

THE BOY WHO FOLLOWED HIS FATHER INTO AUSCHWITZ

a true story retold for young readers

JEREMY DRONFIELD

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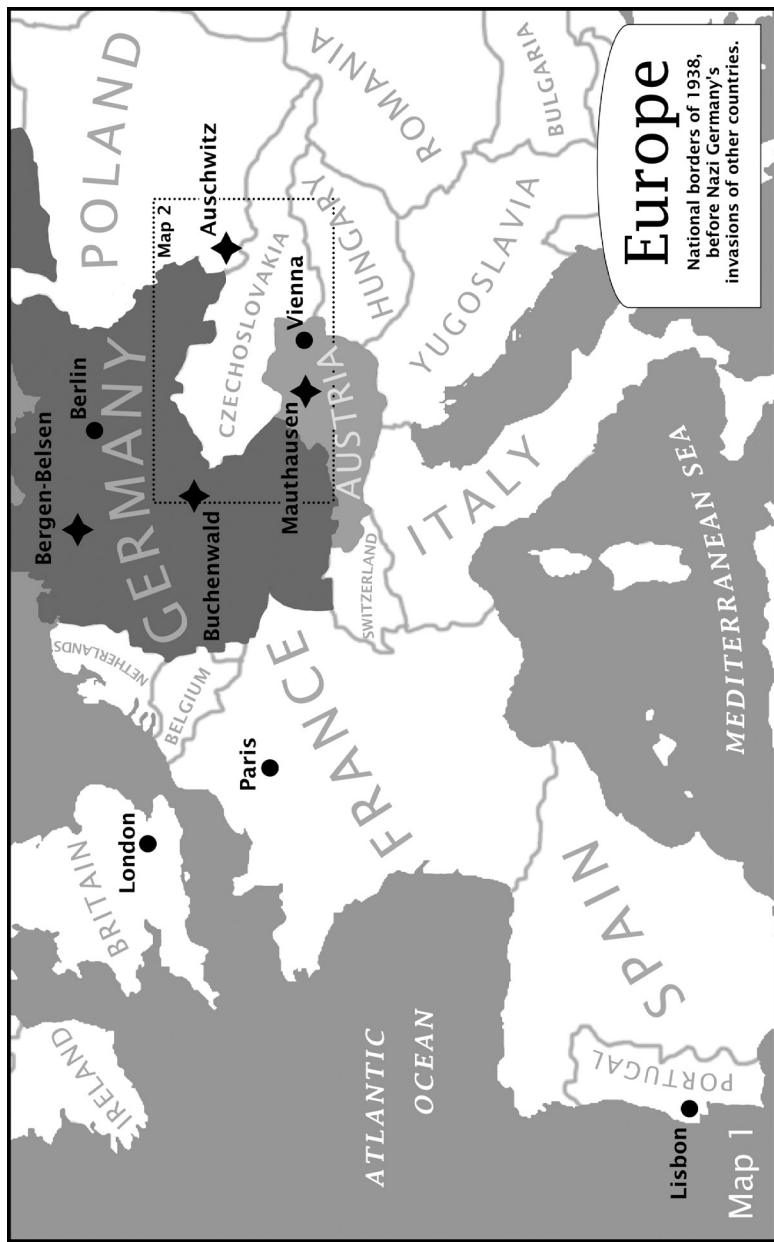
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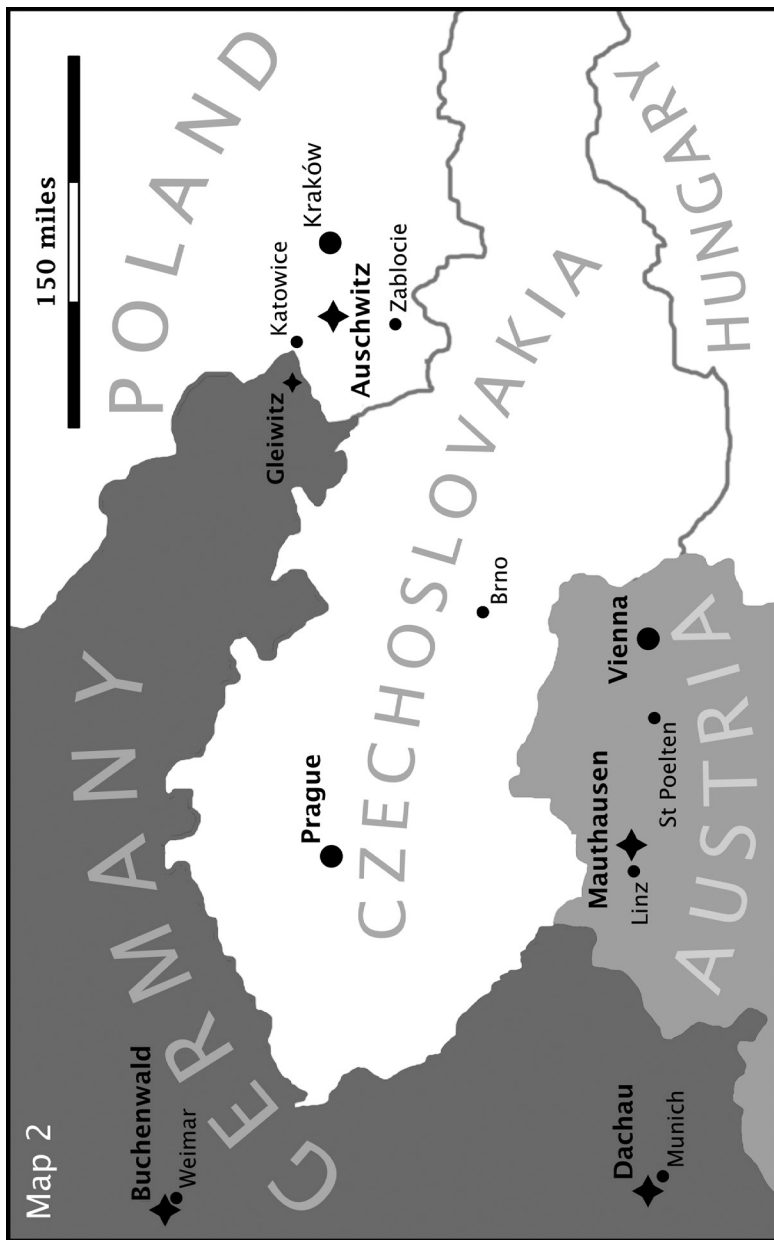
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First Edition



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TIMELINE OF EVENTS

THIS TIMELINE COVERS IMPORTANT EVENTS connected with the Holocaust and World War II in Europe. It includes some events from the story of Fritz and Kurt, so don't read it before reading the book if you don't want to know what happens.

Key events are marked in bold.

- 1923 -

Fritz Kleinmann is born in Vienna on June 20.

- 1930 -

Kurt Kleinmann is born in Vienna on January 14.

- 1932 -

In Germany, the **Nazi Party** gains more votes than any of the other political parties in national elections, but not enough to win power.

- 1933 -

JANUARY

Adolf Hitler is appointed chancellor (prime minister) of Germany in a deal among politicians who think they can control him.

MARCH

Hitler seizes absolute power and sets up a Nazi dictatorship. The **first concentration camp** for political prisoners (communists and other opponents of the Nazis) is set up outside the town of **Dachau**, in southern Germany.

APRIL

The Nazi government begins making **laws against Jewish people**. Many Jews start immigrating to other countries.

- 1937 -

JULY

Construction begins on Buchenwald concentration camp, near the city of Weimar in central Germany. It is the third major camp, the others being Dachau (founded 1933) and Sachsenhausen (1936).

Many other, mostly smaller camps are set up all over Germany. The prisoners are mostly political. Laws against Jews become more and more severe, but they are not yet sent in large numbers to concentration camps.

- 1938 -

MARCH

Nazi Germany invades Austria on March 12 and takes control.

SEPTEMBER

Germany takes over part of Czechoslovakia. The governments of Great Britain, France, and other countries agree to let Hitler keep the lands he's taken so far, but only if he promises not to try to seize any more.

NOVEMBER

Kristallnacht, also known as the November Pogrom, November 9–10. Across Germany and Austria, synagogues and Jewish homes and businesses are attacked by Nazi mobs. Thousands of Jewish men and boys are arrested, including Fritz Kleinmann and his father, Gustav. Many are released (including Fritz and Papa), but thousands are sent to Dachau, Buchenwald, and other camps.

DECEMBER

The Kindertransport begins. The first 1,000 children leave Vienna for London. Altogether, 10,000 children immigrate to Britain from Nazi Germany.

- 1939 -

JANUARY

Fritz's sister, Edith, leaves Vienna for England.

Throughout this period, Jewish people struggle to emigrate from Germany and Austria. Many of the men sent to the concentration camps after Kristallnacht are released in order to emigrate.

SEPTEMBER

Nazi Germany invades Poland on September 1. Great Britain and France declare war on Germany two days later. **Beginning of World War II.** Eventually, more than three million Polish Jews will come under Nazi rule.

Following the invasion of Poland, the Nazis begin experiments using poison gas to kill prisoners. The gas chambers are made from converted trucks.

In Germany and Austria, thousands of **Polish-born Jewish men are arrested** and sent to concentration camps. Gustav Kleinmann, Fritz's father, is one of them. Fritz is taken too.

OCTOBER

Fritz and Papa arrive in Buchenwald concentration camp on October 2.

NOVEMBER

Assassination attempt against Hitler on November 8. The SS take revenge on Jews in concentration camps.

- 1940 -

APRIL

A new concentration camp is created at Auschwitz, in German-occupied Poland. At first it will be used for Polish political prisoners.

MAY-JUNE

On May 10, **Germany begins the invasion of Belgium, the Netherlands, and France**, quickly conquering all of them. The British Army is evacuated from France at Dunkirk. The Royal Air Force defends Britain from German bombers. The country is under threat of invasion by sea. The United States helps out by selling Britain weapons and supplies.

- 1941 -

FEBRUARY

Kurt Kleinmann leaves Vienna alone to travel to America. He arrives in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he is taken care of by the Barnet family.

MARCH

Britain runs short of money to pay for the war against Nazi Germany, so the United States begins giving weapons and military equipment on “lend-lease.” Britain will have to pay for these supplies after the war is over.

JUNE

Nazi Germany invades the Soviet Union (Russia's communist empire, which includes Ukraine, Belarus, and other lands) on June 22. Millions more Jews who live there come under Nazi rule.

SEPTEMBER

Auschwitz's first gas chamber is used to kill captured Russian soldiers. The evil reputation of Auschwitz begins to spread through the other concentration camps by prisoners who are transferred between them.

DECEMBER

Japan attacks the US Navy at Pearl Harbor on December 7. Four days later, Japan's ally **Germany declares war on the United States**.

Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union join together as **the Grand Alliance** (known more simply as the Allies). Their leaders, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin, become known as the "Big Three."

