY MOTONOWA RAN VERY EARLY BACK FROM HER BLACK MARKET WORK...

WE'LL WALK TOWARD SOSNOWIEC - AT LEAST WE'LL KNOW OUR WAY AROUND.
ANJA WAS SO AFRAID SHE WAS SHAKING.
STAY CALM - WALK AS IF WE'RE JUST STROLLING ... AND SPEAK GERMAN.
FOR HOURS WE WALKED.
B-BESUCHEN WIR DOCH FRAU KAWKA.
GUTE IDEE.
VLADEK-WE'RE BEING FOLLOWED.
RELAX
BUT IF WE TURNED A CORNER, THEY ALSO TURNED.
ES IST KALT.
JA. JA.
OF COURSE I WAS RIGHT - THEY DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING ON US.
WOOSH
THEY JUST WERE WALKING.
STAYING ON THE STREET ALL NIGHT IS TOO DANGERDUS... MAYBE WE CAN HIDE IN THAT CONSTRUCTION SITE.
GOOD-I'M EXHAUSTED.
HERE WAS A FOUNDATION MADE VERY DEEP DOWN IN THE GROUND..
BE CAREFUL!
I JUMPED FIRST IN, AND I PULLED OVER BRICKS FOR ANJA TO STEP DOWN.
AND HERE WE WAITED A COLD FEW HOURS FOR THE DAY.

IT STARTED TO BE LIGHT...

LATER, KAWKA CAME IN...

SHE TOOK ANJA INSIDE AND BROUGHT TO ME SOME FOOD... IN THOSE DAYS I WAS SO STRONG I COULD SIT EVEN IN THE SNOW ALL NIGHT...

SHE TOLD ME THESE TWO ACQUAINTANCES VISITED OFTEN TO HER ON THURSDAY EVENINGS... TODAY WAS MAYBE A MONDAY...
I DON'T GET IT... WASN'T HUNGARY AS DANGEROUS AS POLAND?
NO. FOR A LONGER TIME IT WAS BETTER THERE IN HUNGARY FOR THE JEWS... BUT THEN, NEAR THE VERY FINISH OF THE WAR, THEY ALL GOT PUT ALSO TO AUSCHWITZ.
I WAS THERE, AND I SAW IT. THOUSANDS - HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF JEWS FROM HUNGARY...
SO MANY, IT WASN'T EVEN ROOM ENOUGH TO BURY THEM ALL IN THE OVENS.
BUT AT THAT TIME, WHEN I WAS THERE WITH KAWKA, WE COULDN'T KNOW THEN.
SO... I WENT NEXT DAY TO DEKERTA STREET TO BUY FOOD...
OH GOD! OH GOD! MR. SPIEGELMAN. YOU'RE ALIVE! I'M SO GLAD TO SEE YOU!
MRS. MOTONOWA!
I WANTED TO FIND A NEW CONNECTION TO HIDE US. BUT REALLY I DIDN'T THINK TO FIND AGAIN HER.
PRAISE MARY. YOU'RE SAFE! I COULDN'T SLEEP, I FELT SO GUILTY ABOUT CHASING YOU AND YOUR WIFE OUT.
THE GESTAPO NEVER EVEN CAME TO MY HOUSE. I JUST PANICKED FOR NOTHING. PLEASE COME BACK AGAIN.
ANJA WAS GLAD OF GOING BACK. AND MOTONOWA ALSO... ALWAYS I PAID HER NICELY.
AND THAT SAME NIGHT WE SAID GOODBYE TO KAWKA AND WENT AGAIN TO SZOPIENICE.

AFTER WE WERE BACK ONLY A SHORT TIME...

SO EACH DAY AND NIGHT WE SAT IN SUCH A STORAGE LOCKER...

AT NIGHT WE COULD MOVE AROUND A LITTLE, BUT IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE DOWN THERE...

