



*The Evil, drawing: Beate Schützmann-Krebs*

oyfn zibetn tog, zuntik iz dos geven, hot men undz oysgeshtelt in arbetskomandes un glaykh hobn zikh bavizn mentshn mit shtekns in di hent mit a geler late oyfn orem mit der oyfshrift „kapo“. (1) tsvey mol hot men undz gelernt vi azoy mir darfn farbaygeyn farbay der blokfirer (2)-shtube vu es shteyen di merderishn ponimer fun di SS. mir hobn gedarft marshirn ale mitn linkn fus un ver s'hot nisht gekent toyshn dem fus hot bakumen a festn zets mitn dembenem shtekn.

in dem zelbn tog, baym morgn-apel, iz eyne fun undzer blok, *Yashe Zelikovitch*, fun mayn shtetl, gekhapt gevorn baym toyshn broyt oyf vaser bay a rusishn krigs-gefangenem. baym apel hot men oysgerufn zayn numer un der blok-eltster mitn SS-man hobn im gegebn 25 shtekns. zayn foter iz geshtanen in der zelber ray baym apel un tsugezen un gehert di toyt-geshrayen fun zayn zun velkhn men hot farn shrayen derharget un tsugevorfn tsu der vant vu es zaynen gelegn etlekhe velkhe zaynen umgekumen baym drot. dos iz geven der ershter korbn fun undzer transport.

akht inderfri hobn mir aroysmarshirt tsu der arbet. in der ershter finftl iz gegangen der kapo un geshrien: links, links, links! ot zaynen mir baym hoykhn ayzernem lager-toyer. links shteyt a kleyner hiltserner barak, bay velkhe es shteyen a tsendlik merderishe daytshn un kukn vild oyf di marshirndike, blase, mentshn-shotns. mir haltn di hitlen in di hent, di kephoykh. shteyt an alter, groyer, banditisher yeke (3) un shmeykhlt tsinish, murmlendik epes tsu zaynem a „kamarad“.

der kapo meldet vifl mentshn es zaynen gekumen, dem nomen fun der komande. mir hern dos vort „krematorium“ mit 300 heftlinge baym aroysmarshirn. tsvey yunge SS shteyen fun bayde zaytn un tseyln undz vi mir voltg geven di tayerste zakhn oyf der velt.

mir farnemen zikh oyf links un marshirn mitn blotikn veg tsum veldl tsu.

On the seventh day, a Sunday, we were lined up in "Arbeitskommandos" (work crews), and immediately, people appeared with sticks in their hands and a yellow patch on their sleeves with the inscription "Kapo"(1). Twice we were instructed how to pass the room of the "Blockführer" (2), where the murderous figures (lit. "faces") of the SS were standing. We all had to march with our left foot (first), and whoever could not change his step sequence (fast enough) received a firm blow with the oak stick.

That same day, during morning roll call, one of our block, *Yashe Zelikovitch* from my shtetl, was caught while trying to exchange bread for water with a Russian prisoner of war. At roll call his number was called out, and, together with the "block elder", the SS man gave him 25 strokes of the cane. *Yashe's* father stood in the same line at the roll call and had to watch and listen to the death cries of his son, who, finally, was killed for his screaming and thrown against the wall, where quite a few already were lying having perished on the (electric) wire. This was the first victim from our transport.

At eight in the morning, we marched out to work. In the first line of five, the "Kapo" walked and yelled, "Left, left, left!" Now, we arrived at the high, iron camp gate. On the left, there was a small, wooden barrack, by which 10 murderous Germans stood, peering wildly at the marching, pale human shadows. We hold our hats in our hands, heads held high. An old, gray, bandit "yeke"(3) stands there smiling cynically, muttering something to his "comrade."

The "Kapo" reports how many people have arrived and gives the name of the work crew. We hear the word "krematorium" and "with 300 prisoners" while marching out. Two young SS men stand on either side of us and count us as if we were the most precious things in the world.

We turn left and march along the muddy path towards the grove.

<p>mir blaybn shteyn oyf a frayen plats vu es zaynen ongeshtelt bages(?), tsigl, berg zamd, shteyner, fesser, smole, kastns mit ridlen</p>	<p>Finally, we stop at an empty place, where "bages"(sacks? panniers?) are deposited, in addition bricks, mounds of sand, stones, barrels, pitch and boxes with spades,</p>
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- (1) Kapo= Designation for a functionary prisoner who acted as an "employee" of the camp management. For more information, see for example <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kapo>
- (2) „Blockführer“= The „Blockführer“ (block leaders) were every day present in the camp, held roll calls and assigned the prisoners of their barracks (block) to "Arbeitskommandos" (work crews) or individual tasks. Read some more here: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schutzhaftlagerf%C3%BChrung>
- (3) Yeke= German Jew

