

Triste Torun

Do we endure the ruins?

PROLOGUE

WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, IN A TOWN CALLED TORUN.

THE NATIONAL SOCIALISTS MARCHED THROUGH WITH THEIR ARMY AND STATIONED A CAPTAIN IN THE TOWN.

POLISH, GERMAN, ADULT, CHILDREN - HOW DOES TORUN ENDURE THE RUINS?

1. ACT - SCENE 1: WHAT CAN'T BE DONE

INSERT:

INSIDE [TAVERN, STOREROOM] LATE AFTERNOON

STAIGER CARRIES BOXES, EDITH JOINS IN.

STAIGER [Alone, moving Crates]: One ration for the city, two rations for "*Hauptmann*" Schlosser. [Moving another Crate] Carrying a tub of water for the town [exhausted, short pause, panting][sets tub down], a carton of wine for "Ważny kapitan " Schlosser. Who would have thought that my tavern would be a campground for these German dogs. "Cry havoc... and let slip the dogs of war" says the poet, a tavern owner is silent and clenches his fist.

EDIT [Comes in through the door, almost falls over a crate]: Ivanko, what kind of a mess is this? Come on, give me the box [takes box, looks inside]. We have wine? Where did you get wine?[Harsh Eye contact] Don't let that fascist Heinrich at the bar see it, he's drunk enough already....

STAIGER [mumbling]: This stupid concentration camp warden. What a brązowy brud.

EDIT [walking with crates]: We should do something about these fascists. Since the german army went through, there are only 2 Nazis left....

STAIGER [drinks alcohol from his flask out of the jacket]: Don't think too loud, the brązowy brud Heinrich maybe can hear you....

EDIT [puts down box, with hands on hips]: Let him, I'll easily flatten this little runt.

STAIGER [puts flask away]: And then what? Then more people will come from the concentration camp to look after him.

EDIT [raises index finger]: And then what? Just do nothing?

Staiger [looking sadly at the bottom]: We have to see how we can really help the people here.

EDIT [shaking his head]: So just do nothing.

STAIGER SLOWLY WALKS TO EDIT AND OFFERS HER THE FLASK. BLACK.

1. ACT - SCENE 2: THE DRINK & THE FORESHADOW

INSERT:

INSIDE [TAVERN, AT THE BAR] LATE AFTERNOON

HEINRICH IS DRINKING ALKOHOL, JAMES JOINS THE ROOM AND READ NOTES IN THE CORNER

HEINRICH [Sees James, raises his glass]: Ah, the Anglo-Saxons are joining forces!

JAMES [smiles ashamedly, crosses the room and sits down as far away from Heinrich as possible, saying in very British German]: Guten Tag, Aufseher Heinrich. (Gudan Tog, Auofsayer Heinrick)

[Reads in his newspaper, then says to himself]: Hmpf, the Krauts were pushed back on the western front it seems.

HEINRICH [Holds Beer, sings loudly]:

Wenn vor uns ein feindliches Heer dann erscheint,
Wird Vollgas gegeben Und ran an den Feind!
Was gilt denn unser Leben Für unsres Reiches Heer?
Ja Reiches Heer?
Für Deutschland zu sterben Ist uns höchste Eeeeeeeehr!

HEINRICH Takes a even bigger long sip.

JAMES [clears his throat noticeably and flips through the newspaper, speaking very british english]:

Ah, the Germans have lost ground again, the Russians are getting closer and closer to us.

HEINRICH [Sets down his glass from drinking, sings loudly]:

Und läßt uns im Stich
Einst das treulose Glück,
Und kehren wir nicht mehr
Zur Heimat zurück,
Trifft uns die Todeskugel,
Ruft uns das Schicksal ab,
Ja Schicksal ab,
Dann wird uns der Panzer
Ein ehernes Grab.

JAMES [says to himself, albeit a bit too loudly]: drink the pain away...