BUT, THEN, MOTONOWA STOPPED TO COME DOWN.
IT'S BEEN 3 DAYS SINCE SHE BROUGHT ANY FOOD.
HERE...HAVE ANOTHER CANDY...
I HAD STILL CANDIES I ORGANIZED ON DEKERTA. ONLY THIS WE HAD TO EAT.
ALSO, HERE WE HAD NO PLACE WHERE TO WASH, SO ANJA GOT ON ALL HER SKIN A TERRIBLE RASH.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WORSE- THE HUNGER OR THE ITCHING.
DON'T SCRATCH! IT ONLY- SHH!
CLIK
THE DOOR.
I'M SORRY I COULDN'T GET DOWN BEFORE...MY HUSBAND IS GETTING SUSPICIOUS.
HE ASKED WHY I GO TO THE CELLAR SO OFTEN. HE EVEN ASKED IF I WAS HIDING JEWS HERE! ...HE WAS JOKING, BUT STILL...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT HERE?
THERE ARE RATS, GIANT RATS! THEY'RE HORRIBLE!
WELL- YOU'RE BETTER OFF WITH THE RATS THAN WITH THE GESTAPO... AT LEAST THE RATS WON'T KILL YOU!
MMM..
AND SHE WAS RIGHT. WE WERE HAPPY EVEN TO HAVE THESE CONDITIONS.
AFTER THE TEN DAYS HER HUSBAND LEFT, AND SHE TOOK US BACK.
IT'S GOOD TO BE "HOME," EH, VLADEK?
IT'S A LOT NICER THAN THAT CELLAR.
BUT I DIDN'T FEEL SAFE HERE. IT WAS TOO MANY WAYS SOMEBODY COULD FIND US OUT. I WANTED TO GO BETTER TO HUNGARY.

SO, WHEN IT CAME THURSDAY, I WENT IN THE DIRECTION TO TAKE A STREETCAR TO SEE KAWKA IN SOSNOWIEC.

THEY RAN SCREAMING HOME.

I APPROACHED OVER TO THEM...

WHEN I ARRIVED TO KAWKA, THE TWO SMUGGLERS WERE THERE TOGETHER SITTING IN THE KITCHEN..

ANJA AND I BOUGHT ALWAYS PASTRIES THERE. HE USED TO BE A VERY RICH MAN IN SOSNOWIEC.

BACK WHEN IT WAS THE GHETTO, ABRAHAM WAS A BIG MEMBER OF THE JEWISH COUNCIL.

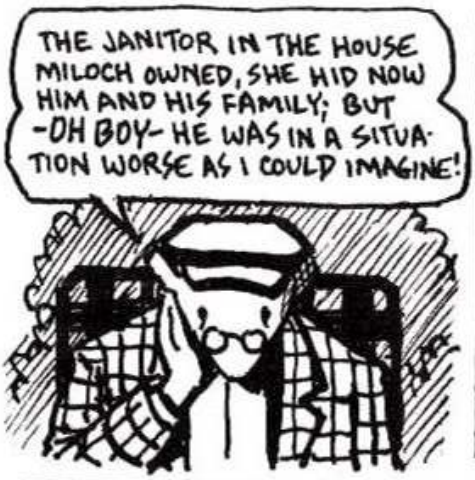
THE SMUGGLERS PROPOSED US HOW THEY WOULD DO.

WE SPOKE YIDDISH SO THE POLES DON'T UNDERSTAND.

I AGREED WITH MANDELBAUM TO MEET AGAIN HERE. IF IT CAME A GOOD LETTER, WE'LL GO.

BUT IF EVER I TALKED OF THIS PLAN TO ANJA...

MILOCH HELPED ME IN SRODULA. MAYBE NOW, IF HE NEEDED, I COULD HELP HIM.



WE DRANK AND WE DRANK- ONLY NEAR MIDNIGHT FINALLY THEY WENT HOME.