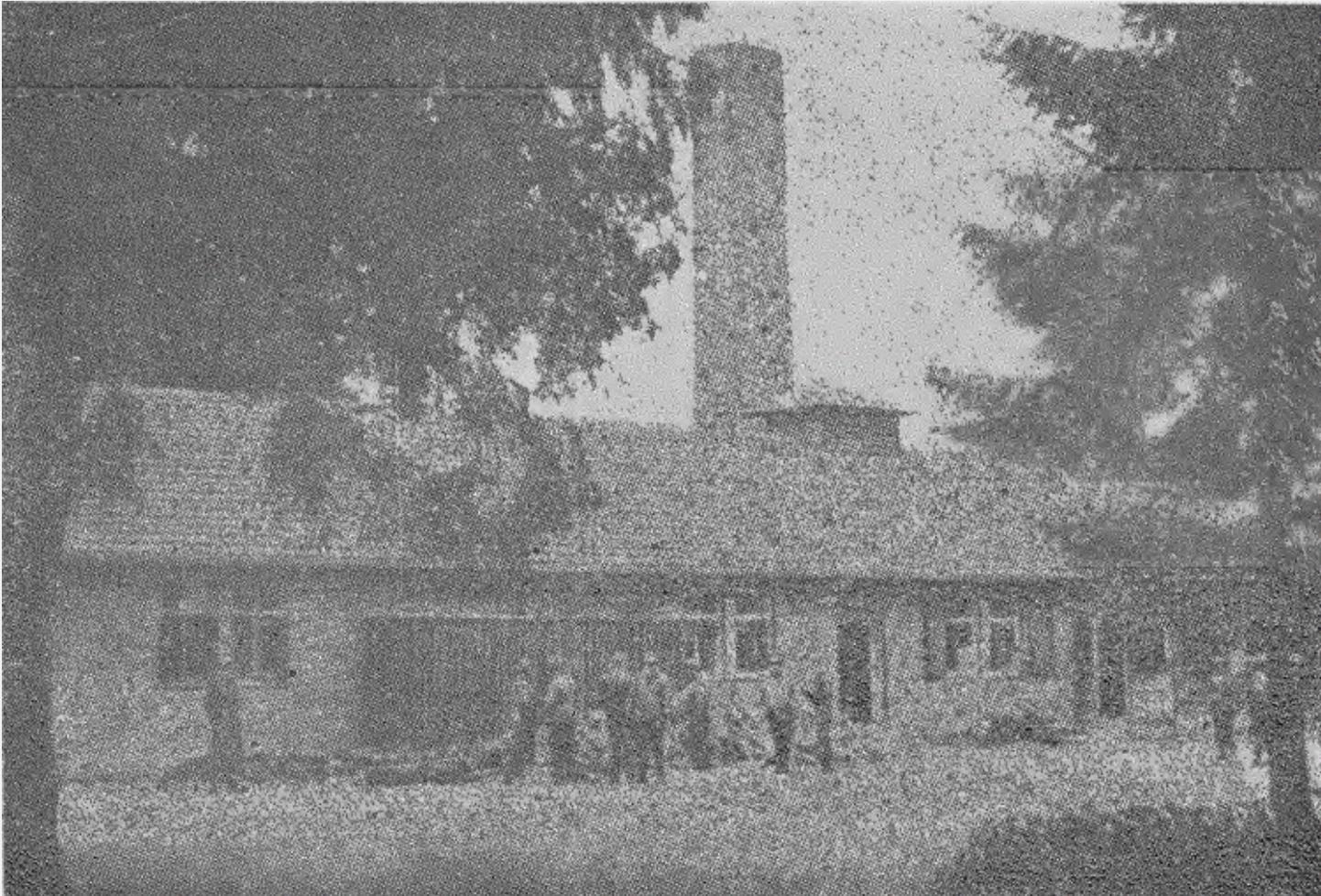
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<p>shvere hamers a.a.v. a traktor shteyt in a zayt ongelodn mit shvere groyse shteyner. baym traktor shteyen etlekhe tsivile mentshn. ale haltn shtekelekh in di hent, di oygn gevendet tsu undz un shmeykhlen tsinish. der kapo mit etlekhe poylishe fararbeter tseyln vider un shteln tsu 2 man in eyn grupe. tsu yede 20 vert tsugeshtelt a „fararbayter“, velkher trogt a shmoln, geln band mit a shvartser oyfshrift: „fararbayter“.</p> <p>der fararbeyter fun undzer grupe firt undz geshlosn tsu a kastn. yeder nemt a ridl oder klots un geyt in der rikhtung tsu di tsivile mentshn. eyner fun di tsivile geyt tsu tsu undz un shtelt undz oys baym grobn a shmoln, tsvey-meterdikn grub.</p> <p>nokhn oparbetn etlekhe sho hob ikh gefregt baym mayster vos mir grobn, vos vet men do boyen?</p> <p>-do vet zayn a krematoryum tsu farbrenen ale yidn- hot mir der mayster geentfert mit a shmeykhl.</p> <p>di ershte tsayt hobn mir iberhoypt nisht farshtanen di verter, nor shpeter hobn mir shoyn alts gezen mit di eygene oygn vi gikh es iz oysgevaksn a hoykher dreysik-meterdiker koymen fun velkhn es hobn zikh getsoygn</p>	<p>heavy hammers and so on. At the side is a tractor loaded with heavy, large stones, and near it are quite a few civilian people. All of them hold sticks in their hands, and, having their eyes turned toward us, they smile cynically. The "Kapo " and several Polish foremen count us again and additionally, assign 2 men to each group. For every 20 men, a "foreman" is assigned who wears a narrow yellow ribbon with the (German) inscription: "Vorarbeiter".</p> <p>The foreman of our group leads us, cohesively, to a box. Everyone takes a spade or a log and goes towards the civilians. But one of them comes up to us, positioning us to dig a narrow pit two meters deep.</p> <p>After we worked on it for a few hours, I asked the master what they were actually going to build there where we were digging?</p> <p>"A crematorium will be built there to burn all the Jews", the master replied with a smile.</p> <p>At first, we did not understand these words at all, but later, we already saw with our own eyes how quickly a high, thirty meter thick chimney had risen there, from which red tongues of fire blazed up to the sky.</p>