- 1942 -

JANUARY

With the war preventing Jews from emigrating, Nazi leaders secretly decide to start killing them. They call it "the

Final Solution to the Jewish Question.” Auschwitz becomes one of the main centers, but most of the killing is carried out in Germany’s conquered eastern territories. Sometimes gas will be used, and sometimes shooting.

JUNE

In Vienna, a train carrying 900 Jewish women, children, and men sets out, destined for a camp in the eastern lands conquered by Germany. **Tini and Herta Kleinmann (Fritz and Kurt’s mother and sister) are among them.** Nobody on the transport is ever seen alive again.

JULY

American bombers make their first air raids against targets held by Nazi Germany. The Americans bomb by day, and the British by night.

OCTOBER

Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, orders that all Jews in concentration camps in Germany must be moved to the Auschwitz and Majdanek camps in occupied Poland. Fritz and Papa are transferred from Buchenwald to Auschwitz, along with 400 other Jewish prisoners. They arrive on October 19.

NOVEMBER

British and American forces land in North Africa to begin fighting the Germans there. These will be the first land battles between the American and German armies in World War II.

- 1943 -

MAY

Fritz's father and sixteen other Jewish men are made "Aryan" by the SS.

SUMMER

Fritz becomes involved with the Auschwitz-Monowitz resistance. He is found out by the Gestapo and tortured. He narrowly avoids being killed.

The war starts going very badly for Germany. Their military forces in North Africa were defeated in May, and in July the Allies invade Italy. The German armies in Russia suffer defeats, and Soviet forces begin to advance.

AROUND NOVEMBER

Fritz makes friends with Alfred Wocher.

DECEMBER

Alfred Wocher first visits Fritz's relatives in Vienna.

- 1944 -

MAY

After the invasion of Hungary by Nazi Germany, **large transports of Hungarian Jews arrive in Auschwitz.**

JUNE

D-Day. On June 6, Allied forces (mainly American, Canadian, and British) invade northern France. Meanwhile, the Allied advance in Italy is progressing, and Rome is captured.

JULY

Russian troops, advancing into Poland, capture Majdanek, the first death camp to be taken intact by the Allies (other camps in the east have been destroyed by the retreating SS). The Russians find gas chambers, crematoriums, and bodies. The news is reported around the world, but it has little impact, as the war dominates the headlines.

The SS begin air-raid defenses at Auschwitz. **Fritz's father is given the task of making blackout curtains.** Fritz works as a curtain fitter.

AUGUST

American planes, flying from a base in Italy, bomb the factories at Auschwitz for the first time.

Allied forces liberate Paris, France. France is now a member of the Allies. Soviet forces continue recapturing lands in eastern Europe.

OCTOBER

American troops take Aachen in western Germany, the first German city to be captured by the Allies.

DECEMBER

The **Battle of the Bulge** breaks out when Hitler makes a last big attempt to beat the Allied forces in the west. He fails, and Germany goes into defensive mode, trying to stave off defeat. Hitler believes he can still win the war.

- 1945 -

JANUARY

The **Soviet Union launches a major attack against German defenses in Poland**. Russian troops advance quickly and are soon close to Auschwitz.

The SS begins evacuating the Auschwitz camps and trying to destroy the evidence of their crimes. The **Death March** begins as the SS retreats toward Germany, taking prisoners with them. **Fritz and Papa are put on a train to Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria**. They become separated, sent to different camps, and neither of them knows if the other is still alive.

The main Auschwitz camps are liberated by Soviet troops on January 27, a date that will later be commemorated as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. However, the Holocaust is far from over.

MARCH

Having been separated from his father, **Fritz arrives in Mauthausen** concentration camp in western Austria on March 15.

APRIL

American soldiers liberate Buchenwald concentration camp on April 11.

Russian forces capture Vienna on April 13 after a fierce battle. Two days later, **British soldiers liberate Bergen-Belsen** concentration camp in northwestern Germany. It is filled with tens of thousands of dead and dying prisoners. **Gustav Kleinmann**, Fritz's father, is one of the survivors found there.

Adolf Hitler dies by suicide on April 30, having accepted that Germany can't win the war. German forces continue fighting to defend the shrinking territory remaining between the Allies advancing from the west and south (mostly British, Canadian, and American) and the east (Soviet).

MAY

American soldiers capture Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria on May 5. Fritz Kleinmann is one of the surviving prisoners.

Germany surrenders on May 8, which is named V-E

(Victory in Europe) Day. Japan carries on fighting the Allies in Asia and the Pacific Ocean.

SEPTEMBER

On September 2, Japan surrenders and World War II ends.

AFTERMATH

Germany and Austria are divided into “**zones of occupation,**” with each zone governed by one of the Allies: Great Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and France. Vienna is in the Soviet zone.

With the end of World War II, the Grand Alliance breaks down and the **Cold War begins** between the Soviet Union and the western Allies.

In 1954, **Kurt visits Vienna** for the first time since 1941 and is reunited with his father and Fritz.

The occupation zones continue until 1955, when **Austria becomes a free country again** for the first time since 1938. Germany is divided into two countries. West Germany is a democracy, but East Germany is under Soviet communist control. This lasts until 1990, when Germany becomes one big country again. In 1991, the Soviet Union breaks up into separate nations, with Russia as the most powerful.

In 1994, **Kurt visits the site of the former Nazi death camp at Maly Trostinets** in Belarus, Eastern Europe, where his mother and his sister, Herta, were killed by the SS in 1942. A memorial stands on the site, commemorating

the thousands who died there.

In 1995, Fritz publishes his book, *Doch der Hund will nicht krepieren* (*Still the Dog Will Not Die*), telling his family's story, including his father's diary. He also gives lectures and helps with educational field trips to Auschwitz. He hopes this will help raise awareness of the Holocaust among Austrian people. In the course of it, he returns to Auschwitz himself for the first time, the place where more than a million people were killed, including a million of his fellow Jews.

Six million Jewish people were killed in the Holocaust, which in Hebrew is called the *Shoah*, meaning the Catastrophe.

At least 250,000 and perhaps as many as 1.5 million Romani and Sinti traveler people were killed by the Nazis. In the Romani language, it is called the *Porrajmos*, which means the Devouring.

Other victims murdered by Nazi Germany included at least **3.3 million captured Soviet soldiers**, about **1.9 million non-Jewish Polish civilians**, as well as **thousands of political and religious prisoners, gay people, and disabled people.**

Altogether, through battles, bombing, mass killings, disease, and starvation, **World War II caused the deaths of around 60 million people**—about equivalent in number to the entire population of California and New York State combined. The majority of the dead were civilians.

GLOSSARY

antisemitism Hostility, mistrust, or prejudice against Jewish people and their culture.

antiziganism Hostility, mistrust, or prejudice against Romani and other traveler peoples and their culture.

bar* or *bat mitzvah The religious ceremony in which a Jewish boy (*bar*, meaning “son” in Hebrew) or girl (*bat*, meaning “daughter”) becomes an adult in the eyes of Judaism. The phrase means “son/daughter of the commandment,” meaning that the boy or girl is now responsible for their own actions.

concentration camp A prison camp intended to hold, or “concentrate,” a certain part of the population, such as an ethnic minority or a political group. Buchenwald and Dachau were Nazi concentration camps. See also ***death camp***.

death camp A camp whose main purpose is to kill people in large numbers. (Sometimes called an extermination

camp.) Sobibor and Treblinka in occupied Poland were examples of Nazi death camps. Auschwitz was both a concentration camp and a death camp.

Gestapo The Nazi “secret” police, a branch of the SS. Their mission was to infiltrate and destroy any resistance to the Nazis. There were Gestapo offices in all towns and in concentration camps.

ghetto A section of a city where people of a certain ethnic group live. In cities conquered by the Nazis, Jews were often made to live in ghettos, which were fenced in so that the people inside could not leave.

Hanukkah Jewish religious festival lasting for eight days, celebrating an occasion in ancient times when the Jewish people won their freedom from foreign invaders. Hanukkah takes place according to the traditional Hebrew calendar, so falls on different dates each year in November, December, or January.

Hebrew The traditional language (and culture) of Jewish people.

Judaism The Jewish religion.

Kindertransport Program in which Jewish children from Nazi Germany were allowed to immigrate to Britain. Altogether 10,000 were transported.

Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) The night of November 9–10, 1938, when Nazis across Germany and Austria attacked Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues and arrested thousands of Jewish men. Many Jewish historians now call it the November Pogrom. *Pogrom* is an old Russian word that has been used throughout history to refer to attacks on Jewish communities.

rabbi The religious leader in a *synagogue*.

scholar* or *scholar in residence In a *synagogue*, an expert on Jewish religion, history, and culture, who helps everyone to understand them.

Shabbos* or *Shabbat The Jewish Sabbath, from sunset on Friday until nightfall on Saturday. A time for rest and prayer. It is ushered in by lighting candles, and includes blessings over candles, wine, and a type of bread called challah.

SS The Nazi police and security organization. “SS” stood for ***Schutzstaffel*** (protection squad). The SS also ran

concentration camps and death camps, and its Waffen-SS branch fought alongside the German armies.

storm trooper A member of the Nazi Party “Storm Division” (*Sturmabteilung*). The word began in World War I, when storm trooper units were the special forces of the German army. In the 1930s, when the Nazi Party created their division to control crowds and beat people up, they called them “storm troopers.” The “storm troopers” in *Star Wars* are based on the Nazi enforcers.

synagogue Jewish place of worship, like a church is for Christians or a mosque is for Muslims. A synagogue is sometimes called a shul or a temple. See also **scholar** and **rabbi**.

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ABM Archives of Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum, Oświęcim, Poland.

AFB Findbuch for Victims of National Socialism, Austria: available online at www.findbuch.at/home (accessed October 1, 2021).

AWK Pogrom: November 1938: Wiener Library, London: available online at www.pogromnovember1938.co.uk/viewer (accessed September 23, 2021).

CJH German-Jewish Children's Aid Records: Center for Jewish History, New York.

DFK Letters, photographs, and documents from the archive of Fritz Kleinmann.

DKK Letters and documents in possession of Kurt Kleinmann.

DOW Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes, Vienna: some records available online at www.doew.at/personensuche (accessed September 16, 2021).

DRG Documents and photographs in possession of Reinhold Gärtner.

FDR Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York.

FTD Records of the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials: Fritz Bauer Institut, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

ITS Documents on victims of Nazi persecution: ITS Digital Archive: International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen, Germany.

JHC Archive of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Boston, MA: I-96 Box 69 Folder 09: Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, New England Historic Genealogical Society.

PGM Prisoner record archive: KZ-Gedenkstätte Mauthausen Research Center, Vienna.

PNY Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York: Microfilm Publication M237, 675: National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

WLO *Adolph Lehmanns Adressbuch*: Wienbibliothek Digital: www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/wbrobv/periodical/titleinfo/5311 (accessed September 16, 2021).

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SOURCE NOTES

CHAPTER 1—SAY YES!