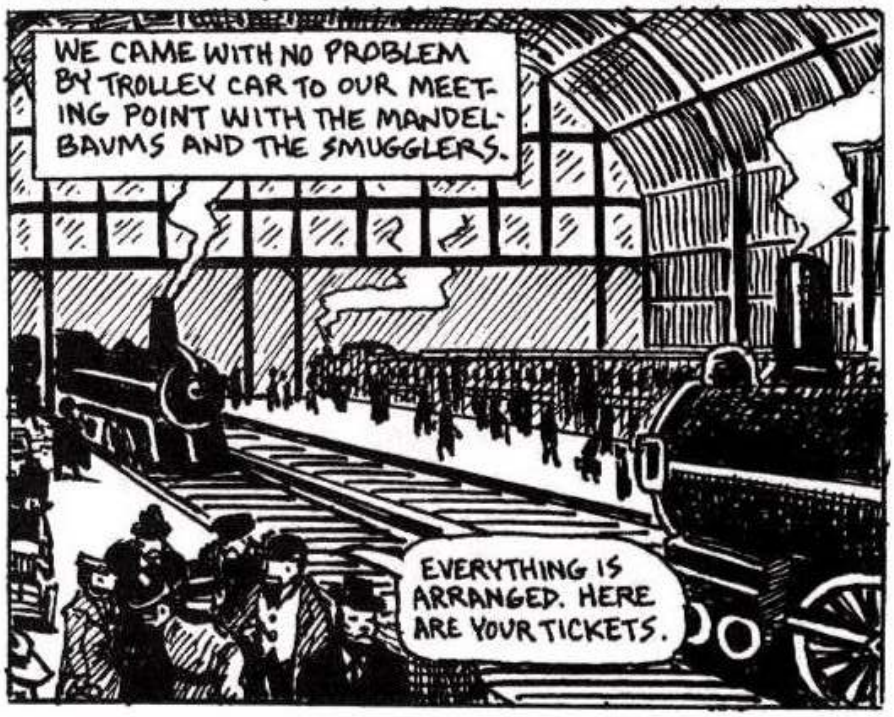
I THINK IT'S SAFE TO GO DOWN.
ARE YOU - SNF. CARRYING FOOD FOR MILOCH?
I FED THEM EARLIER. THIS IS JUST TRASH.
THE CONDITIONS HOW MILOCH WAS LIVING - YOU COULDN'T BELIEVE.
...I ALWAYS BRING GARBAGE SO THE NEIGHBORS DON'T GET SUSPICIOUS.
PSST - MILOCH. YOUR COUSIN IS HERE.
?
IN EACH COURTYARD WAS A VERY DEEP HOLE TO THROW IN ALL THE GARBAGE.
INSIDE THIS GARBAGE HOLE WAS HERE SEPARATED A TINY SPACE — MAYBE ONLY 5 FEET BY 6 FEET.
VLADEK! I'M GLAD YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!
MY GOD!
I LOOKED DOWN ONLY FOR A SECOND, BUT IN THERE WAS LIVING MILOCH, HIS WIFE AND THEIR 3-YEARS-OLD BOY.
HOW CAN YOU LIVE THERE? YOU MUST BE FREEZING!
WE HAVE NO CHOICE. AT LEAST OUR BUNKKER IS UNDERGROUND..
AND THE DECOMPOSING GARBAGE GIVES SOME HEAT.
BUT PEOPLE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE...
I TOLD HIM MY STORY WITH THESE POLES UPSTAIRS.
WHAT CAN WE DO?
LISTEN - ANJA AND I MAY BE GOING TO HUNGARY!..
I EXPLAINED OUR HIDING PLACE WAS NOT PERFECT, BUT BETTER THAN HIS.
I'LL COME AGAIN WHEN I HAVE MORE NEWS, BUT IT'S VERY LATE NOW — I MUST GET BACK HOME.
AND I WAS LUCKY. NOBODY MADE ME ANY QUESTIONS GOING BACK TO SZOPIENICE.