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<p>royte fayer-tsunen tsum himl. dem ershtn tog hobn mir gearbet biz 5 azeyger farnakht. dan zaynen mir vider, geshlosn avek tsum hoykh lager-toyer. itst hot geshpilt an orkester un s'iz geven laykhter tsu marshirn tsum takt.</p> <p>-links,tsvey, drey fir hot der „kapo“ geshrien farn dernentern zikh tsum lager. un ven mir zaynen shoyn geven hart leben blokfirer-shtube hot zikh gehert „mitsn-op“ un a geshray fun kapo: 300 heftlinge-krematoryum 1 - tsurik in lager! vider hot men undz getseylt un geshribn un oysgemekt.</p> <p>der orkester shpilt tsum takt. mir marshirn oyf der lager-shtrase tsum blok. di lager-shtrase iz shvarts fun marshirndikn grupn. fun eynike grupn trogt men toyte un halb-toyte.</p> <p>es derhert zikh a gong un ale loyfn shnel tsu zeyere blokn.</p>	<p>The first day, we worked until 5 o'clock in the early evening. Then we walked again, cohesively, to the camp gate. Now an orchestra was playing and it was easier to march to the beat.</p> <p>"Left, two three, four," the "Kapo" yelled before we approached the camp. And when we were already very close to the room of the block leader, we heard, "Caps off!", and a shout of the "Kapo": "300 prisoners - Crematorium 1 - back in camp!" Again, they counted us and wrote down the number before crossing everything out again (and recounting).</p> <p>The orchestra is playing to the beat. We are marching on the "camp street" to the block. The "camp street" is black with marching groups. From some groups, dead and half-dead are carried.</p> <p>A stroke of the gong sounds, and everyone quickly runs to their blocks.</p>
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<p>oyf der lager-shtrase lign etlelhe mentshn, velkhe sharn zikh oyf ale fir in der blote. baym aynshteln tsum apel bakumt yeder batsolt farn tog arbet mitn dembenem shtekn ibern kop.</p> <p>mir shteyen shoyn oysgeshtelt tsu tsen in a ray. der blok-eltster makht ibungen: „mitsn ap“, „mitsn oyf“ un ver es lozt tsu shpet oder tsu fri arop di hant-bakumt a festn zets, az es fardreyt zikh der kop un shvartse pasn loyfn far di oygn.</p> <p>nokhn apel firt men grupnvayz in latrine, oykh geshlosn, tsu finf in a ray.</p>	<p>On the camp road, quite a few people are left dragging on all fours in the mud. As we line up for roll call, we all get the reward for a day's work in the form of blows over our heads with the oak cane.</p> <p>We are already lined up in rows of ten. The block elder does exercises: "Caps off". "Caps on", and whoever takes his hand down too late or too early receives a firm blow so that everything spins in his head and black stripes dance in front of his eyes.</p> <p>After the roll call, we are led to the latrine in groups, cohesively, five in a row.</p>
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*“Krinik in Khurbn”, original photograph, page 169, caption:*