HEINRICH [now calm after hearing the last sentence from James with a threatening undertone]: My little Anglo-Saxon, shall I say hello to your wife for you? At the last weighing there were still 38kg left of her.

Don't forget that I am your way of communication to her straight into the concentration camp.

JAMES [now excited]: But I'm paying you in snaps too, just so you can threaten me here!

HEINRICH [even more threatening]: maybe I should tell your "Hauptmann" Schlosser about the Snaps that got "lost" in Staigers Store Room?

JAMES : And don't get any of it anymore? Seems like a deadlock.

HEINRICH [takes glass in hand again]: Seems so.

JAMES : Then i need to go [Stands up and goes]

1. ACT - SCENE 3: HOPE COLAPSING

INSERT:

OUTSIDE [RUINS, AT THE CHOCOLATE SHOP] LATE AFTERNOON

TADZIO WORKS HIS CLEARING SHIFT FOR THE CITY'S RUBBLE, KAZIK LIES ON HIS STOMACH SORTING HIS RATIONS.

KAZIK [plays with a pickle jar]: Roll, roll, roll away! The Germans won't find you there.

Tadzio [enters the stage, stretches]: Well, here we go. [Pushes stones away from the entrance of the shop.

KAZIK [continues speaking to the front, cucumber jar in hand]: When do you think we can open the chocolate shop again?

Tadzio [rubbing his forehead with sweat]: First we have to clear the entrance. More importantly, we have to have supplies, right? What would you do Kazik?

KAZIK [puts down glass, stands up, gesticulating with his hands, full of energy]: we'll set up the shop - you as the new owner instead of just beeing a salesman and me as your salesman!

TADZIO [moves to carry debris again]: And then? Do we sell to Nazis then? As two Poles who probably even think they're Jews. Think Kazik, be smarter then them. What are your goals and what stands in the way?

KAZIK [raises hand and shouts loudly]: Nazis!

TADZIO [looks glum]: Correct. They stand in our way. Them and the fact that we probably won't make it through the winter, except for those cucumbers there in front of you and the chocolate reserves I have in the cellar of the ruin, we won't get anything from the new boss of the town, Hauptmann Schlosser.

KAZIK [shouts loudly again]: Then we'll have to kill all the Nazis or escape with the supplies!

TADZIO [twitches and he reacts very quickly now]: Not so loud! Do you know what they do to insurgents?

KAZIK [shrugging his shoulders] : Well, they hang them. Or they'll go to a concentration camp.

TADZIO [shocked by Kazik's shoulder shrugging and frankness, now panicking]: Who did you talk to about that?

KAZIK [realises he did something wrong, now shy]: Well, only with Kylie. The captain's daughter. We are, after all, the last two children in the village. [Stunned silence, both stare at each other for a moment].

But it was the teacher, Mr. Friedrich, who gave me the idea! He's always talking about rising up against bad people!

TADZIO [frowns]: Hm. Promise me you won't talk about that with anyone else.

Tadzio uncovers a stone, the house collapses on it.

KAZIK : I guess we can forget about the chocolate now.

Black.

1. ACT - SCENE 4: WELFARE OF THE CHILD

INSERT :

INSIDE [CHURCH, FRONT ENTRY, TEMPORARILY SCHOOL ROOMS] LATE AFTERNOON

HENRYK SETS UP A TABLE MADE OF CHURCH PEWS AND THE CROSS OF JESUS. ROBERT ARRANGES SCHOOL UTENSILS ON THE ALTAR.

ROBERT [SPEAKS INTO THE WIDE CHURCH IN A RESOUNDING VOICE]:

"FREEDOM IS ALWAYS THE FREEDOM OF THE DISSENTER."

SO DEAR FELLOW TEACHER, HENRYK, LET'S BUILD A SCHOOL OF FREE THINKING HERE!

HENRYK [WITH AN IRONIC TIRED UNDERTONE]: CAN YOU GO ANY BIGGER? MODERATE YOURSELF!

[HEAVY EXHALATION.]