6 “Fritz leapt into the air, stretching for the soccer ball . . . kicked it back to Leo.” Based on details from various recollections by Kurt (interviews with the author) and Fritz (various archived interviews and memoir *Doch der Hund will nicht krepieren: Tagebuchnotizen aus Auschwitz*), with some circumstantial details from G. E. R. Gedy, *Fallen Bastions: The Central European Tragedy* (London: Gollancz, 1939).

12 “Hans’s father was a barber . . . Jews in Berlin.” Information on Hergesell family from Reinhold Gärtner and Fritz Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund* (Innsbruck: Innsbruck University Press, 2012), 182, and entries for Hergesell, Hans, Shoah-Opfer database; Hergesell, Raimund Karl, Gestapo-Opfer (Arbeiterbewegung) database; Hergesell, Amalie, Politisch Verfolgte, Shoah-Opfer database, DOW; Lehmann’s directory for Vienna for 1938, WLO.

CHAPTER 2—SHABBOS

14 “Today was Friday . . . settling in the trees.” Chapter draws on Gedy, *Fallen Bastions*.

15 “It ended: ‘Vote YES for Austria!’ and was signed ‘Schuschnigg,’ the leader.” Message also printed in *Die Stimme*, March 11, 1938, 1.

16 “People cheered the parade . . . ‘Hooray for Austria!’” Gedy, *Fallen Bastions*, 287–96.

18 “When Fritz went in, he saw Papa was hard at work . . . the covering.” Life

in the Kleinmann household and Gustav's workshop based on recollections by Kurt (interviews with the author) and Fritz (various archived interviews and memoir in Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*).

22 "Kurt walked alone along the cobbled lane leading to the synagogue. . . . Hitler wouldn't be able to come." The synagogue that evening is described as "überfüllt"—overcrowded, jam-packed (Gold, *Geschichte der Juden*, p. 77; Weinzierl, "Christen und Juden," 197–98).

24 "It was on the radio in the club," said Fritz. "Mr. Schuschnigg has given up. Hitler threatened him, and he's given up! They've canceled the vote." Gedye, *Fallen Bastions*, 12.

25 "Just as the rumors had warned, along with the Nazis and their supporters, men of the Vienna police were marching!" See *ibid.*, 287–89, for an eyewitness account of events in Vienna that day and evening.

CHAPTER 3—THE MONSTER

29 "There were planes—dozens of them . . . doors of the planes were opening." Oswald Dutch, *Thus Died Austria* (London: E. Arnold, 1938), 231–32; Gedye, *Fallen Bastions*, 315; see also *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* (*Tages Ausgabe*), March 12, 1938, 3; *Banater Deutsche Zeitung*, March 13, 1938, 5; *The Times* (London), March 14, 1938, 14.

29 "there came leaflets. . . . Heil Hitler!" Leaflet also printed in *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* (*Tages Ausgabe*), March 12, 1938, 3.

30 "In one town, Austrian soldiers paraded to greet the Germans." *The Times* (London), March 14, 1938, 9.

31 "On this first day of the invasion, he was said to be in the town of Linz, only two hours away." Dutch, *Thus Died Austria*, 232.

32 "Planes flew over constantly, shaking the walls and rattling the windows."

Dutch, *Thus Died Austria*, 233; Gedye, *Fallen Bastions*, 315.

32 “Some people’s houses were robbed too.” Ibid., 303.

32 “The roads were filled with their tanks and big guns, and trains loaded with supplies were on every railway line.” *The Times* (London), March 14, 1938, 9.

32 “Tens of thousands of soldiers poured into the city.” See Dutch, *Thus Died Austria*, 233–34, 242, and Gedye, *Fallen Bastions*, 303–21, for details of the initial military incursion into Vienna and Austria.

32 “At night, huge searchlights lit up the clouds over the city, in case other countries sent planes to interfere with the invasion.” Dutch, *Thus Died Austria*, 303.

33 “‘They’ll leave us alone,’ he said. ‘They’ll go after the rich folk. The Nazis are always saying they’ll show Jews how to work. Well, I’ve worked all my life. I know what work is.’” Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 189–90.

33 “He’d heard from his friend Hans about the terrible things happening in Berlin, Germany’s capital city.” Ibid., 182.

33 “At last, Fritz couldn’t stand it any longer. When Mom was busy cooking and Papa was out of the room, he went quietly to the door and slipped out. He hurried down the stairs, through the lobby, then ventured warily out to the street.” Source for this episode is Kurt (interview with the author). Details of the circumstances of what follows are taken from Gedye, *Fallen Bastions*, 318–19; Dutch, *Thus Died Austria*, 242–43; *The Times* (London), various reports March 14–15, 1938; multiple reports in Vienna newspapers (*Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, *Montagblatt*, *Das kleine Volksblatt*, *Kleine Volks-Zeitung*, *NS Telegraf*, etc., all by this point Nazi-controlled), March 14–15, 1938. Footage can be viewed in British Pathé newsreel 512.03, which was not released at the time; it is viewable at www.britishpathe.com/video/hitler-in-vienna (accessed March 30, 2022).

34 “All over the city, the Nazis were taking Jewish people’s cars for their own use.” Dutch, *Thus Died Austria*, 243–44.

36 “Tanks and vehicles had broken down all over Austria, slowing down the advance.” Gedy, *Fallen Bastions*, 314–19.

CHAPTER 4—THE CONNECTION AND THE EXCLUSION

39 “Fritz and Kurt sat in the kitchen . . . Hardly anything nice happened nowadays.” Episode based in part on the surviving family photograph and a note added by Fritz to a copy of the photo (DRG). Events leading up to it based on various sources, mainly Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 183–84, and Kurt’s interviews with the author.

43 “Some had been vandalized and robbed by storm troopers.” See e.g., “Report from Vienna regarding the persecution of Jews during 1938,” 93771-1375/95, AWK; Gedy, *Fallen Bastions*, 354.

43 “Local celebrities came here to have their pictures taken.” *Kamera Kunst* and *Radio Wien*, various dates; Hans Gemperle obituary, *Allgemeine photographische Zeitung*, May 1941, 73.

44 “Getting out of the country was expensive . . . leave behind everything you owned.” David Cesarani, *Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews 1933–49* (London: Macmillan, 2016), 147ff, 207; David Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes* (London: Vintage, 2005), 60ff.; Doron Rabinovici, *Eichmann’s Jews: The Jewish Administration of Holocaust Vienna, 1938–1945*, trans. Nick Somers (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2011).

45 “It wasn’t only the Nazis who made it difficult. . . . We don’t have room.” See various news reports, e.g., *The Times* (London), January 31, 1939, 14; also in Arad et al., *Documents*, 132; *The Spectator*, July 29, 1938, 189; August 19, 1938, 294.

46 “There were signs everywhere . . . without being picked on.” An official ban on Jews using parks and entertainment venues came in on September 25, 1939 (Doron Rabinovici, *Instanzen der Ohnmacht: Wien 1938–1945* [Frankfurt: Jüdischer Verlag, 2000], 196), but seems to have been in effect long before that.

46 “His parents were planning to follow him later, and they would all set sail together on a ship to New Zealand.” Richard Wilczek, letter to the author, April 13, 2016.

47 “The girls were being trained to grow up to be wives for the Nazi men.” Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 183.

47 “If they couldn’t be bothered to run them . . . and materials and machines.” Ibid., 187–88.

47 “The other was Mr. Mueller, who sang the chants at the city’s finest synagogue, the Pazmaniten Temple.” Ibid., 187; also 1938 directory, Band 1, 115; Band 2, 147, WLO.

48 “Anyone the Nazis wanted to get rid of in a hurry (such as journalists or anyone who protested) began to disappear, and it was heard later that they had been sent to Dachau, never to return.” On establishment of concentration camps, see Wachsmann, *KL*; Cesarani, *Final Solution*; Laurence Rees, *The Holocaust: A New History* (London: Viking, 2017).

48 “It was supposed to be for government records, but the Nazis used the lists to make Jewish people into slaves. Any time of day or night, they could be called out to wash Nazis’ cars or clean toilets.” Dutch, *Thus Died Austria*, 257–58.

50 “He wrote ‘No Jews’ on his pad. ‘Come on,’ he said to his men, and they moved on down the street.” In his 1997 interview, Fritz named the building concierge in 1945 as a Frau Ziegler, and described her obstinate temperament. However, the 1938 directory (Band 2, 147, WLO) gives the name in

1938 as a Theckla Schläha. Despite this, since Frau Ziegler was known to Fritz in 1945, I assume that she had been acting concierge when he lived there in 1938–9. Since Fritz is very specific about who betrayed the Jews in the building to the Nazi authorities (*Doch der Hund*, 1997 interview), I infer that the concierge did not give the names to the SA.

50 “And Papa had one or two Aryan friends with upholstery workshops who let him work for them sometimes.” Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 194.

CHAPTER 5—NIGHT OF BROKEN GLASS

52 “All across Vienna, the synagogues were burning.” Kristallnacht occurred on the night of November 9–10, 1938, in the early hours of the morning. The SA and SS were instructed not to destroy but only to loot Jewish premises (telegram from SS chief Reinhard Heydrich, sent at 1:20 a.m., November 10, 1938, in Arad et al., *Documents*, 102–104). That instruction came late in the night and was ignored.

53 “There were many beautiful synagogues in Vienna, and the troopers set fire to them all. When the firefighters arrived, the storm troopers wouldn’t let them stop the flames.” See e.g., “Report by Robert Steiner, Paris, regarding the November Pogrom in Vienna,” 93811-1375/130; “Report by Oskar Hirschfeld, London, regarding the November Pogrom in Vienna,” 93803-1375/123, AWK.

54 “They said they were searching for weapons, but that was just an excuse.” See “Report by Maximillian Loewy regarding the November Pogrom events in Vienna,” 93710-1375/60, AWK.

55 “They huddled together as their Nazi neighbors joined in with the storm troopers, yelling and laughing at the terrified Jews.” Fritz Kleinmann (Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 187) specifies two neighbors as ringleaders in the abuse, a woman identified only by the name “Red Risa” and *Ortsgruppenleiter* (local group leader, a Nazi Party rank) Blahoutek [*sic*].

The latter would be Leopold Blahoudek, a bookbinder who lived in the building next door to the Kleinmanns (1938 directory, Band 1, 90, WLO).

54 “Instead he pointed at Papa and said to Mr. Blahoudek, ‘Him. He’s a Jew.’” Fritz describes being betrayed by neighbors very briefly in his book (Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 188). In his 1997 interview (but not in the book), Fritz gave the names of these men. He recalled a third man called Schwarz, although no record has been found of a person of that name living in Im Werd 11. Fritz was unable to recall the name of the fourth member of the group, the Nazi official. He seemed slightly confused, and referred to him as the building’s Nazi leader, who lived “on the floor above.” This could be a conflation with *Ortsgruppenleiter* Blahoudek, who actually lived in the next building, and whom Fritz named in his book (ibid., 187). Fritz recalled Novacek’s first name as Fritzl, but the 1938 directory (Band 1, 889, WLO) shows him as Friedrich. Another Novacek (possibly related), a cinema projectionist called Karl, remained loyal throughout the Nazi period (ibid., 135, 192). The scene as written here borrows elements from Kurt’s memory of the later raid when Fritz was taken a second time, as well as from accounts of similar raids (e.g., “Report by Robert Steiner, Paris, regarding the November Pogrom in Vienna,” 93811-1375/130; “Report by Oskar Hirschfeld, London, regarding the November Pogrom in Vienna,” 93803-1375/123, AWK).