“Exterior appearance of the crematorium in Dachau, mountains of dead lie next to it and (North) American soldiers look at it with bewilderment on the first day of liberation.”

s'iz shoyn akht in ovnt un dervayl hot men nokh keyn frishtik misht gezen far di oygn.

bay yedern hot shoyn tsen mol ibergekhalesht in hartsn (1). nisht azoy der hunger hot ba yedn azoy shtark gepeynikt vi der dursht. a fayer hot gebrent in kerper. di lipn fartsoygn mit a tsheshpoltener, kleyiker hoyt. keyn shney iz shoyn oykh nisht geven. alts iz farvandlt gevorn in klepiker shvartser blote.

der gantser lager iz gevorn eyn groyser zump un mentshn hobn bay der greste onshtrung nisht gekent aroystsien di fis.

ver s'iz ayngeszunkn in zump iberlozndik dort di trefes un ver s'iz gefaln hot shoyn nisht gehat keyn koyekh zikh tsurik oyftsushteln un iz azoy ibergeblihn biz er iz oysgegangen.

It is already 8 o'clock in the evening, and meanwhile, we have not yet had breakfast before our eyes.

Each of us had had to deal with a fainting spell ten times (1). But it was not hunger that tormented everyone so much, but thirst. It burned like fire in our bodies, and our lips were covered with cracked, sticky skin. There was no more snow either. Everything was turned into sticky, black mud.

The whole camp had become one big swamp and people could not pull their feet out even after a hard struggle.

Those who sunk in, had to leave their wooden slippers there, and those who even fell down, no longer had the strength to stand up again and remained stuck there until it was over for them.

(1) I am not completely sure with this translation.

Following two pictures with inscriptions (page 170):



*Klausen - observing the Jews marching into the camp.*



*Kaduk - in the camp by the electric fence, shooting at a  
refugee from the Gypsy camp behind the fence.*

eyner hot oyfn tsveytn nisht gekukt. yeder hot gevust, az der zelber goyrl vart dokh oyf im oykh.

vaser iz gevorn dos hoypt-problem far undz, nay-ongekumene. dos esn iz bashtanen fun a halbn liter groz-zup un a tsefoylte kartofl. dos hot men gedarft esn shteyendik finf man iber eyn shisl.

mit di ergste shmutsikste verter hot men undz gerufn. di hoypt-shrek iz geven farn blok-eltstn un farn lager-politsyant, velkher iz geven an SS-man. ven er flegt shoyt zayn mid fun shlogn undz, flegt er zikh oyfshraybn dem numer fun hant un baym apel flegt yener bakumen zayn shtrof, velkhe iz bashtanen in 25 shmits oder 10 minut azoy gerufenem „sport“ fun velkhn men flegt blaybn lign halb toyte in der blote.

nokh tsvey vokhn, hobn shoyt fun undzer transport, vos hot anthaltn baym araynkumen in lager 150 mener, gefelt a 20. di helft zaynen aleyt avek tsum drot grupesvayz tsu drey un tsu fir, haltndik zikh georemt. tsumorgns nokhn toyt fun *Yashe Zelikovitsh*, gants fri, ven s'iz nokh geven shtok fintster, iz der ershter avek tsum drot zayn foter, *Milke Zelikovitsh* mitnemendik a yungn mentshn, *Katriel Engenradt*. zey zaynen gefaln toyt fun a shos in Brust, finf meter fun elektrishn drot.

ven der apel hot zikh ongehoyn hobn gefelt tsvey perzon un men hot zey glaykh gefunen leben drot.

yeder arestirter hot getrogn dem numer fun blok vu er iz un ven eyner hot gefelt tsum apel, hot men glaykh im gefunen baym drot un festgeshtelt fun velkhn blok er iz.

No one paid attention to the other. Everyone knew that the same fate was waiting for him as well.

Water became the main problem for us newcomers. Our meal consisted of half a liter of grass soup and a rotten potato and was taken standing over one bowl for 5 people.

We were called the worst and dirtiest words. The most terror was spread by the block elder and the camp policeman, an SS man. When he was tired of beating us, he used to write down the number of a person's arm, and at the roll call, he would get his punishment. The punishment consisted of 25 lashes or 10 minutes of so-called „sport“, after which the person lay half-dead in the mud.

After two weeks, 20 men were missing from our transport, which consisted of 150 men when it arrived at the camp. Half of them had gone themselves to the wire, in groups of three or four, holding each other arm in arm. The next early morning after the death of *Yashe Zelikovitsh*, when it was still pitch dark, it was his father, *Milke Zelikovitsh*, who was the first to go to the wire, taking with him a young person, *Katriel Engenradt*. They fell by a shot in the chest, five meters from the electric wire.

When roll call began, the two people were missing, but were immediately found next to the wire.

Each detainee bore the number of his block, and when someone was missing during roll call and was found by the wire, one could immediately determine from which block he was.

kimat ale fun undzer transport hobn gelitn oyf der algemayner krenk durkhfal, velkhe hot gehersht in lager. es flegn derfun shtarbn yedn tog tsendliker arestirte.

in tsvey vokhn arum hot men undz ibergefirt in a tsveytn blok, numer 13, vu es hobn zikh gepeynikt bay toyznt arestirte. di badingungen zaynen in ot dem blok geven fil ergere vi in frierdikn karantin. der blok-eltster un der blok-shrayber hobn mit zikh forgeshtelt banditn in ale hinzikhntn.

der *blok-eltster*, *Rozen*, a slovakisher yid un der *shrayber Adek (1)* a poylisher yid.

Almost all of our transport suffered from a general diarrheal disease which prevailed in the camp. Dozens of prisoners died of it every day.

After two weeks, we were transferred to another block, number 13, where about a thousand prisoners were tormented. The conditions in this block were much worse than in the previous "quarantine". The block elder and the block clerk embodied bandits in every respect.

The *block elder*, *Rozen*, was a Slovak Jew and the *clerk*, *Adek (1)*, a Polish Jew.

(1) It is more likely that the name was "**Arek**", however I read it as "Adek".