DO YOU THINK, MR. FRIEDRICH, GOD WILL SCOLD US IF WE BUILD A TABLE FOR THE CHILDREN FROM THE CROSS OF JESUS?

ROBERT [WITH A COCKY TONE]: "GOD WILL FORGIVE ME - THAT'S HIS PROFESSION."

HENRYK [NOW WORKING ON THE CROSS]: FORGIVE ME IF I DON'T HAVE TIME TO INDULGE IN QUOTATIONS WITH HEAVY MEANINGS, WILL YOU GIVE ME THE HAMMER? [EXTENDS HAND TO ROBERT]

ROBERT [SIGHS AND HANDS OVER THE HAMMER]: HERE. YOU ARE RIGHT. BUT NOW WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER.

HENRYK [LOOKS UP, GREATLY ASTONISHED]: WE? WHO IS "WE"?

ROBERT [LECTURING]: ALL THOSE WHO WANT TO HELP MAKE IT BETTER THAN IT IS RIGHT NOW.

THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN HERE SINCE THE WAR AND WHY I'M BUILDING A CLASS IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS CHURCH FOR THESE TWO CHILDREN.

HENRYK [NOW THINKING]: I BECAME A TEACHER BECAUSE I LIKED THE CHILDREN IN LUBORÍ, MY VILLAGE.

ROBERT [ENNOBLING]: ALSO A NOBLE ASPIRATION. I REMEMBER HOW I COULD TEACH SUSANNE [NOTE, THIS IS HIS DAUGHTER IN GERMANY] TO READ IN DÜSSELDORF.

HENRYK [CURIOUS, RAISING EYEBROWS]: SUSANNE? WHO IS THAT?

ROBERT [CURTLY]: I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.

HENRYK [INSISTENT]: SURELY NOT? IN THESE TIMES WE TALK TOO RARELY ABOUT THE DEAD OF WAR.

ROBERT [BURSTING OUT OF NOWHERE]: SHE'S NOT DEAD!

HENRYK [WALKING TOWARDS HIM, SPEAKING WARMLY]: BUT?

ROBERT [NOW BITTER]: MY DAUGHTER. I'M GOING TO TAKE A BREAK NOW. [WALKS TO A CORNER]

HENRYK [SPEAKING TO HIMSELF]: THOSE GERMANS. WANT TO HELP THE "POOR POLISH" BUT DON'T EVEN LOOK AFTER THEIR OWN. [DEEP SIGH AND SHRUG OF SHOULDERS]

1. ACT - SCENE 5: LOCKING UP SCHLOSSER

INSERT:

**INSIDE [CHURCH, BACK ENTRY, TEMPORARILY HAUPTMANN`S QUARTER,
SCHLOSSERS LIVE HERE] LATE AFTERNOON**

UWE READS REPORTS AT A TABLE, KYLIE MAKES COFFEE FOR HIM WITH
A COFFEE MILL.

UWE [smoking, engrossed in his reports]: is the coffee ready?

KYLIE [walking across the room with the grinder in her hand]: In a moment Mr. Father.

UWE [with cigar in mouth]: Could be one of the few pleasures we have left, the way the war
is going.

KYLIE [delighted to add to the conversation]: Yes, I heard that too, when the Russian is here,
Heinrich said.

UWE [serious look over the reports to her]: Stay away from Heinrich, he's not a good person.

KYLIE [looks down]: because he is a convinced National Socialist?

UWE [determining]: Because he's not a good person. [Sets the reports aside].

Kylie, my daughter, just because someone is a Nazi doesn't make him bad.

What I'm about to say remains as much between us as the subject of your mother.
Pinkypromise.

Whoever believes in what the Heeresleitung preaches, like Heinrich, is bad.

Think of your mother. She was the best person I knew, yet a "Untermensch".

KYLIE: Edith says all soldiers are evil because only our deeds count. And the leadership will switch in Torun would change soon.

