

Time Ticking
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I glance at the clock on the dull, deserted, classroom wall. Nearly 3.30. The bell would ring soon and release me from this hellish like prison. I glance across the room to the next bleak oak table. The boy next to me is doing the same. We are all desperately determined to leave the school building. The minutes are hours slowly ticking away to our freedom.

Finally I hear the saviour bell. I dart out of the room weaving in and out of the people like a stoat. I sprint for the door and tumble out in a crowd of people onto the bustling street. I turn left and bolt off down the street passing stands; smells of bread pastries and fish pierce my nostrils and float around my brain like an aura making my mouth water. Houses lean like lovers, cobbles are scattered across the ground like marbles, trees line the streets standing stiff as toy soldiers. I reach the end of the village and barrel up a rocky track passing fields running up to my parents' house by the mountains.

10 years later

As the troop train trundles round the bend, I feel a twang of excitement. I feel united: fellow comrades with the rest of the men on the train. To be serving the mighty Hitler and to have the swastika on my chest and armband makes me feel proud. As I get off the train, it rattles and rumbles away. I see the train is the only way of entry and exit. I smell something. The smell creeps up to my face, infects my nostrils. I can't get it away like it is an annoying dog following me everywhere. I slowly begin to feel sick; it churns up my inside and turns my stomach inside out. Then I nearly faint. I see mass piles of bodies in heaps along the floor, their eyes have been pecked out (probably by crows); they are like twisting hands of skeletons reaching up from the dead. My sense of unity has vanished quicker than a cat chasing a dog.

We are shown to a sort of sleeping quarters where we sit down and play cards, drink beer and smoke until we are on our shift. My shift is approaching fast. I grab my rifle to go and relieve a bleary eyed guard.

On my way there I hear a lifeless shriek and people begging God for mercy and for this torture to stop. I am horrified by this and walk at double speed to get away from this horror that is flipping my stomach back to front like gutting the intestines of a chicken; I always had to help my mother with this when I was a child. It disgusted me. But then I am even more disturbed as I reach my post. There standing, grasping the fence desperately trying to get out are about five lifeless children in striped pyjamas with blank expressions, the eyes not moving, not even twitching the slightest, their stomachs are depressed, deformed and destroyed, their bones nearly bursting out of their bodies, their arms are as limp as ragdolls. I walk past and take my position at the top of the lookout tower. As I lean against one of the pillars, I think to myself Hitler is not the great leader everyone proclaims he is. If they saw this, they would not follow him any longer. I am also starting to feel sorry for the Jews who live here, if you can call it living. Then I see a shadow: a Jew trying to escape. He has managed to sneak past the guards. My head starts to spin; if I let him

escape, I will get shot, but if I don't I will never forgive myself for not allowing him a new life.

Slowly I turn my back on him.