*Caption under this photograph on page 172:* In a pit next to the crematorium are lying mounds of human skeletons, which could not be burned because of the great shortage of coals.

der blok eltster iz geven eyner fun di eltste yidishe arestirte, mit numer 27.000. der eyntsiker nomen vos mir hobn bay im gehat iz geven: „ir, shmutsike drekzek“, „ir zoy-hinte“ un derbay mekhaded geven mitn shtekn ibern kop.

der shrayber Adek iz a nideriker, fest-geboyter „mentsh“. mit a grober heyzeriker shtim. shtendik on a hitl mit a glat-razirtn kop, mit a grobn, dembenem shtekn in hant. ver es flegt araynfaln tsu im in hant arayn hot shoyn mer nisht gelebt.

zayn oyfn fun derhargenen iz bashtanen in derlangen a festn klap ibern kop un ven der korbn flegt faln in blote, flegt er aroyfleygn dem shtekn oyfn haldz un mit bayde fis aroyftretn oyf bayde ekn fun shtekn biz di tsung fun korbn flegt zikh aroysshtekn un a vayser shoym flegt aroys oyf di lipn. ersht dan flegn di shtubdinstn khapn dem korbn far di fis un tsuvarfn tsu der vant vu es flegn lign ongevorfn toyte un halb toyte.

far undz hot der Adek gehaltn a rede glaykh baym onkumen in zayn blok. zayne verter zaynen geven: „ir hint, ir vet bay mir leben nisht mer vi eyn vokh. ir zolt visn az ir zent itst in blok numer 13 bay Adekn un ir zolt visn vos aykh dervart“.

The block elder was one of the oldest Jewish arrestees, with the number 27.000. The only "names" he titled us with were: "You dirty scumbags, you pig dogs", and simultaneously, he would "honor" us with cane blows over our heads.

The clerk Adek, a small, powerfully built "man", had a brusque, hoarse voice. He was constantly seen without a hat, with a clean-shaven head and a rough, oaken stick in his hand. Whoever fell into his hands did not survive.

His way of killing was to deliver a firm blow on the **prisoner's** head, and when he fell into the mud, he used to place the stick on the victim's neck and stepped on the ends of the stick with both feet, until the victim's tongue came out and a white foam wetted his lips. Only then, the "Stuben-Dienste" ("room services") used to grab the victim by his feet and throw him to the wall, where other dead and half-dead people were already lying on top of each other.

Immediately, when we arrived at his house, Adek gave us a speech with the words: "You dogs, you will not live with me for more than one week. I want you to know that you are now in block number 13 with Adek, and I want you to know what awaits you there!"

in blok 13 zaynen ayngeshtanen di ergste arbets-komandos, vi krematoryum numer 1 un numer 2 un veyslgrobn. dos zaynen geven drey komandes vu a yid hot gekent oyshalt nisht mer vi tsvey vokhn. bay di krematoryums hot men gearbet gantse 24 sho mit a shturmishn tempo.

fun der komande flegt men yedn tog arayntrogn 20-30 toyte un di helft halb-toyte, velkhe flegn tsumorgns avekgeyn in blok numer 7. dos iz geven der blok fun toyt.

ikh hob gearbet in krematoryum numer 1- komande baym trogn tsigl. di arbet iz gevaksn far di oygn. tsendliker tsivil-daytshn zaynen dort geven basheftikt un yedn tog flegt kumen fun Berlin a hoykher ofitsir, batrakhtn di arbet un tsuayln.

der „kapo“ iz geven a daytsh. a kriminal-farbrekher mit a grinem vinkl. in lager zaynen geven farshidene optsaykhungen; politishe arier hobn getrogn a dreyek mitn shpits aroptsu. yidn hobn getrogn a roytn vinkl mitn shpits aroyftsu un a geln vinkl mit a shpits arop, dos hot mit zikh fargeshtelt a mogn Dovid. yeder yid hot gemuzt trogn zayn ershtn os fun land: a poylisher a „p“, a frantsoys- a „f“, a rumenisher- a „r“ un azoy vayter. ganovim hobn getrogn grine vinklen mit di shpitsn arop un sabotatshnikes- shvartse vinklen mitn shpits arop. di „kapos“ zaynen in der merhayt geven kriminele farbrekher, velkhe hobn bakumen getsolt mit sigaretn far yedn dermordetn arestant.

ven mir flegn kumen tsu der arbet, flegt der „kapo“ gebn a farordenung yeder zol oyfmakhn dos moyl un ver s'hot gehat

Block 13 housed the worst work crews, such as "Crematorium number 1 and number 2" and "Excavation works in the Vistula". In these 3 work crews, a Jew would not endure more than two weeks. At the crematoria, one had to work 24 hours in a row at a stormy pace.

From (such a) work crew, they used to bring in 20-30 dead every day, half of them half-dead, who left the next morning for block number 7 - the block of death.

I worked in the "Crematorium Number 1" crew, and had to haul bricks. The amount of work grew before our eyes. Dozens of civilian Germans were employed here and every day, a tall officer came from Berlin, inspected the work and intervened.