56 “The truck stopped at the main police station.” The Polizeiamt Leopoldstadt, headquarters of the local uniformed police, was at Ausstellungsstrasse 171 (*Reichsämtler und Reichsbehörden in der Ostmark*, 204, AFB).

56 “They were herded into an old stable building at the back of the police station.” Narrative based on Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 188; additional details from testimonies “Report from Vienna,” 93670-1375/24; “Report by Alfred Schechter,” 93714-1375/62 & 62a; “Report by Carl Löwenstein,” 93824-1375/143, AWK; also testimonies of Siegfried Merecki (Manuscript 166 [156]), Margarete Neff (Manuscript 93 [205]) in Uta

Gerhardt and Thomas Karlauf, eds., *The Night of Broken Glass: Eyewitness Accounts of Kristallnacht*, trans. Robert Simmons and Nick Somers, 36–55 (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2012); and Peter Wallner, *By Order of the Gestapo: A Record of Life in Dachau and Buchenwald Concentration Camps* (London: John Murray, 1941).

56 “It was a big room, but there were already hundreds of Jewish men and teenage boys crammed into it, from different parts of the district.” Altogether, 6,547 Jewish people were arrested across Vienna that day and held in various police stations around the city (Melissa Jane Taylor, “‘Experts in Misery’? American Consuls in Austria, Jewish Refugees and Restrictionist Immigration Policy, 1938–1941” [PhD diss., University of South Carolina, 2006], 48). A small number of women were caught in the net and were soon released.

61 “Some Nazis were reluctant to send war heroes to the concentration camps, even if they were Jewish.” As late as October 1941, on the eve of the Final Solution, Nazi authorities in Vienna were allowing (or being persuaded to allow) certain special dispensations for “highly decorated” Jewish war veterans, such as sending them to Theresienstadt ghetto rather than Auschwitz. Rabinovici, *Eichmann’s Jews*, 117, 121–23.

62 “All the forms were filled out, the applications were made, and they waited for months, but nothing happened.” Affidavit documents, JHC.

63 “Fritz and Kurt were not among the lucky ones chosen.” The first thousand children from Vienna set out for the UK in December 1938. *The Times* (London), December 3–12, 1938.

63 “They wanted healthy teenagers, and Mom applied for Fritz to go. But the plan never happened.” Fritz Kleinmann, 1997 interview; *Manchester Guardian*, December 15, 1938, 11; March 18, 1939, 18.

64 “It was a Nazi rule that all Jews had to take the middle name ‘Israel’ (for

men and boys) or ‘Sara’ (for women and girls).” Reich Ministry of the Interior regulations, August 17, 1938, in Arad et al. *Documents*, 98–99. On treatment when photos were taken, see “Report regarding the mistreatment of the Jewish population in Vienna and the Burgenland,” 93993-1375/306, AWK.

64 “Fritz felt more angry than afraid at the way he was being treated, and he stared into the camera with smoldering fury in his eyes.” Fritz’s J-Card photo was preserved by him.

64 “There was a big international student sports festival in the city.” Thomas Weyr, *The Setting of the Pearl: Vienna under Hitler* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 147.

65 “Empty shops boarded up, men gone to Dachau or Buchenwald, homes with nobody living in them.” M. Mitzmann, “A Visit To Germany, Austria and Poland in 1939,” document 0.2/151, YVP.

65 “Suddenly there was a loud knocking . . . warily opened the door.” Fritz, 1997 interview; Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 190.

CHAPTER 6—THE JOURNEY

69 “But Papa had made up his mind. ‘I’ll sort it out,’ he said. ‘They’ll understand I’m not Polish. I fought for Austria, remember.’” Based on Kurt’s recollections (interviews with the author).

70 “The Metropole was the headquarters of the Gestapo.” Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 190.

71 “SS guards stood at the entrances and exits.” Episode based on Fritz’s 2008 interview. There is very little eyewitness testimony, as only a few of these men survived. The guards here are referred to as SS for simplicity. In fact they were men of the Vienna Schutzpolizei (“protection police”), the regular city police, who by this time had been thoroughly Nazified and incorporated into the SS policing structure.

73 “Some of the prisoners . . . they went away disappointed.” Paul Weindling, *Victims and Survivors of Nazi Human Experiments: Science and Suffering in the Holocaust* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 45–46; Volkhard Knigge and Jürgen Seifert, eds., *Vom Antlitz zur Maske: Wien, Weimar, Buchenwald 1939* (Weimar: Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Buchenwald, 1999); Fritz Kleinmann and Paul Grünberg interview, 1999.

76 “‘There’s a sweater and a scarf and a pair of socks.’” Package contents recorded in Buchenwald personal record card, ITS.

77 “More than a thousand men came pouring out of the wagons onto the train tracks, scared and dazed.” Fritz Kleinmann (*Doch der Hund*, 12) cites a figure of 1,048 Viennese Jews in this transport, whereas other sources (Harry Stein, compiler, *Buchenwald Concentration Camp 1937–1945*, ed. Gedenkstätte Buchenwald [Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2004], 116) give 1,035.

79 “‘Papa! What are you doing here?’” Based in part on Fritz Kleinmann interview (1997) and Gustav Kleinmann’s diary (in Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*).

79 “What he didn’t know was that the men who had come this way before him called it ‘Totenwald,’ meaning ‘Forest of the Dead.’” “Report regarding conditions in Buchenwald concentration camp,” 93887-1375/203, AWK.

80 “Fritz would learn later that it had 380 volts of electricity running through it.” Stein, *Buchenwald*, 35.

CHAPTER 7—THE LITTLE CAMP

83 “Remember that—you will not get out alive.” Fritz Kleinmann, 1997 interview.

83 “Papa was 7291; Fritz was 7290.” Buchenwald personal record cards, ITS. There were no tattoos; this practice was confined to Auschwitz and was not employed at any other camps (Wachsmann, *KL*, 284).

84 “Dripping wet, they had to hurry outside, where shallow tubs waited for them, reeking of disinfectant.” Jack Werber and William B. Helmreich, *Saving Children: Diary of a Buchenwald Survivor and Rescuer* (London: Transaction, 1996), 36, describe this process.

84 “After a plunge and scrub in the pools, they were made to sit on stools to have their heads shaved.” Arrival of “Polish” prisoners from Vienna was recorded in photographs in the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation.

85 “‘Jews,’ he said to the sergeant, ‘I can’t believe such people have been allowed to walk around free until now.’” Quoted by Emil Carlebach in Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 162–63.

86 “In the past few days, thousands of Jewish men had been brought to Buchenwald from all over Germany.” See Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 113–14. Immediately after Kristallnacht, new arrivals totaled 10,098. There were over 9,000 subsequent departures due to release, transfer, or death (about 2,000 deaths in total in 1938–39, not including those who died between Weimar and the camp; *ibid.*, 109).

86 “They were four levels high, and looked more like shelves than beds.” See Felix Rausch in Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 271–76.

88 “‘I’m Jakob,’ he said. ‘Jakob Ihr. But people call me Itschkerl.’ . . . ‘I live right by the Prater. What about you?’” There is a mystery around the identity of “Itschkerl.” Recently uncovered records show that a Jewish prisoner named Jakob Ihr arrived in Buchenwald on the same transport as Fritz. He was indeed from the Prater area of Vienna. However, he was a thirty-one-year-old man, born in 1908 (prisoner record documents, ITS). Fritz describes his friend “Itschkerl” as a boy “ein Bursch.” There may be various explanations. Fritz may have conflated two individuals in his memory, both from

the Prater district, and mixed up their names. More likely, despite Itschkerl's age, he might have presented as much younger, physically and mentally, leading Fritz to believe he was a teenager like him. If they talked of home, Itschkerl would likely have mentioned that he lived with his mother (given as his next of kin on his records), which could add to the illusion. Supporting the hypothesis that he presented as younger than he was (and perhaps didn't admit his real age to his friends), Jakob Ihr evidently joined the bricklaying school for Jewish boys set up by Robert Siewert; his records indicate that he'd been a metalworker in Vienna, but on liberation in 1945 he gave his trade as mason. His Buchenwald medical record mentions that he'd had severe measles as a child, which could have affected his neurological development. While in Buchenwald, he was frequently ill (sometimes very seriously) but managed to survive. Jakob did not go to Auschwitz; he survived in Buchenwald until the end of the war. For simplicity, I have taken Fritz's testimony at face value and treated Itschkerl as Fritz perceived him.

88 "Itschkerl shook his head. 'No, just me. My father's gone. I live with my mother.'" Jakob's mother's name is given as Netty Ihr (Jakob's prisoner records, ITS). I haven't found clear evidence of what happened to her. However, an Ettel Ihr was deported on a transport to Riga ghetto in occupied Latvia in January 1942 (transport record, DOW).

90 "Oh Buchenwald, I cannot forget you, . . . For the day will come when we are free!" Jerry Silverman, *The Undying Flame: Ballads and Songs of the Holocaust* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2002), 15; also Manfred Langer, in Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 169–70.

92 "The man went on: 'You'll see four times as many red triangles as Jewish stars in here.'" Jews made up only a fifth of Buchenwald's prisoners, even after the huge intake of "Polish" Jews (Fritz Kleinmann, 1997 interview).

92 "Leopold Moses at your service." Leopold Moses was born in Berlin in 1900. He was a communist and worked variously as a laborer, salesman, and

chauffeur. Prior to Dachau, he spent time in the Gestapo prison in Berlin (prisoner records, ITS).

94 “The wagon was made of steel and had been loaded with more than four tons of stone.” Estimate based on size of wagon and density of broken limestone = 150 lbs. per cubic foot. Different sources give the number of men assigned to pull each wagon as between sixteen and twenty-six.

CHAPTER 8—THE STONE CRUSHER

97 “They’d put him back with the ordinary prisoners, who would take revenge on him.” Rees, *Holocaust*, 79.

97 “‘We’re the stones, Fritz. The Nazis are the machine. They shovel us into the camps and grind us down to dust.’” Gustav described the stone crusher and likened it to the camp system in his poem “Quarry Kaleidoscope,” which he wrote in his diary (Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 43–44).

99 “Papa smiled. ‘You see, Fritz? There *is* hope for us. Don’t give up. They can’t grind us down like this if we don’t let them.’” “They cannot grind us down like this,” Gustav wrote in his diary. “The war goes on.”

100 “In concentration camps across Germany, the SS took revenge on Jewish prisoners.” Wachsmann, *KL*, 220; see also Ian Sayer and Jeremy Dronfield, *Hitler’s Last Plot* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2019).