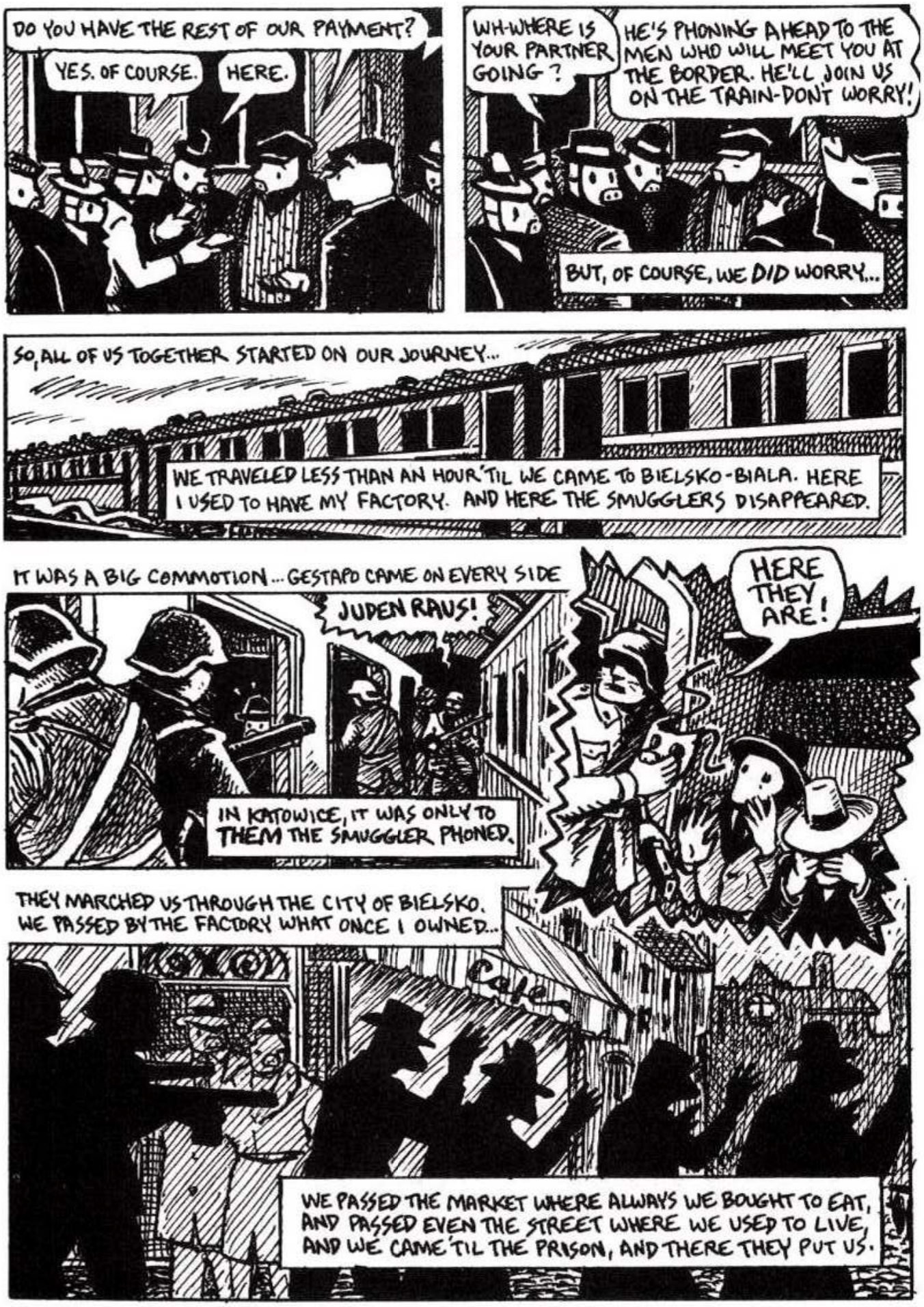
A FEW DAYS AFTER, I CAME AGAIN TO THE SMUGGLERS. AND MANDELBAUM WAS ALSO THERE.

IT WAS IN YIDDISH AND IT WAS SIGNED REALLY BY ABRAHAM. SO WE AGREED RIGHT AWAY TO GO AHEAD.

BUT ANJA JUST DIDN'T WANT WE WOULD GO...

BUT, FOR ANJA AND I, IT WAS FOR US WAITING **ANOTHER** DESTINY...