UWE [dismayed]: Is that what she said?

KYLIE: Yes.

UWE [uneasy, stands up]: That sounds like revolt.

KYLIE: Revolt? Some people in Torun brought that up.

UWE: Tell me who talked about a Revolt!

KYLIE: Our Teacher Mr. Friedrich did...

UWE: I'll ned to go now, sweetie! [Stands up, stressed and walks away]

Black.

2. ACT - SCENE 1: DO WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER?

INSERT:

INSIDE [TAVERN, STORAGE AND AT THE BAR] LATE AFTERNOON

STAIGER AND EDIT ARE SORTING CRATES IN THE STORAGE, HEINRICH IS DRINKING ALCOHOL IN THE BACK CORNER ON THE OTHER IS JAMES READING AND SITTING.

Edit [see's a empty box and looks confused to Staiger]: Hey, look there is supply missing!

Staiger [Looks unbelieving to Edit]: No that's not posible.

Edit: But look!

Staiger: Shit! When that maniac there[points towards the bar] finds out where get killed.

Edit: Yes i know, but what should we do to prevent that?

Staiger: At first stay calm and pretend everything is normal. We have like what?... two days until the next ration count? Until than we have to fix things.

Edit: No, it takes too long, they could come and count at any moment. I'll sort it out now [takes bottle and wants to leave].

Staiger [holds her tightly]: You can't do that now, can you?

Edit: Why, what could happen? Should...

Staiger: [interrupts Edit] **They will kill us.** That's what will happen

Edit: Yeah, and if it's you and me, we're old farts, we're going to die in this shit anyway.

Staiger: A But what about the city. They will terrorise everyone here. The kids and Kazik! What about Kazik then?!

Edit: They won't kill Kajik [breaks away and goes over] Like this! [slams the gun down on the table] You didn't see anything.

Do we understand each other?

Heinrich: Aye aye, sir!

2. ACT - SCENE 2: NOT ENOUGH TO LIVE

INSERT:

OUTSIDE [RUINS OF THE CHOCOLATE SHOP] EARLY EVENING

KAZIK AND TADZIO ARE SEARCHING IN THE RUINS FOR FOOD.

Tadzio: All what was left is now lost.

Tadzio: We still have us.

Tadzio: How does that save us from being dead in a few days? Be realistic!

Kazik: ..we can find a way.

Tadzio: What kind of way would that be? First these Nazis come here and destroy half of the town and now the Shop is gone. [Says to himself] And we have too less Supplies for two...

Kazik?

Kazik: Yes Tadzio?

Tadzio: You need to go. Here take this [Hands him a bag with their complete supplies].

Kazik: But then you wont have anything at all.

Tadzio: Im good. In these ruins are enough things left and besides Edit wanted to spend some supplies I will see after her later.

Do you know Bydgoszcz ? Go there, just straight up the river Wisła, people will help you there.

Kazik: But I don't want to go!

Tadzio: But WE cant survive together here! Leave!

Kazik: But Tadzio...please.

Tadzio: LEAVE!

Kazik hugs Tadzio, goes slowly away, looking after Tadzio.

3. ACT - SCENE 1: WHO IS THE TRAITOR?

INSERT:

CHURCH, [FRONT ENTRY, TEMPORARILY SCHOOL ROOMS] EARLY EVENING

HENRYK WORKS AT THE TABLE MADE OF CHURCH PEWS AND THE CROSS OF JESUS. ROBERT AGAIN ARRANGES SCHOOL UTENSILS ON THE ALTAR. UWE JOINS THE ROOM FROM BEHIND.

[walks quickly towards him to the front, Henryk stands in the background]

Mr. Friedrich we have to talk!

Robert: Ah Mr. Schlosser, to what do I owe the honour?

Uwe: Don't beat around the bush, you're inciting a revolt here!

Robert: Revolt? I may be am a critic of the nazis but I would never openly lead people to their own death.