100 “Of all the SS men in Buchenwald, none was more frightening than Sergeant Blank.” Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 51; Stein, *Buchenwald*, 119.

100 “There was silence again, then another burst of gunfire.” Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 231, 252–53; Wachsmann, *KL*, 220.

101 “The guards grabbed Fritz and dragged him toward the others who’d been picked out.” Fritz Kleinmann, quoted in Horsky, *Man muß darüber reden*, 48–49, reproduced in Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 16n.

101 “This contraption was the Horse, and they were all terrified of it.” The table was known in German as the *Bock*, a word meaning a trestle, sawhorse, or vaulting horse (see Stein, *Buchenwald*, 52, 108–109; “Report by Viennese businessman Erwin Mann regarding his imprisonment in Vienna, Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camp,” 93876-1375/192, AWK).

103 “The prisoners called it the Death Block, and few patients came out of it alive.” In his diary Gustav refers to this place as the *Todes-Holzbaracke* (death barrack), probably a nickname for a building used for sick Jews after they were barred from the prisoners’ infirmary (block 2, in the southwest corner of the camp facing onto the roll-call square) in September 1939 (see Emil Carlebach in Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 162).

103 “Dr. Heller was a young Jewish prisoner. . . . work in the quarry.” Dr. Paul Heller was born in Prague in 1914 (prisoner records, ITS). He was arrested in September 1939 for being an active member of the Socialist Movement of Students in Prague. At this point his official work detail was in the quarry, so he must have been working as a doctor intermittently, perhaps by special permission. He later served as an official prisoner doctor in Auschwitz. He survived the Holocaust and eventually immigrated to the United States (obituary, *Chicago Tribune*, September 29, 2001).

104 “Dr. Blies was an SS officer in charge of health and hygiene. . . . the other SS doctors.” Burkett, *Buchenwald Report*, 60–64.

105 “He was a funny-looking man, which did little to make him any less frightening.” Prisoner Walter Poller, quoted in Pukrop, “Die SS-Karrieren,” 79. Poller worked as Blies’s assistant. He recalls that after only a few days in Buchenwald, Blies “transformed his appearance into a less comical character.”

105 “He stepped up to Dr. Blies . . . something to eat.” In his account of this episode (*Doch der Hund*, 48), Fritz seems to imply that his “weeping and

desperate" ("weinender und verzweifelter") voice was an act.

106 "The next day, he was given light work to do around the camp." Gustav's diary is hard to interpret here: "(Am) nächsten Tag kriege (ich) einen Posten als Reiniger im Klosett, habe 4 Öfen zu heizen . . ." The Klosett might have been the latrine in the little camp, or perhaps in the main camp barrack blocks, which had earlier been out of order due to a water shortage (Stein, *Buchenwald*, 86). The Öfen (ovens or furnaces) are harder to pinpoint; most likely they were part of the kitchens or the shower block. They were not crematorium ovens, which Buchenwald did not acquire until summer 1942 (ibid., 141).

106 "I like to work," he said. "It helps me forget where I am." Gustav wrote this in his diary.

CHAPTER 9—A FEELING OF HOPE

110 "They took pity on the boys, and gave them any extra bits of food they laid hands on." It's possible that Jakob "Itschkerl" Ihr allowed other prisoners to believe he was a teenage boy for this reason (see earlier note on Itschkerl).

110 "That morning, as it ended, Fritz was about to head off with the other garden workers when the camp's chief kapo . . ." Prisoners who had kapo-type duties within the camp were actually called block seniors and camp seniors. Here they're referred to just as kapos for simplicity.

110 "Waiting for him was Lieutenant Hackmann . . . brutal nature." Stein, *Buchenwald*, 44–45, 307; Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 34. Hackmann's first name is variously given as Hermann and Heinrich.

113 "A few came back to Vienna saying that lots of people had been killed there." Report in Arad, *Documents*, 143–44; Rabinovici, *Eichmann's Jews*, 87ff.

114 "One of her friends . . . kids to America." Aid charity letters and documents relating to Barnets and the Kleinmann family, CJH and JHC.

114 “But the American government was still letting only a tiny number of refugees into the country.” In June 1940, an internal State Department memo advised US consuls in Europe: “We can delay and effectively stop . . . immigrants into the United States . . . by simply advising our consuls to put every obstacle in the way . . . which would postpone the granting of the visas” (US State Department memo, June 26, 1940, in Wyman, *America and the Holocaust*, vol. 4, 1; also *ibid.*, v).

118 “The German-Jewish Children’s Aid charity . . . effort for Kurt.” Letters, CJH.

CHAPTER 10—THE ROAD TO LIFE

120 “He loved books, and had a little collection he kept hidden from the SS.” Stefan Heymann was a Jewish communist from Mannheim. Formerly a bank employee, he was arrested in May 1933 for distributing anti-Nazi pamphlets. He was tortured to confess to his crime and imprisoned by the Gestapo until 1936, then sent to his first concentration camp (Allied military government case file, May 2, 1945, ITS).

121 “The leaves on the trees not yet begun to turn, the grass was still green.” Anton Makarenko, *The Road to Life: An Epic of Education (A Pedagogical Poem)*, vol. 2, ch. 1. Translation available online at www.marxists.org/reference/archive/makarenko/works/road2/ch01.html (accessed October 20, 2021). The book is about a Soviet rehabilitation camp for young offenders.

122 “Papa and his friends . . . the Singing Horses.” Stein, *Buchenwald*, 90.

122 “‘It’s hard work,’ Papa said to Fritz. . . . get used to anything, I suppose.” Gustav wrote this in his diary at this time.

124 “There were nice houses for the officers and their families and even a zoo.” Hackett, *Buchenwald Report*, 42.

124 “It was known to be safer than most work teams.” Fritz describes what

follows in *Doch der Hund*. He appears to have been transferred to the construction detail on August 20, 1940, after four months in the garden (prisoner record, ITS).

127 “The Roma (short for Romani) are traveling people . . . people’s terrible plight.” See Hancock, “Romanies and the Holocaust.”

127 “He stuck up for his workers if the SS picked on them, and he spoke to the boys patiently and kindly,” Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 72.

128 “We have good friends . . . I’m proud of you.” Gustav wrote this in his diary.

128 “Many of them were friends of Fritz’s and Papa’s . . . Vienna in the old days.” Murders of prisoners—predominantly Jews—spiraled in 1940–41. Across all concentration camps, annual prisoner deaths from all causes rose from 1,300 (in 1938) to 14,000 (Wachsmann, *KL*, 224–25).

128 “The United States helped out by selling Britain weapons and supplies (and would soon start lending them when the British government ran out of money).” Under the Lend-Lease and War Loan programs initiated in 1941, the US provided the UK with a total of around \$35 billion in supplies (primarily military matériel) and money (Seidl, “The Lend-Lease Program, 1941-1945”; McNeill, *America, Britain & Russia*). The loans were repaid by the UK during the postwar decades, with the final installment paid in 2006 (“Britain pays off final instalment of US loan - after 61 years,” *The Independent*, December 29, 2006). Lend-Lease aid was also sent at different times to France and the USSR (the latter debt being more or less written off during the Cold War).

128 “The Royal Air Force (with a handful of American volunteer pilots taking part) . . .” Americans were prohibited by the US Neutrality Act from taking part in the European war. However, a number of American civilian

pilots went to Canada, where they volunteered for the RAF and flew against the German Luftwaffe in Europe. Eventually, there were enough American pilots for the RAF to form them into three “Eagle” squadrons. Most of these pilots subsequently transferred to the USAAF in 1942 (Timothy S. Good, ed., *The American Eagle Squadrons of the Royal Air Force* [Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2020]).

129 “So many prisoners were dying in Buchenwald that the SS built a crematorium inside the main camp.” Wachsmann, *KL*, 225. Cremation is forbidden in Jewish law, and cremated remains are prohibited from cemeteries. However, exceptions are made for those cremated against their will, and ashes sent back from the concentration camps were permitted into Jewish cemeteries from the start.

CHAPTER 11—THE NEW WORLD

131 “I’ll be good, I promise.” Kurt retained no memory of how he felt during this time. He attributed this to the trauma of the experience. He did remember the circumstances of this moment and his mother’s anxiety that he would misbehave and be sent back.

133 “He noticed the leather wallet on its string around his neck, and he remembered.” Kurt retained no memory of saying goodbye to his mother and Herta. His last memory was of her sitting him on the kitchen table and giving him the wallet. The next thing he recalled was being on the train to Lisbon. We don’t know when the memory loss set in (immediately or at a later date), so the narrative here reflects his memory of it now. The “dream” interlude is an actual memory of an incident that occurred before the Nazi invasion. It seems significant that Kurt so clearly remembered an episode of losing his family, then being reunited with them.

The journey that follows is based in part on interviews with Kurt, accounts written by him (including an essay written at the time), and letters from Tini,

July 1941, DKK; notes by Fritz Kleinmann, DRG; also data from passenger and crew list, SS *Siboney*, March 27, 1941, PNY, and an arrival interview conducted by the German-Jewish Children's Aid representative.

136 "Although she was Kurt's age, Irmgard was taller than either of the boys." Irmgard Salomon's height was recorded on medical inspection as 5 feet, whereas Kurt was 4 feet 6 inches and Karl Kohn was 4 feet 10 inches. Karl was marked as having "defective vision" and "pituitary disease." Kurt's only recorded defect was his differently colored eyes. See passenger and crew list, SS *Siboney*, March 27, 1941, PNY.

138 "From now on, you'll sleep in your cabin, do you hear?" Miss Sneble, who was a member of the ship's complement, complained to the charity rep when they arrived in New York. She'd expected an escort to be provided for the children. She and the ship's purser had been concerned about the children's welfare. The children reported that they'd been fine (rep's report, CJH).

139 "The children had been given American flags . . . glittering porcupine spines." There is video footage of a ship that appears to be *Siboney* arriving in New York in 1941 (possibly not the same arrival as Kurt's) online at <https://app.nimia.com/video/1259682/342195263-immigration-jew-usa> (accessed November 12, 2021).

139 "Everyone had to be inspected by a doctor to see if they were bringing any diseases." Passenger and crew list, SS *Siboney*, March 27, 1941, PNY.

CHAPTER 12—CHILD OF FORTUNE

142 "Mrs. Maurer said, 'Judge Barnet and I . . . family brought here.'" Tini Kleinmann, letter to German-Jewish Children's Aid, March 1941, DKK. Alma Maurer had telegraphed Tini on March 9 to say that she was arranging travel for Herta. Tini had been informed that Mrs. Maurer was trying to arrange for the whole family to come to America.

144 “It was as if he’d been blindfolded and spun around and around, and when the blindfold was gone, there was nothing familiar in sight.” Kurt retained no memory of how he felt during this period, apparently due to disorientation and trauma. In later years he often asked the Barnets and others how he had been emotionally, and always received the glib reply “You were fine.” Judge Barnet fended off inquiries by Kurt’s appointed social worker, telling her Kurt was doing fine and providing no details. Kurt was always frustrated by this gap in his memory. In this narrative I’ve based his emotional state on close reading of photographs and his recorded behavior.