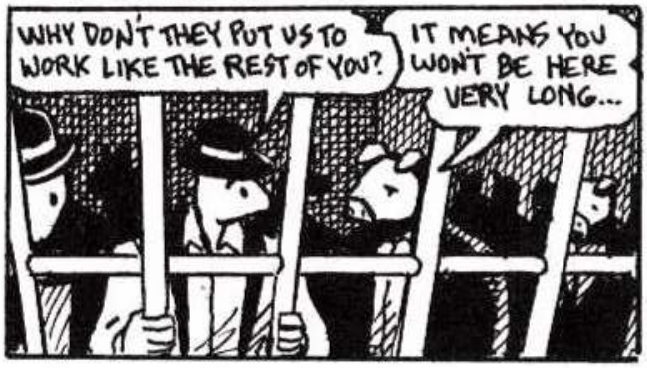



DO YOU HAVE THE REST OF OUR PAYMENT?
YES. OF COURSE.
HERE.
WH-WHERE IS YOUR PARTNER GOING?
HE'S PHONING AHEAD TO THE MEN WHO WILL MEET YOU AT THE BORDER. HE'LL JOIN US ON THE TRAIN-DON'T WORRY!
BUT, OF COURSE, WE DID WORRY...
SO, ALL OF US TOGETHER STARTED ON OUR JOURNEY...
WE TRAVELED LESS THAN AN HOUR 'TIL WE CAME TO BIELSKO-BIALA. HERE I USED TO HAVE MY FACTORY. AND HERE THE SMUGGLERS DISAPPEARED.
IT WAS A BIG COMMOTION... GESTAPO CAME ON EVERY SIDE
JUDEN RAUS!
HERE THEY ARE!
IN KATOWICE, IT WAS ONLY TO THEM THE SMUGGLER PHONED.
THEY MARCHED US THROUGH THE CITY OF BIELSKO. WE PASSED BY THE FACTORY WHAT ONCE I OWNED...
WE PASSED THE MARKET WHERE ALWAYS WE BOUGHT TO EAT, AND PASSED EVEN THE STREET WHERE WE USED TO LIVE, AND WE CAME 'TIL THE PRISON, AND THERE THEY PUT US.

I HAD A SMALL BAG TO TRAVEL. WHEN THEY REGISTERED ME IN, THEY LOOKED OVER EVERYTHING.

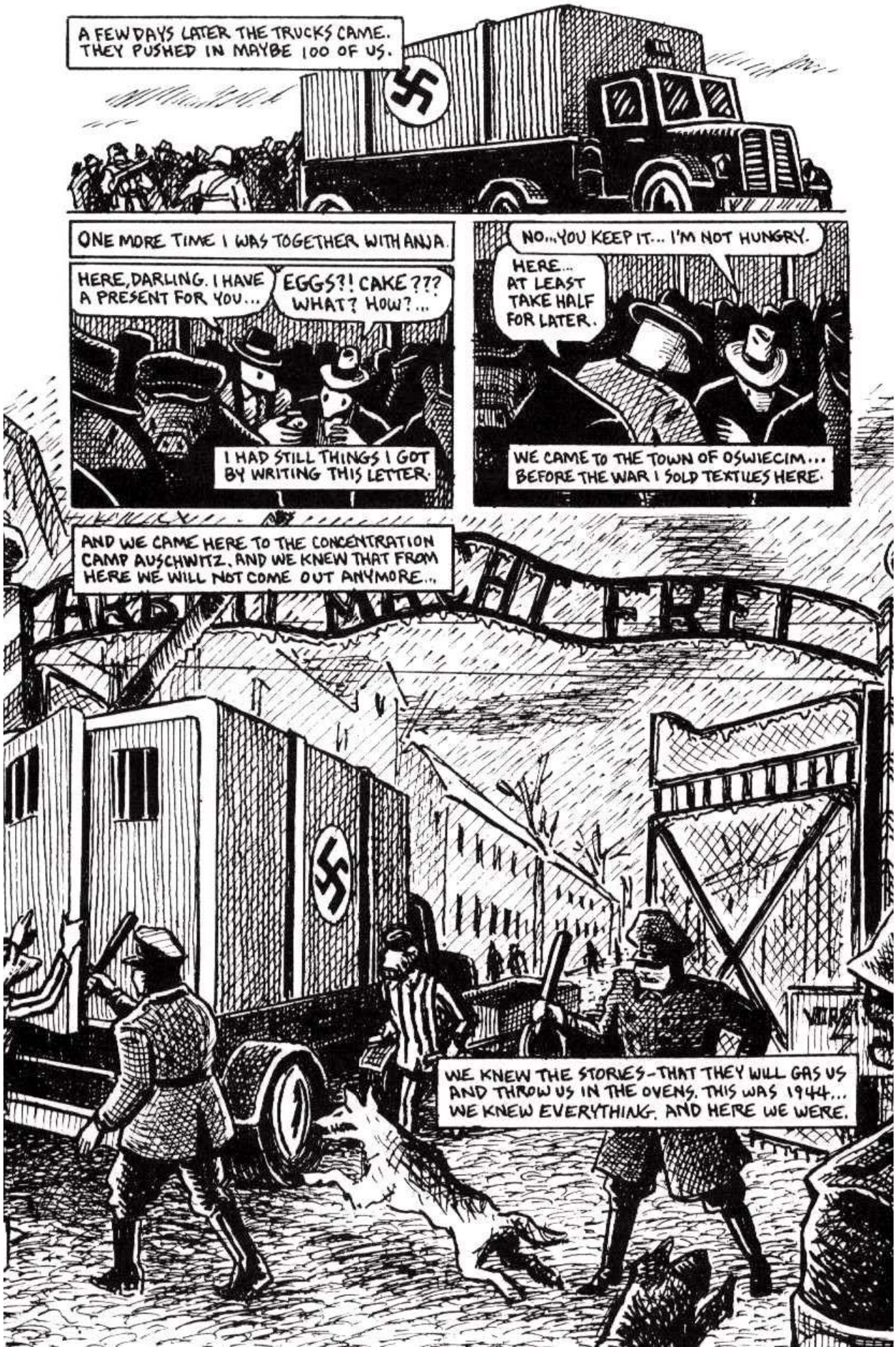
WITH A SPOON HE TOOK OUT, LITTLE BY LITTLE, ALL THE POLISH.