Our "Kapo" was a German, an imprisoned criminal with a green triangle (**on his clothes**). There were various identification badges in the camp; political Aryans wore a triangle (**or "angle"**) with the point down **on their jackets or shirts**. Jews wore a red angle with the point upwards and a yellow angle with the point downwards, which altogether made a Star of David. Additional, every Jew had to wear the first letter of his country of origin: for Poland a "P", for France an "F", for Romania an "R" and so on. Thieves wore green angles with the point down, and saboteurs wore black angles with the point up. The majority of the "Kapos" were imprisoned criminals who were rewarded with cigarettes for each murdered prisoner.

When we got to work, the "Kapo" used to order that we should open our mouths. And whoever had a...



*KZ Auschwitz-Birkenau, photo courtesy of Tomek Wisniewski*

a goldenem tson iz geshtelt gevorn in a zayt. di flegt men tsuteyln di shverste arbet baym trogn 25 tsign oyf di rishtovanyes bis tsum koymen. ver es flegt nisht arbetn in loyf-shrit-flegt vern aropgevorfn fun der hekhster rishtovanye oyf der erd.

gants oybn zaynen spetsyel geshtanen etlekhe yunge SS un flegn mit flays oysfiln di dozike umentshlekhe arbet. eyn tog hob ikh gearbet baym trogn tsign un ven tsumorgns gelingt mir nisht tsu krign a tsveyte arbet, volt ikh oykh gelegn a tsemeymester untn, in a kaluzhe blut. ikh hob etlekhe teg gearbet baym makhn leym un baym oploden tsign fun di oytos.

di toyte flegt men aroysraysn di gildene tseyne un derfar flegn di yunge SS trinken schnaps. dertsu flegn zey nokh bakumen fun lager-komendant, Shvarts, a matone: far yedn toytn a pekl tsigaretn.

der orkester hot geshpilt tsum takt un di toyte flegt men tsu fir mit amol, oyf di akslen arayntrogen in lager-komendatur, velkhe flegt shteyn baym toyer un shepn nakhes fun undzere umdertreglikhe tsores.

in der ershter vokh hot men fun undzere 140 derharget 40. di iberike zaynen geven ale in zeyer a shlekhtn tsushtand un flegn yedn tog grupesvayz, geyn in blok numer 7, oyfn „rever“. der blok numer 7 hot mit zikh fargeshtelt a durkhgang-tsenter tsum toyt, durkh velkhn es flegn yedn tsveytn tsi dritn tog aroysgenumen vern (1) fun 1500 biz 2000 mentshn fun ale natsyonalitetn, ober di merhayt- yidn. rusn, polyakn-flegt men shoyne nemen ven zey zaynen geven 50 protsent toyt.

in lager zaynen geven mentshn fun ale felker: yidn, rusn, polyakn, tshekhn, yugoslavn, grikhn, shpanyoln, daytshn un az. vayter. s'iz oykh geven a shtrof-komande-s.k.- dortn flegt der shtarkster yid kenen leben 5-6 teg. di shtrof-komande iz geven opgezundert fun algemeynem lager mit a hoykher, gemoyter vant, oybn batsoygn mit shtekhikn drot. di

...a gold tooth was placed aside. Later, these people were assigned the hardest work, they had to drag 25 bricks over the scaffolding up to the chimney. Anyone who could not do this job at a run was thrown from the highest scaffolding down to the earth.

At the very top, there were standing a number of young SS men ready to do this inhuman "work" with diligence. For one day, I worked carrying bricks, and if I hadn't been able to get another job the next day, I would have also been lying murdered in a puddle of blood below. **But** I then worked for several days making clay and unloading bricks from the trucks.

The dead people's gold teeth were usually torn out, for which the young SS men could drink schnapps. In addition, they received a present from camp commandant Schwartz: a packet of cigarettes for each dead person.

The orchestra played to the beat, and the dead were carried four at a time, on the shoulders, to the camp command ("Lagerkommandatur"), **whose members** stood at the gate and gloated over our unbearable suffering.

In the first week, 40 of our 140 (**sic!**) men were murdered. The remaining ones were all in very bad condition, so that every day whole groups had to move to block number 7 - to the "precinct". Block number 7 represented a transit center to death, of which 1500-2000 people of all nationalities were taken out (1) every second or third day, but the majority were Jews. Russians and Poles were already taken out when they were only half dead.

People of all nationalities were in the camp: Jews, Russians, Poles, Czechs, Yugoslavs, Greeks, Spaniards, Germans and so on. Also, a "Strafkommando" (penal - command), **abbreviated** "S.K.", was there, where the strongest Jew had a life expectancy of 5-6 days. The "S.K." was

farzindikung farvos men flegt dort araynfaln iz bashtanen in redn mit a tsivil-arbetter oder redn mit froyen. dos letste iz geven spetsyel

separated from the general camp by a high, brick wall, covered with barbed wire fence at the top. The "sin", for which someone was put in here, was talking to a civilian worker or women. The latter was exceptionally strictly forbidden.