When the GJCA rep interviewed him in New York on his arrival, Kurt wouldn’t talk about any “worries” he might have about his experiences. Karl and Irmgard were similarly silent about it.

145 “*My beloved Kurt,*” the letter began. . . . *be there with you.*” Tini Kleinmann, letter to Kurt, July 15, 1941, DKK.

149 “The answer was that they wanted to.” Writing to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society in Boston in December 1938, Samuel Barnet asked for extra affidavit application forms because there were “a number of local people who are interested in bringing friends and relatives from Germany” (JHC). As far as I am aware, none of these applications was successful, and Kurt was the only refugee to arrive in New Bedford.

150 “*I’m so happy . . . thousand kisses from your Mom. I love you.*” Tini Kleinmann, amalgam of two letters to Kurt, both dated July 15, 1941, DKK.

151 “Kurt didn’t know it, but Mom had also written to Uncle Sam. . . . Fritz ever escaping.” Tini Kleinmann, letter to Samuel Barnet, July 19, 1941, DKK. Judge Barnet acted immediately, filing the necessary papers and putting up \$450 to cover Herta’s expenses (Fritz Kleinmann in Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 83). But it was too late and the bureaucracy too complex and obstructive.

CHAPTER 13—THE FINAL SOLUTION

153 “‘From now on a new wind blows in Buchenwald,’ he bellowed over the loudspeakers at roll call.” Fritz Kleinmann in Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 82.

153 “Everyone thought to themselves, *tomorrow it could be my turn*.” Gustav wrote this in his diary.

154 “‘My lads are true to me,’ he said. ‘We stick together.’” Gustav wrote this in his diary.

155 “The number of Jews in Buchenwald had dwindled until they were only a small fraction of all the prisoners.” In March 1942, only 836 Jewish prisoners remained, out of a total of over 8,000 prisoners (Stein, *Buchenwald*, 128).

156 “‘It means your mother and sister have been arrested. They’re being sent to the Ostland.’” Fritz Kleinmann, in Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 82.

157 “One thing was certain—there wouldn’t be any more letters from Mom and Herta.” See the original version of *The Boy Who Followed His Father into Auschwitz* for the full story of Tini and Herta. Neither Gustav, Fritz, nor Kurt knew for certain what had happened to them until after the war.

158 “‘It’s basically all the Jews still in Buchenwald. . . . The SS need you.’” At this point (October 1942), only 639 Jews were still alive in Buchenwald. Of these, 234 were employed in building the factory (Stein, *Buchenwald*, 128–29).

162 “At Weimar train station, they were loaded into freight wagons, forty men in each.” Fritz (in *Doch der Hund*, 86) says there were eighty men to a wagon; however, Commandant Pister had ordered a train from the railway company consisting of ten cattle/freight wagons and one passenger carriage for SS personnel (Stein, *Buchenwald Report*, 128–29). Fritz gives the date of

departure as October 18 and of arrival at Auschwitz as October 20; out by one day; it was actually the 17th and 19th.

162 “‘They’re all saying it’s a journey to death,’ . . . a man can only die once.” Gustav wrote this in his diary. He used the stock expression *Himmelfahrtskommando*, which translates literally as “trip to Heaven mission” and is the German equivalent of “suicide mission” or “kamikaze order.”

CHAPTER 14—LET’S ALL FIGHT!

165 “*Aunt Helene is always thinking of you . . . uses to catch trout.*” Tini, letter to Kurt, July 15, 1941, DKK.

166 “There were posters everywhere showing an American soldier that read ‘BUY WAR BONDS—LET’S ALL FIGHT.’” Poster issued by United States Treasury Department, 1942; viewable online at <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn520993> (accessed October 28, 2021).

166 “After a while, Kurt sold so many war bonds, he received a medal for it from the government.” War Finance Medals were issued in 1945 by the US Treasury to reward involvement in selling bonds. The medal was silver, with images of a revolutionary militiaman on one side and the iconic Iwo Jima flag raising on the other. They were marked “US Treasury Award / For Patriotic Service” and engraved with the recipient’s name. There is very little information available on these medals, but it appears that around 40,000–50,000 were struck. There were no fixed criteria to qualify for one, and they were awarded at the discretion of local War Finance committees.

168 “*They don’t even get to see a garden, only the walls of the Jewish school.*” Tini refers here to the Piper Heim, a day-care center and kindergarten established in 1939 for Jewish children in an outbuilding of a destroyed synagogue. It was run by the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde.

168 “All the kids here envy you being at summer camp. . . . I love you—Mom.”
Tini, letter to Kurt, August 5, 1941, DKK.

CHAPTER 15—A TOWN CALLED AUSCHWITZ

169 “Flashlights dazzled their eyes, and they could hear dogs snarling and the groans of 400 men with stiff limbs.” There were 405 men on the transport list, but only 404 were admitted to Auschwitz (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 255). Presumably one had died en route.

170 “That army base had now been taken by the SS and they had built their concentration camp around it.” In early 1915, Gustav was wounded in action and treated at the military hospital in what was then an Austro-Hungarian army base (Gemeinsames Zentralnachweissbureau, *Nachrichten* Nr 190, 24; Nr 203, 25). I infer that Fritz didn’t know about Gustav’s stay at Auschwitz hospital, as he doesn’t mention it anywhere in his recollections. Neither does Gustav mention it in his diary. If it weren’t for the official records of wounded men, we would never know about this coincidence. The army base at Auschwitz was built before World War I to guard the border crossing between Austro-Hungarian and German territories (Van Pelt and Dwork, *Auschwitz*, 59). After 1918, the base passed to the Polish army, and in 1939 fell to Germany and was taken over by the SS. In April 1940, Heinrich Himmler gave approval for it to be developed as a camp.

170 “Above it was a sign in German . . . nobody believed it.” Fritz recalled (*Doch der Hund*, 88) that the SS would say to the prisoners, “There is a road to Freedom. Its milestones are: Obedience, Diligence, Honesty, Order, Cleanliness, Sobriety, Truthfulness, Willingness to Sacrifice, and Love of the Fatherland!” Fritz writes that “We prisoners said ironically, ‘Walking that way is forbidden!’”

171 “They’d heard the rumors of mass killings here, and that the chamber where they pumped in the deadly poison gas was disguised as a shower

room.” Cesarani, *Final Solution*, 283–85; Wachsmann, *KL*, 267–68, 301–302; Franciszek Piper in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, vol. 1A, 206, 210.

172 “They reeked of the chemical used to disinfect them.” Uniforms were deloused with Zyklon B in a special gas chamber. This was the original intended purpose of this poison gas, which the SS adapted for use in the killing gas chambers. For the latter purpose, they asked the manufacturer (a subsidiary of IG Farben) to remove the noxious warning smell that was normally added to it (Hayes, *Industry*, 363).

172 “The prisoner doing it wasn’t very skilled—Fritz stiffened with the pain, and the 2 and the 9 went wonky.” Arrivals list, October 19, 1942, ABM.

173 “It was vast, built to hold 100,000 prisoners.” Franciszek Piper in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, vol. 1A, 210.

173 “‘Lots of scary things here,’ Papa said to Fritz. ‘But we have good nerves, don’t we? We can stand it.’” Gustav wrote these words in his diary.

174 “He would whistle happily while he did it, and even his own SS commanders were wary of him.” Langbein, *People*, 391–92.

176 “As well as the 400 men from Buchenwald, there were over a thousand Jews from camps all over Germany.” In all, 1,674 Jewish prisoners had been transferred to Auschwitz in October, from Buchenwald, Dachau, Natzweiler, Mauthausen, Flossenbürg, and Sachsenhausen, plus 186 women from Ravensbrück (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 255–60).

176 “The one in charge held up his clenched fist, and as each prisoner passed, he pointed his thumb left or right. . . . go to the left.” Fritz demonstrates the thumb gesture in his 2003 video interview.

177 “He was right. The 600 were never seen again.” Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 261. The 186 women from Ravensbrück were declared fit and assigned

work separately from the men (ibid., 261–62).

177 “Fritz thought to himself, *So this is Auschwitz. We’re all doomed to death.*” Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 90. Fritz believed that they stayed only a week in Auschwitz I before the selection, and in their testimony to the Frankfurt trials both he and Gustav stated the time as eight days (Abt 461 Nr 37638/84/15904–6; Abt 461 Nr 37638/83/15661–3, FTD); in fact it was eleven days, from October 19 to 30, 1942 (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 255, 260–61).

177 “‘Everyone admires you,’ said Papa to Fritz. . . . I’m proud of you.” Gustav wrote as much in his diary. Whether Fritz’s action really did save their lives is uncertain. There was a heavy demand for workers for construction of the new Monowitz camp, and the records imply that the intention all along had been to send the transferred prisoners to work there (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 255). However, the record is unclear, and Fritz and Gustav had the impression that they were all slated for execution.

CHAPTER 16—THE DAY WILL COME WHEN WE’RE FREE

178 “They’d been in Monowitz for two weeks. . . . on the prisoners.” The camp officially opened for reception of prisoners on October 28 (Wagner, *IG Auschwitz*, 95–97).

180 “The Monowitz camp . . . working in the factories.” On the use of prisoner labor, see Florian Schmaltz in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia* vol. 1A, 216–17; Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 92; Hayes, *Industry*, 358.

180 “Fritz heard from them that his friend Leopold Moses had died.” Leopold Moses was transferred to Natzweiler on March 12, 1942 (Buchwald prisoner record card, ITS). He was then moved to Dachau on August 17, dying three days later from “failure of heart and circulation” (Dachau death report, August 20, 1942, ITS). It’s unclear whether he was dying when he was moved to Dachau.

181 “Their eyes were lifeless, their spirits gone.” See Yisrael Gutman in Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy*, 20; Wachsmann, *KL*, 209–10, 685 n. 117; Wladyslaw Fejkiel quoted in Langbein, *People*, 91.

182 “‘Hold your head up high, Fritz,’ Papa said. . . . friends by our side.” Gustav wrote this in his diary.

183 “Your friend must have been a political prisoner—one of the lucky ones who were set free.” See Wachsmann, *KL*, 49–52; Joseph Robert White in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia* vol. 1A, 64–66.

183 “He and a friend sometimes played a game. . . . I win.” Fritz doesn’t mention this game in his recollections, but he described it to Kurt, who related it to the author.

185 “Fritz was sweating as he climbed back up the ladder. That had been a close call.” “Such seemingly small strokes of luck determined life and death,” Fritz wrote when recalling this incident (*Doch der Hund*, 101).

187 “Construction of the Buna factories . . . work hard enough.” Hayes, *Industry*, 358.