HERE WE GOT VERY LITTLE TO EAT - MAYBE SOUP ONE TIME A DAY - AND WE SAT WITH NOTHING TO DO.



IN A SHORT TIME HE GOT AGAIN A PACKAGE...

IT WAS EGGS THERE... IT WAS EVEN CHOCOLATES. ...I WAS VERY LUCKY TO GET SUCH GOODIES!


A FEW DAYS LATER THE TRUCKS CAME. THEY PUSHED IN MAYBE 100 OF US.
ONE MORE TIME I WAS TOGETHER WITH ANJA.
HERE, DARLING. I HAVE A PRESENT FOR YOU...
EGGS?! CAKE??? WHAT? HOW?...
I HAD STILL THINGS I GOT BY WRITING THIS LETTER.
NO...YOU KEEP IT... I'M NOT HUNGRY.
HERE... AT LEAST TAKE HALF FOR LATER.
WE CAME TO THE TOWN OF OSWIECIM... BEFORE THE WAR I SOLD TEXTILES HERE.
AND WE CAME HERE TO THE CONCENTRATION CAMP AUSCHWITZ. AND WE KNEW THAT FROM HERE WE WILL NOT COME OUT ANYMORE...
WE KNEW THE STORIES - THAT THEY WILL GAS US AND THROW US IN THE OVENS. THIS WAS 1944... WE KNEW EVERYTHING. AND HERE WE WERE.

MY GOD.
YES. SO IT WAS...
...AND WHEN THEY OPENED THE TRUCK, THEY PUSHED MEN ONE WAY, WOMEN TO THE OTHER WAY...
ANJA AND I WENT EACH IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION, AND WE COULDN'T KNOW IF EVER WE'LL SEE EACH OTHER ALIVE AGAIN.
THIS IS WHERE MOM'S DIARIES WILL BE ESPECIALLY USEFUL. THEY'LL GIVE ME SOME IDEA OF WHAT SHE WENT THROUGH WHILE YOU WERE APART.
I CAN TELL YOU ... SHE WENT THROUGH THE SAME WHAT ME: TERRIBLE!
IT'S GETTING COLD. WHY DON'T WE GO UPSTAIRS AND SEE IF WE CAN FIND HER NOTEBOOKS...
NO... I LOOKED ALREADY...
...IT'S JUST NOT TO FIND ANYMORE!
WELL... LET'S CHECK OUT THE GARAGE. YOU'VE GOT LOADS OF STUFF IN THERE.
NO. YOU'LL NOT FIND IT. BECAUSE I REMIND TO MYSELF WHAT HAPPENED...
THESE NOTEBOOKS, AND OTHER REALLY NICE THINGS OF MOTHER... ONE TIME I HAD A VERY BAD DAY... AND ALL OF THESE THINGS I DESTROYED.
YOU WHAT?