Uwe: That's what everyone would say in this situation! I don't see how you could exonerate this accusation, "freundchen".

[Henryk comes forward from behind and clears his throat.]

Henryk: He would never actually do anything, he just likes to talk openly about other people's dreams.

Uwe: Others, Henryk? Do you realise how serious the situation is here? [Uwe is panicking now] I'm holding this place together by myself. If the army comes back and there's no order here, I'll be hanging right next to you! Who's going to take care of the children then, of my Kylie?

Henryk.

If you don't give me a name right now...

Henryk: But I don't know anything!

Uwe [Takes pistol from holster]: I don't have it just for decoration.

Henryk: Calm down uwe, I don't know anything.

Robert: I'm sure he knows more than he's telling, Uwe. [Looking from Henryk to Robert]

Uwe [Holds pistol under Henryk's head]: I have nothing against you, but you force me to act, I can't tolerate too much attention from the army.

Henryk [now in panic]: Staiger! The supplies look very incomplete, perhaps he is secretly diverting some for secret plans?

Uwe: Staiger, eh? [Packs away pistol, adjusts Henryk's shirt and lets him go]. I have to go, thank you Henryk. Robert. [Nodding].

Uwe leaves, Henryk looks devastatingly at Robert and he looks down.

3. ACT - SCENE 2: "CRY HAVOC... WAR."

INSERT:

INSIDE [TAVERN, AT THE BAR] EARLY EVENING

HEINRICH IS DRINKING ALCOHOL, JAMES READS NOTES IN THE CORNER

Tadzio enters the tavern, sees Heinrich and speaks to him.

Tadzio: Hey, where is Edit?

Heinrich: Haven't seen anything, haven't seen anything. [Waves off.]

Tadzio [Turns around searchingly sees James]: Have you seen Edit?

James: In the back, but don't disturb her.

Tadzio: I have to, the hunger... Tadzio: Thank you. [Goes to the back]

Uwe enters the room [frantically].

Uwe: Where is staiger? [Speaking to Heinrich and walking to him]

Heinrich: Haven't seen anything, haven't heard anything about missing rations.

Uwe: Missing rations?

Heinrich: I'm not allowed to say anything about that, Edit said. [smiles wickedly]

Uwe: Edit? [now calling for her] EDIT! EDIT!!!

Edit [comes forward]: Oh Herr Schlosser, what can I offer?

Uwe: The truth.

Edit: Well, you know I like to talk openly and freely, Herr Hauptmann.

[Staiger slowly joins in].

Uwe: I hear about revolts and missing rations. May I go to the back and check on our supplies?
[Now bossy and dominant] Warden Heinrich Stüssler, get up! Give me a hand here for a moment.

Heinrich: Yes, my captain!

Uwe: Go outside and guard the entrance, don't let anyone in unless you get information about our supplies.

Heinrich: Yes, my leader!

Heinrich staggers outside.

Uwe: Supplies. Supplies, Staiger!

Staiger: I have the list here with me.

Uwe: I don't want a list, I want to go to the back and look!

Staiger: Now that we're sorting, why don't you let me tidy up first?

Uwe: Clean up? You mean hide your secret plans? I can see you're lying! [Draws his gun again]

Staiger: Calm down, my captain.

Tadzio looks out from the background and carefully walks onto the stage.

Uwe: You can have peace, if that's what you want I'll give you eternal calmness. [Raises his gun].

Now get out of the way! [Edit and Staiger retreat to the rear].

Heinrich comes back in, dragging Kazik behind him with a backpack full of supplies.

Heinrich: A success my general! I have the culprit!

Uwe [turns around in surprise and catches sight of Kazik, Tazio recognises Kazik as well]: Who do we have here? [Uwe raises the pistol and points it at Kazik, Tazio runs to stop him Edit is held by Staiger so that he doesn't run off too].

A shot is fired.

Black.

War always equals destruction.

Destruction of civilisation.

Civilisation is the human thing between us that there is to preserve.

Every war is one too many.