189 “One of them was Gustav Herzog, who had worked as a journalist in Vienna before the Nazis came.” Buchenwald personal record card and military government questionnaire, May 1945, ITS. Gustav Herzog was born in 1908, and was thirty years old when he was arrested by the Gestapo in June 1938 for “anti-Nazi work for English and American newspapers.” Herzog was a camp clerk from mid-1943, and head of the office from January to October 1944 (Herzog, Frankfurt trials statement, Abt 461 Nr 37638/84/15891–2, FTD).

CHAPTER 17—A MAN FAR FROM HOME

195 “In Leeds they’d been bombed . . . to the countryside.” Peter Patten, interview with author.

CHAPTER 18—THE RESISTANCE

198 “The careful way these were looked after, . . . prisoners mad.” Wachsmann, *KL*, 210.

198 “Prisoners got ill, and the hospital was badly equipped, run by cold-hearted SS doctors.” Langbein, *People*, 142; Irena Strzelecka and Piotr Setkiewicz, “Bau, Ausbau und Entwicklung des KL Auschwitz” in Długoborski and Piper, *Auschwitz 1940–1945*, vol. 1, 128.

201 “The kapos were decent men who let their workers take it easy as long as no SS guards or factory managers were nearby.” Pierre Goltman, *Six mois en enfer* (Paris: Éditions le Manuscrit), 89–90.

201 “Fritz found himself . . . bolts and the like.” Fritz states that he worked as *Transportarbeiter*, transport worker (*Doch der Hund*, 113); this was a broad label, and probably denotes fetching and carrying for locksmith technicians within the factory.

202 “The groups in each camp passed messages to each other and supported each other’s spying and sabotage.” On the Auschwitz prisoner resistance see Langbein in Gutman and Berenbaum, *Anatomy*, 490–91; Henryk Świebicki, “Die Entstehung und die Entwicklung der Konspiration im Lager” in Długoborski and Piper, *Auschwitz 1940–1945*, vol. 4, 153–54; Florian Schmaltz in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia* vol. 1A, 217.

204 “The truck stopped outside the Gestapo offices.” In his memoir and interview, Fritz says only that he was taken to the Political Department (Gestapo), without specifying whether it was the main department at Auschwitz I or the sub-department in Monowitz. The involvement of Grabner and the seriousness of the charge suggest that it was probably the main department. On the other hand, at the end of the interrogation he says that Grabner “went back to Auschwitz with the civilian” (*Doch der Hund*, 114); but he also writes that Taute and Hofer took him “back to the camp” (*ibid.*), which again suggests

Auschwitz I as the scene of the torture. Overall, the balance of evidence favors the latter. In his 1963 statement for the Frankfurt trials (Abt 461 Nr 37638/83/15663, FTD), Fritz stated that this incident occurred in June 1944; as Grabner left Auschwitz in late 1943, this must be a transcription error for June 1943.

205 “Over 2,000 prisoners had been murdered on his orders.” Langbein, *People*, 329.

205 “Grabner’s voice was eerily soft. . . . Karmeliter market.” Ibid. 31, 185, 322, 329–35.

CHAPTER 19—A TRUSTED FRIEND

207 “Two of his old Buchenwald friends, Fred and Max . . .” Fred Lustig and Max Matzner. Lustig was an old comrade of Gustav Kleinmann’s from the Buchenwald haulage column.

207 “The staff were mostly prisoners.” Wagner, *IG Auschwitz*, 163–92; Irena Strzelecka and Piotr Setkiewicz, “Bau, Ausbau und Entwicklung des KL Auschwitz” in Długoborski and Piper, *Auschwitz 1940–1945*, vol. 1, 128.

208 “After a while, Gustav Herzog came in with Stefan and another friend, Erich, who was also in the resistance.” Erich Eisler, an Austrian antifascist.

210 “It was kept a total secret. Other than Gustav, Stefan, and Erich, nobody outside the hospital was allowed to know that Fritz was still alive.” Only two other conspirators are known. Fritz’s friend Jule Meixner, who worked in the hospital laundry, helped him to hide from the inspections. Sepp Luger, a prisoner functionary who handled hospital administration, entered Fritz in the register, although as a clerk it’s not clear whether he actually knew that Fritz was alive.

210 “That was the hardest thing of all for Fritz, having to let Papa believe that he was dead.” Gustav doesn’t mention Fritz’s “death” in his diary. He didn’t

write anything at all around this time, leaving his diary untouched for many weeks. Possibly the two things are connected.

210 “He and Fritz had been inseparable, living for each other.” Two years earlier, Gustav wrote: “*Wir sind die Unzertrennlichen*”—“We are the inseparables.” There is no exact equivalent of the noun *Unzertrennlichen* in English.

211 “They wrote in the hospital register that the man had gotten better.” The register had only one line for each patient, with their name, number, the date, and what happened to them. It said either “discharged,” “sent to Birkenau” (meaning the gas chambers), or a black cross, which meant they’d died.

211 “As long as Fritz carried the other man’s number . . .” He would have to answer to the number at roll call, which the dead man’s friends would have recognized. Since these friends aren’t mentioned as being party to the deception, I infer that he was known to have no friends or relations in the camp, perhaps having arrived alone.

211 “. . . there were no guards who would recognize him as Fritz Kleinmann.” The entry recording Fritz Kleinmann’s “death” has not come to light; presumably it was among the majority of Auschwitz records that were destroyed before liberation of the camp. Some later hospital registers have survived (and have the format described), but this one is apparently lost. In his recollections, Fritz didn’t give the name of the dead man whose identity he was given. Possibly he didn’t remember or omitted it for reasons of delicacy. In his 1997 interview, Fritz said that the man was a Jew from Berlin with a prisoner number beginning 112xxx, indicating that he must have arrived in Auschwitz relatively recently (the group from Buchenwald were numbered 68xxx).

213 “Papa hugged his boy to him, and hope was kindled again for them both.” In his written memoir (*Doch der Hund*), Fritz implies that this happened shortly after his transfer from the hospital to block 48, whereas in his 1997

interview he is vague, implying that through necessity the secret was kept for a long time.

214 “Grabner had been taking gold, jewels, and other valuables for himself, and the SS had caught him.” Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 537, 542.

214 “The commandant of Auschwitz had been involved in Grabner’s stealing and had been fired too.” Langbein, *People*, 40; Wachsmann, *KL*, 388–89; Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 537, 812.

214 “Around the same time, . . . his investigations.” Prisoner resistance report, December 9, 1943, quoted in Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 542.

CHAPTER 20—FIGHTING BACK

224 “He loved to see the trains pass through, knowing they were heading for the gas chambers.” Langbein, *People*, 321–22.

225 “Hundreds of bewildered people . . . a new life.” There was never a ramp at Monowitz, and the railway did not enter the camp; from 1942 on, standard procedure was that transports went to the “old Jew-ramp” at Oświęcim train station, or to a spur near Auschwitz I, and from 1944 to the ramp inside Birkenau; however, Fritz Kleinmann (*Doch der Hund*, 129–30) suggests that some transports were unloaded at or near Monowitz, presumably in open ground near the camp, and that men selected for Monowitz arrived with their luggage.

226 “He knocked on some of the other doors . . . were still alive.” It is not known whether Karl Novacek was related to Friedrich Novacek, who lived in the same building and was one of the friends who betrayed Gustav and Fritz in 1938.

227 “His aunt Jenni, the animal lover with the talking cat, was one of them.” Jenni and her sister Bertha were deported on the same batch of transports as Tini and Herta, at a later date (Transport list, Da 227, September 14, 1942, DOW).

228 “*The years have been hard to me and Fritz. . . . your Gustav and Fritz.*” Gustav Kleinmann, letter to Olga Steyskal, January 3, 1944, DFK. The letter was written in pencil on paper apparently torn from a notepad (not his diary).

230 “There were so many victims that the gas chambers were running twenty-four hours a day.” At the time of the invasion in March 1944, Hungary had a Jewish population of around 765,000 (Cesarani, *Final Solution*, 702). The transport of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz began at the end of April (Danuta Czech, “Kalendarium der wichtigsten Ereignisse aus der Geschichte des KL Auschwitz” in Długoborski and Piper, *Auschwitz*, vol. 5, 201; *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 618). Between May and July 1944, 147 trains were sent to Auschwitz (Cesarani, *Final Solution*, 710). They arrived in Birkenau at the rate of up to five a day, overwhelming the system (Wachsmann, *KL*, 460–61).

230 “Papa was running an upholstery workshop at the Buna factories and Fritz had been transferred to work for him.” This appears to have happened around May 1944, as Gustav refers to it in his diary immediately after his description of the Hungarian Jews. In Fritz’s memoir, he implies that it occurred before Christmas 1943, but the diary seems to rule this out.

231 “‘He’s all right,’ Papa said. ‘The man is anything but a Nazi.’” Gustav wrote this in his diary.

232 “Two of Papa’s workers, . . . rations the SS provided.” Fritz identifies them only by the names Jenő and Laczi. Surviving Auschwitz records show that two Jewish brothers arrived together on a transport from Hungary at about this time: Jenő and Alexander Berkovits (prisoner numbers A-4005 and A-4004; Monowitz hospital records and work register, ABM).

232 “The price per coat was about two pounds of bacon or half a bottle of alcohol (which could be swapped elsewhere for food).” Fritz specifically says bacon—*Speck*—in his memoir (*Doch der Hund*, 139). Some stricter Jews traded nonkosher foods for bread if they could, and there were Hasidic

rabbis in Monowitz who refused all nonkosher food; they quickly starved to death (Wollheim Memorial oral histories: online at wollheim-memorial.de/en/juedische_religion_und_zionistische_aktivitaeten; accessed November 14, 2021).

235 “She’d been in the Birkenau camp for a year before coming to Monowitz.” Richard Wilczek, letter to the author, April 13, 2016.

235 “Papa gave him his spare food and got Stefan to arrange a safe job for him in the hospital.” Fritz mentions this encounter in *Doch der Hund* (p. 142) without identifying the young man more specifically. He appears to have been prisoner number 106468, who appears in the Auschwitz III-Monowitz hospital record (ABM) but not in any other surviving Auschwitz records. This serial number was one of a batch issued on March 6, 1943, to Jews deported from Germany (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 347).

235 “Despite the danger, some of the prisoners were happy to see bombs smashing up the Nazi factories.” Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, 308; testimony of Siegfried Pinkus, Nuremberg Military Tribunal: NI-10820: Nuremberg Documents, quoted in Wollheim Memorial, wollheim-memorial.de/en/luftangriffe_en (accessed November 14, 2021).

236 “That had already happened at another big concentration camp farther east, at a place called Majdanek.” Majdanek, near Lublin in occupied Poland, was captured by the Red Army on July 22, 1944. Prisoners evacuated to Auschwitz from Majdanek before its liberation reported that all Jews in that camp had been murdered before the Red Army got there (Fritz, *Doch der Hund*).

CHAPTER 21—A DESPERATE PLAN

237 “This isn’t just dangerous, Fritz, it’s crazy! . . . American army and be free.” This conversation actually took place over two meetings between Fritz and Alfred. I’ve combined them here for simplicity.