AFTER ANJA DIED I HAD TO MAKE AN ORDER WITH EVERYTHING... THESE PAPERS HAD TOO MANY MEMORIES. SO I BURNED THEM.
YOU BURNED THEM?
CHRIST! YOU SAVE TONS OF WORTHLESS SHIT, AND YOU...
YES, IT'S A SHAME! FOR YEARS THEY WERE LAYING THERE AND NOBODY EVEN LOOKED IN.
DID YOU EVER READ ANY OF THEM?... CAN YOU REMEMBER WHAT SHE WROTE?
NO. I LOOKED IN, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER... ONLY I KNOW THAT SHE SAID, "I WISH MY SON, WHEN HE GROWS UP, HE WILL BE INTERESTED BY THIS."
GOD DAMN YOU! YOU-YOU MURDERER! HOW THE HELL COULD YOU DO SUCH A THING!!
ACH
TO YOUR FATHER YOU YELL IN THIS WAY?... EVEN TO YOUR FRIENDS YOU SHOULD NEVER YELL THIS WAY!
BUT, I'M TELLING YOU, AFTER THE TRAGEDY WITH MOTHER, I WAS SO DEPRESSED THEN, I DIDN'T KNOW IF I'M COMING OR I'M GOING!
I'M SORRY. LOOK, POP. IT'S GETTING LATE. I'D BETTER GET HOME...
COME FIRST UPSTAIRS FOR A LITTLE COFFEE.
NO... REALLY. I'D BETTER GET GOING RIGHT AWAY...
SO... TELEPHONE TO ME... YOU SHOULD VISIT HERE MORE OFTEN. DON'T BE SUCH A STRANGER!
SURE... YOU BET! SO LONG.
...MURDERER.

"Spiegelman portrays the Nazis as cats, the Jews as mice, the Poles as pigs and the Americans as dogs. They are all terrifyingly human. This is comic strip art which has nothing to do with Tom and Jerry. Anyone moved by Briggs's *When the Wind Blows* ... will appreciate Spiegelman's genius for dealing with a subject many would say cannot be dealt with at all"
– *The Times*

"You need be neither a Jew nor a death-camp ghoul to be moved. Anyone who has ever tried to understand the mystery of their parents, and how the 20th century has treated them, will find in *Maus* a key that turns the lock"
– Ian Jack in the *Observer*

"This intensely personal account of a family's survival, of hair-breadth escapes and incarceration, deals artfully with experiences and emotions that many might fervently wish to forget. Of how, when life is stripped to subsistence level, trust and betrayal take on unprecedented dimensions... In the tradition of Aesop and Orwell, it serves to shock and impart powerful resonance to what, after all, is a well documented subject. And the artwork is so accomplished, forceful and moving, without resorting to sentimentality, that it works" – *Time Out*

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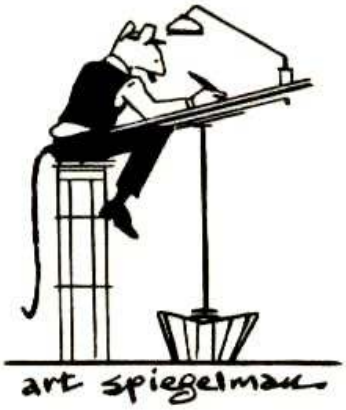
**"The best cartoon book I have ever read. There is not a wasted word or a wasted line in it. Very direct, very powerful, very moving" – Steve Bell**

