

# Alfred

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My family was eating dinner when we heard a knock at the door, I went and opened the door and standing there in front of me were two armed German soldiers. "Tell your family to pack their things and come with us", the soldiers said.

As the soldiers pushed us onto the cramped bus I could see the scared faces of the people onboard. "Where are we going, dad?" I asked, "We are going to America!" said my dad. I could tell by the look on my parents' faces that they were hiding something, but what were they hiding? As we came around the corner I could hear the sound of a train growing louder I excitedly asked my dad "Are we going on a train?" My dad quietly answered "Yes."

Now we were boarding a dirty, putrid and cramped freight car with other people some of which were my friends. As I looked around I noticed there wasn't much excitement in people's expressions, and I could hear a faint crying in the background. When everybody was on, the two soldiers closed the door to the freight car and the car fell silent. As the train lurched into motion I got more excited, but I started to wonder why everyone didn't seem to feel the same way I did.

As the train rolled along the click-clack of the track was like a lullaby to me. I soon fell asleep... I awoke to the whistle and screeching of the brakes. The soldiers opened the doors and we slowly exited. As we got off the train they told the men to go one way and the women and children to go the other. When they took my dad away I couldn't help but cry. I didn't know what was going on or where they were taking him. That was the last time I saw my dad.

The soldiers escorted everyone to large one room barn like buildings with plain wooden bunk beds down one side. I lived in a room with many other people for days without showers or clean clothes. The meals were short and it was a treat just to get bread and water. Some days when we were allowed to go outside we saw other fathers but I couldn't find mine. As time went by families came and went, I asked my mom where they went but she never told me.

We could always hear explosions and gunfire in the distance but it seemed to be getting nearer and the guards got more and more nervous every day. I had seen some people in the camp leave on trains, others were gone but I never knew where they went.

Near the end of the summer we were just waking up when we all heard explosions and gunfire outside our window. As we looked outside our window we could see the guards with their hands up and soldiers in strange uniforms pointing their guns at them. I turned to see my mom looking out another window with a slight smile on her face and tears running down her cheeks.

We were excited to see the soldiers and to get out and move around but most of all, I was excited when they gave us food. We left Auschwitz extermination center in 1945 after one year, two months and seventeen days.

## References

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