244 “Once the bombers had gone, . . . and dead prisoners.” The raid did very heavy damage to several factory buildings (Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, 331–32).

247 “Any prisoners who resisted or tried to escape would be shot immediately.” Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 782–83.

247 “The SS divided them into groups of several hundred, each with an SS officer and guards.” Gustav Kleinmann’s diary indicates units of 100, whereas other records specify 1,000 as the unit size (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 786), and Fritz Kleinmann’s memoir mentions three groups of about 3,000; the inference is that the units were organized in military style—company size, battalion size, and so on.

248 “All the sub-camps around Monowitz . . . west from Auschwitz.” On January 15, 1945, the total number of prisoners in Auschwitz III-Monowitz and its sub-camps was 33,037 men and 2,044 women (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 779). The other Auschwitz camps took slightly longer to begin their evacuation.

CHAPTER 22—THE DEATH MARCH

250 “From time to time the bang of a rifle or bark of a machine gun echoed through the night.” Altogether, fifty prisoners were shot dead during the march (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 786n).

251 “On the prisoners trudged. . . . still being evacuated.” Jews too weak to be evacuated were forced to help the SS destroy evidence of what had been going on in Auschwitz. The sheer scale of the crimes committed there made the cover-up impossible. Red Army troops entered Auschwitz on January 27, 1945, a week after Fritz and Gustav left.

252 “When they reached the town of Gleiwitz, they were put into an abandoned camp and kept there for two days.” Gleiwitz, a sub-camp of the

Auschwitz complex, had been evacuated the previous day (Irena Strzelecka in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, vol. 1A, 243–44).

253 “Rumbling and clanking and shuddering, the train began to move.” Four trains left Gleiwitz that day (January 21, 1945), carrying prisoners from several Auschwitz sub-camps besides Monowitz. The Monowitz prisoners were split between different trains, variously destined for the concentration camps of Sachsenhausen, Gross-Rosen, Mauthausen, and Buchenwald (Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle*, 797).

253 “The temperature was minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit,” Gustav’s diary gives the temperature as “18 to 20 degrees below zero [Celsius].”

254 “They sucked thirstily on the snow, munching it as if it were food.” “We are veritable artists of hunger,” Gustav wrote in his diary. The survivors stripped the uniforms off the dead men and put them on over their own to try to stave off the cold.

254 “Papa wouldn’t have his safe job . . . the same train.” Stefan Heymann and Gustav Herzog were on different transports. Both men ended up back in Buchenwald on January 26, 1945, and were later liberated there (prisoner record cards; military government case files, ITS).

256 “He flung off the striped cap.” In his 1997 interview, Fritz says that he discarded his camp uniform after jumping, but in his written memoir (*Doch der Hund*) he places it before. The latter seems more likely, since his uniform would be of value to the other prisoners to fend off the cold.

CHAPTER 23—THE END OF THE WORLD

269 “When Fritz finally saw it, Mauthausen . . . and towers.” Fritz arrived in Mauthausen on February 15, 1945, twenty days after jumping from the train (Mauthausen arrivals list, February 15, 1945, 1.1.26.1/1307365, ITS). Fritz jumped from the train on January 26, 1945 (per Gustav’s diary, which

agrees, give or take one day, with the record of the train's arrival at Mauthausen (AMM-Y-Karteikarten, PGM), and was entered on the records at Mauthausen on February 15 (Mauthausen transport list, AMM-Y-50-03-16, PGM)—eleven days later than by his own reckoning of his time in custody in St. Pölten.

270 “Fritz expected to be questioned and beaten, but the SS didn’t seem to know what to do with him.” Assuming that they still believed him to be a spy at this point, there was no real system in place to handle him. Suspected enemy agents were typically sent to the Gestapo, and following interrogation (which could last months or even years), were often sent to concentration camps if it was believed that they could be useful later. But by this stage in the war, operational systems were breaking down. The SS was by now improvising ways of dealing with high-value prisoners, which quickly devolved into panic (see e.g., Sayer and Dronfield, *Hitler’s Last Plot*).

271 “His name was Josef Kohl, though everyone called him Pepi.” Josef Kohl was an accountant from Vienna. He’d been a political prisoner since 1938, initially in Dachau. A well-educated man, he spoke multiple languages (Mauthausen and Dachau prisoner records, ITS).

272 “He wrote the information down on the register and gave Fritz his new prisoner number: 130039.” Prisoner record card AMM-Y-Karteikarten, PGM; Mauthausen arrivals list, February 15, 1945, ITS. Mauthausen had received no documentation from Auschwitz about the transport of prisoners because it was turned away and did not unload there. Hence Fritz’s ability to pass himself off as Aryan. His tattoo was noted on his record as a distinguishing feature, but the number, which was meaningless in Mauthausen, wasn’t recorded.

273 “‘Heating engineer,’ he said.” Prisoner record card AMM-Y-Karteikarten, PGM; Mauthausen arrivals list, February 15, 1945, ITS.

273 “Many of the prisoners there worked in secret airplane factories that had been set up in rocky tunnels dug underneath the hills.” Robert G. Waite in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, vol. 1B, 919–21.

273 “Fritz was put in a labor team in the underground factory where Nazi engineers were making parts for their super-advanced new jet fighters.” Gusen II transfer list, March 15, 1945, 1.1.26.1/1310718, ITS; Haunschmied et al., *St. Georgen-Gusen-Mauthausen*, 144, 172. In his memoir (*Doch der Hund*, 170), which is very sketchy at this point, Fritz erroneously identifies the aircraft built here as the Me 109.

275 “No prisoner may fall alive into the hands of the enemy.” April 14, 1945, quoted in Dobosiewicz, *Mauthausen-Gusen: obóz zagłady*, 384. In Himmler’s mind, that meant evacuation, and his telegram said as much. But in the mind of Mauthausen commandant Franz Ziereis, it was understood to mean a total liquidation.

275 “The guards and kapos started herding the prisoners into the shelter of a disused tunnel near the camp.” Dobosiewicz, *Mauthausen-Gusen: obóz zagłady*, 386.

276 “On the commandant’s order, the explosives would be detonated and thousands of prisoners would be trapped inside to die.” The operation was codenamed Feuerzeug—Lighter. The task had been undertaken by the civilian manager in charge of tunnel construction, Paul Wolfram; he and his colleagues were told that their own and their families’ lives would be in jeopardy if they botched the job or revealed the secret (Haunschmied et al., *St. Georgen-Gusen-Mauthausen*, 219ff).

276 “Fritz stood in the dank darkness of the tunnel with no idea of the fate in store. He listened to the echoes of 20,000 people breathing the chilly air.” It is unclear how many prisoners were herded into the Kellerbau tunnels, partly because of widely varying figures for the number of prisoners in the

Mauthausen complex at the time. The total prisoner population of Mauthausen and Gusen has been given variously as 21,000 (Robert G. Waite in Megargee, *USHMM Encyclopedia*, vol. 1B, 902), 40,000 (Haunschmied et al., *St. Georgen-Gusen-Mauthausen*, 203), and 63,798 (Le Chêne, *Mauthausen*, 169–70).

276 “It was said that a Polish prisoner who was an electrician had discovered the wires to the explosives and sabotaged them so they wouldn’t work.” The prisoner was named as Władysław Palonka—see Haunschmied et al., *St. Georgen-Gusen-Mauthausen*, 219ff; Dobosiewicz, *Mauthausen-Gusen: obóz zagłady*, 387. There were alternative claims that both the camp commandant and the engineer who placed the explosives had qualms and sabotaged the operation themselves.

277 “The camp was now being managed by a mixture of Vienna police, German air force, and the Vienna fire brigade.” Fritz Kleinmann in *Doch der Hund*, 171; Langbein, *Against All Hope*, 374; Le Chêne, *Mauthausen*, 165.

278 “For Fritz, Mauthausen was the ultimate horror, the pit of the world, the end of everything.” Fritz recalled of Mauthausen, “I was utterly demolished there” (quoted in Langbein, *Against All Hope*, 82).

CHAPTER 24—THEY ALL FOUGHT

279 “NAZIS SAY HITLER DEAD WORLD HOPES IT’S TRUE” Front page, *Boston Daily Globe*, May 2, 1945.

282 “Uncle Sam didn’t say so to Kurt, . . . himself was helping them.” Samuel Barnet, letter to Senator Leverett Saltonstall, June 1, 1945; O’Dwyer, letter to Samuel Barnet, June 9, 1945, War Refugee Board 0558 Folder 7: Requests for Specific Aid, FDR. It isn’t clear from Sam Barnet’s letter whether he meant this as an expression of admiration for Gustav’s apparent survival or doubt as to whether it was true.

CHAPTER 25—THE JOURNEY BACK

283 “The American army had set up a mobile hospital there.” The 107th Evacuation Hospital was housed in tents and buildings on the bank of the river Regen where it flowed into the Danube. Fritz does not identify the hospital, only that it was at Regensburg. The 107th EH established a facility at Regensburg on April 30, 1945, and remained there until May 20 (www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/107th-evacuation-hospital; accessed November 22, 2021). No other American military hospital units have been identified in Regensburg at that time.

284 “The Americans couldn’t take him any farther, so an American officer arranged a place for him in a Red Cross car going to Vienna.” The original edition of *The Boy Who Followed His Father into Auschwitz* states that Fritz traveled by train back to Vienna, based on a passage in his memoir (Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 171). However, in an obscure and rather jumbled section of his 1997 interview, he states that he traveled in a Red Cross car (*Rot Kreuz Wagen*) arranged by an American.

285 “There had been 1,048 Jewish men on that train. Fritz later found out that only twenty-six of them were still alive.” Fritz states that the total number on the transport was 1,048. However, Buchenwald arrival records say 1,035. In the original editions of *The Boy Who Followed His Father into Auschwitz* I used the latter figure. I now believe that Fritz’s figure is probably correct. Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 15n states that 25 died on the road between Weimar and Buchenwald, but this doesn’t account for the different totals. Of the 1,048, only 181 were still alive by the end of 1942. Most of those subsequently died in Auschwitz (S. Rosenkranz, quoted in Gärtner and Kleinmann, *Doch der Hund*, 191).

285 “The Jewish kids he’d known were gone—either emigrated or dead or missing.” Fritz later researched the fates of fifty-five Jewish and non-Jewish

children who had been playmates in the Karmelitermarkt before 1938, ranging in age from Kurt's to Edith's peer groups (*Doch der Hund*, 179).

285 "Fritz's friend Leo Meth didn't return from Auschwitz, and Fritz would never discover what had happened to him." Fritz does not include Leo's name in any of the lists of the victims, survivors, or émigrés. Presumably he did not know Leo's fate after they were separated in Auschwitz. I haven't been able to find any record of Leo's death or his survival. Presumably he was either among the unrecorded dead or vanished among the millions of displaced persons at the end of the war.

286 "He knocked on it and heard the familiar grumpy voice of Mrs. Ziegler, the concierge." Fritz recounts the following exchanges in his 1997 interview.