(1) „aroysgenumen vern“= they were taken out to be killed

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shtreng farbotn. derfar flegt men bakumen zeks khadoshim s.k. un leben bloyz zeks teg. di arbet fun s.k. iz bashtanen in grobn in der Veysl (Vistula), shteyendik biz halb in vaser. yede finf arestirte hobn leben zikh gehat an SS man als oyfzeer, velkher flegt shlogn mit a shtekn fun fri bizn ovnt. in blok hot di s.k. gehat a spetsyele shtreng distsiplin. men hot gedarft shteyn borves etlekhe sho baym apel un a shtreng shtilkeyt hot gemuzt hershn di gantse tsayt biz nokh der arbet.

yede farbindung mitn lager iz geven opgeshlosn ven etlekhe arestirte flegn geyn in kikh nokhn esn oder in broyt-magazin, flegn zey vern gefirt fun merderishn komande-firer unter geveer. dortn hobn zikh oykh gefunen di, oyf velkhe men hot gehat dem mindestn fardakht, az zey viln antloyfn. der eyntsiker veg tsu rateven dos leben iz geven- antloyfn, trots dem vos es iz dan geven umeglekh es oystsufirn.

fun lager aroysgeyn iz geven umeglekh tsulib dem elektrishn drot fun tsvey mit a halbn meter. fun der arbets-komande iz geven shver zikh aroystsudreyen vayl yede tsen perzon zaynen geven bavakht fun a SS-man. ven es flegt shoyn afile eynem gelingen zikh avektsudreyen in a zayt, flegt er gezukht vern fun toyznter SS mit shpir-hunt.

in dem zelbn tog flegt men dem antlofenem brengen a lebedikn oder toytn in lager arayn. a lebediker korbn flegt tsu morgns oyfgehangen vern inmitn lager un ale flegn muzn bayzayn di tseremonye. der toyter kerper flegt hengen etlekhe teg un es flegt iber im zayn an oyfshrift oyf daytsh un poylish:“yedern dervart dos oyb er antloyft.“

For this, one was punished with six months of S.K., which meant to live only for 6 more days. The work in the S.K. consisted of digging in the Vistula while standing up to the middle of the body in water. Every five prisoners had an SS man next to them as a supervisor, who used to beat them with a stick from morning until evening. In its block, the S.K. exacted a special strict discipline: One had to stand barefoot at roll call for several hours, and there had to be strict silence all the time until after work.

Any communication with the camp was denied, and when quite a few detainees went to the kitchen after dinner or to the bread store, they were led under gun-point by the murderous commando leader. There (in the S.K.) were also those, on whom a faint suspicion had fallen that they might have wanted to escape. The only way to save his life, definitely was to escape. Although it was impossible to implement this.

Because of the electric wire at the height of two and a half meters, it was impossible to get out of the camp. From the work crew, it was also difficult to escape, because ten people each were guarded by one SS man. Even if someone managed to escape sideways, he was usually searched for by thousands of SS men with sniffer dogs.

That same day, the fugitive used to be brought back to the camp alive or dead. A victim, who was still alive was then hanged the next day in the middle of the camp, and everyone had to be present at this ceremony. The dead body used to hang for several days, with an inscription above him in German and in Polish: "This is what awaits everyone who escapes!"

nokh akht teg oparbetn oyf der komande-krematoryum numer 1 hob ikh bashlosn tsu geyn arbetn oyf a tsveyter komande bay barakn-boy, velkhe hot zikh gerekhnert eyne fun di besere komandes. ikh hob zikh tsumorgns fri formirt in der nayer komande „barakn-boy“, velkhe hot getseylt hundert arbeter mit tsvey „kapos“.

an oyber-kapo un a geveyntlekher kapo. der oyber-kapo- a daytsh fun a yor zekhtsik. shtendik mit a lakhedikn gezikht un shtendik on a shtekn. ale haltn im far a foter fun der komande.

After eight days of work in the squad "Crematorium Number 1", I decided to go to a different crew, at "Barackenbau" ("Barracks Construction"), which was one of the better squads. The next morning, I positioned myself in the new work crew "Baracken-Bau", which included a hundred workers with two "Kapos":

**Namely**, a "Head Kapo" and an ordinary "Kapo". The "Head-Kapo" was a German of 60 years. Always with a smiling face, and always without a stick. Everyone considered him a "father" of the squad.