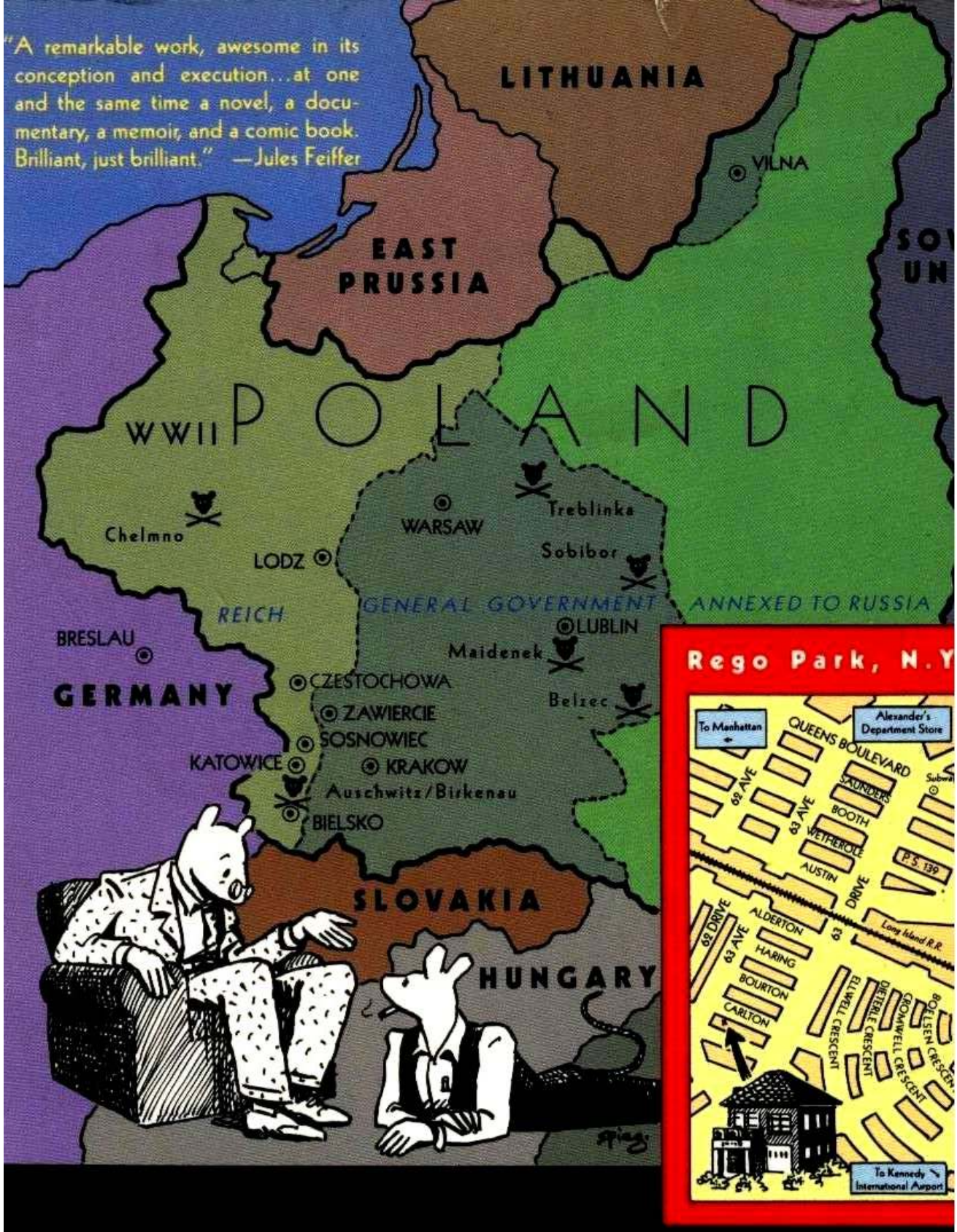
**"A very moving book about a subject so terrible it is almost impossible to comprehend. *Maus* proves that the strip cartoon is a medium just as good as the novel or film. A great achievement" – Raymond Briggs**




Art Spiegelman, born in Stockholm in 1948, is co-editor of *Raw*, the internationally acclaimed magazine of avant-garde comics and graphics. His work has been published in the *New York Times*, *Playboy*, the *Village Voice*, and many other periodicals in the U.S. and abroad. He has received Europe's highly respected Yellow Kid Award for his work on *Maus*, and also *Playboy's* 1982 Editorial Award. A teacher at New York's School of Visual Arts, he lives in New York, where he is currently at work on *Maus*, Part II: "From Mauschwitz to the Catskills."

Cover illustration and design by Art Spiegelman

"A remarkable work, awesome in its conception and execution...at one and the same time a novel, a documentary, a memoir, and a comic book. Brilliant, just brilliant." —Jules Feiffer







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