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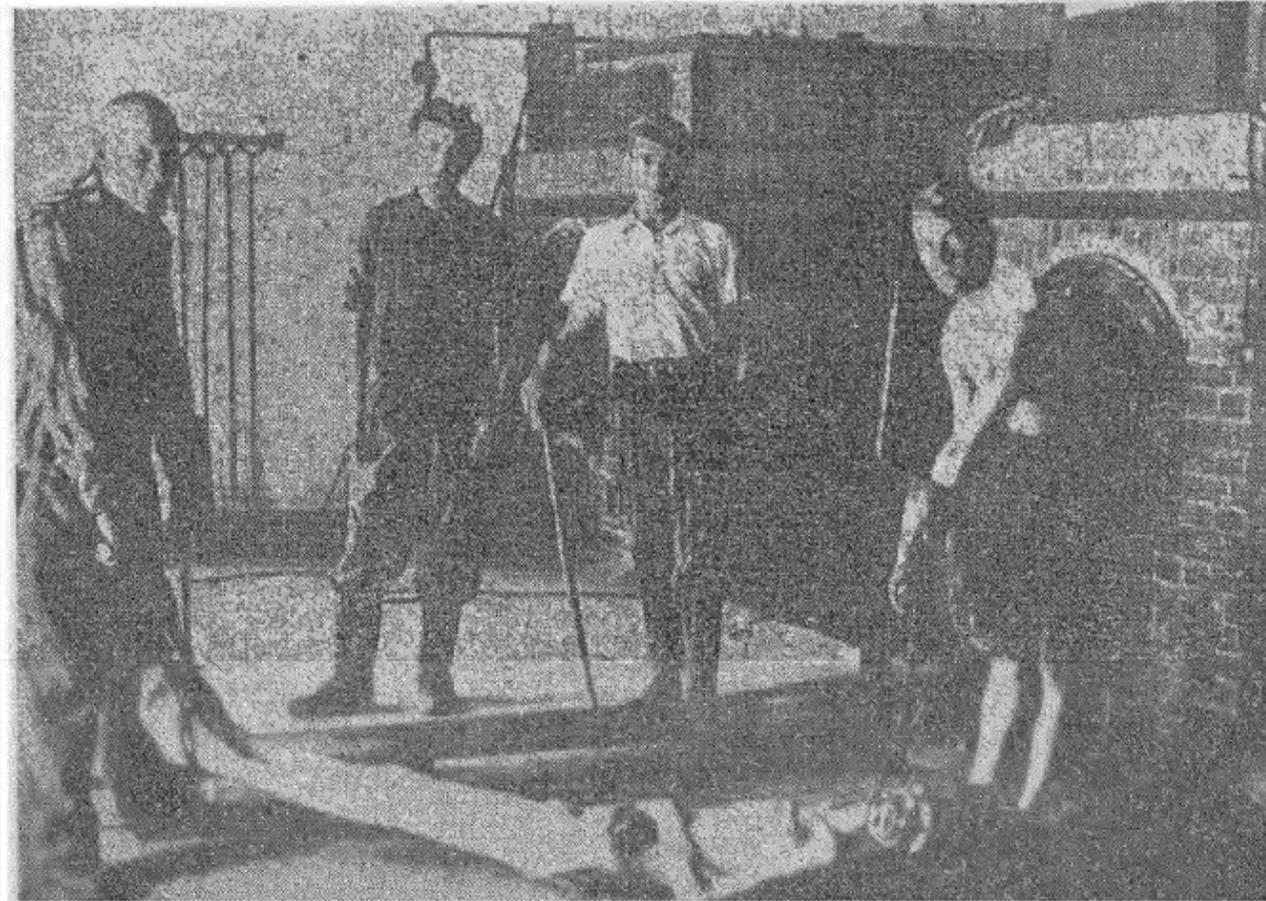
er iz a politisher arestirter un di arbeter fun zayn komande hobn zeyer a gute maynung vegn im. ikh shtel zikh arayn tsvishn der komande. tsu mayn glik hot in dem tog gefelt an arbeter, velkher iz krank gevorn, azoy az tsuzamen mit mir iz geven punkt hundert. nor azoy laykht iz do oykh nisht tsugegangen. in lager un in yedn blok iz geven a farordnung, az men muz arbetn keseyder oyf eyn komande.

ven der merderisher kapo hot dem frimorgn gezen, az ikh fel, iz er aroys ibern lager mikh zukhn. er hot mikh gefunen in barakn-boy komande. dos ershte hob ikh bakumen a festn zets mitn shtekn ibern rukn. ober der alter ober-kapo hot zikh geshtelt far mir un mikh nit gevolt aroyslozn fun der ray. eyn kapo hot mikh getsoygn tsu zikh un der tsveyter tsu zayn komande. bay bayde iz shoyn arayn in ambitsye ver es vet gevinen dem korb. un gevunen hot der alter ober-kapo. ikh bin avek arbetn in a nayer komande.

He is a political prisoner, and the workers of his crew have a very good opinion of him. I stand among the people of his crew. Fortunately for me, one worker was missing that day, because he had fallen ill. So now, together with me, there were exactly one hundred of us. But the change was not as easy as I thought. In the camp and in each block, there was a regulation that everyone had to stay continuously in a single work crew.

When the murderous "Kapo" saw that I was missing that morning, he ran through the camp looking for me. He then found me in the work-crew "Barracks Construction". At first, I was hit hard on my back with his stick. But the old "Head Kapo" immediately stood in front of me and refused to let me out of line. One Kapo pulled me towards him, and the other pulled me into his crew.

The two ambitiously got into a dispute about who would win the victim for himself. And the old "head kapo" won! I left, to work in a new squad.



*Translation of the writing under this photograph on page 176:* Here we see a gassed Jew being thrown into the oven of the crematorium, which was carried out by the "Sonderkommando", whose members were also killed later.