

Easy Reader  
John Boynes:  
The Boy In The  
Striped Pyjamas  
Level B1  
By Sabine A. Ihde



Source: <http://www.theroyalforums.com/forums/f277/70th-anniversary-of-the-liberation-of-auschwitz-january-27-2015-a-37966.html>

## About The Author and About The Book

### About The Author

John Boyne is an Irish Novelist. He writes novels for both adult and young audience and is famous for writing the book: *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2006).

He was born on 30 April 1971 in Dublin, Ireland. At the age of twelve he developed an interest in writing. Therefore, he set out to **major** in English Literature from the Trinity College, Dublin. Then he studied creative writing. Boyne made his writing debut with the story, titled "Entertainments Jar". In the early years he mostly wrote short stories and published around 70 of them.

His first novel was published in the year 2000 by the title *The Thief of Time*. Boyne was highly **commended** on his literary debut.

John Boyne continued to write novels for his adult audience. However, in 2006 he shifted his interest to children's book as he published his masterpiece, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. Since *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* established Boyne's position as a major children's writer, he produced three more successful children's books. The titles include *Noah Barleywater Runs Away*, *The Stay Where You Are And Then Leave* and *Terrible Thing That Happened To Barnaby Brocket*. John Boyne has earned Irish Book Awards, Hennessy Literary Award and The Qué Leer Award. His books have been translated into 46 languages

### About The Book

It is not a conventional book for young readers with a lighthearted tone and a happy ending. The story is set in Germany and centers on a nine-year-old boy Bruno, who is **unaware** of the horrors of the ongoing World War II. As his family moves to Auschwitz, he makes a Jewish friend named Shmuel, who lives there in the camp. Although it is deemed children's classic, the storyline and the insight into World War II makes it an adult read. While the book received great reviews, it also garnered harsh criticism from some of the critics. These critics are of the view that Boyne tried to **trivialize** the horrors of war camps based in Germany. Holocaust is one of the darkest chapters in the history of the world and fictionalizing the facts to suit a children's story not only **undermines** the history but also **misleads** children into taking these serious **issues** lightly.

### Note:

Whenever Bruno refers to the Fury, the person he really means is The Führer, Adolf Hitler.

Whenever he refers to Out-With he talks about the Polish village Auschwitz.

This is a brief summary of the text on John Boyne by: <http://www.famousauthors.org/john-boyne>

## Chapter One

### **Bruno Makes a Discovery**

One afternoon, when Bruno came home from school, he finds Maria, the family's maid who never looked up from the carpet, standing in his bedroom packing up all of his belongings. „What are you doing?“ he asked „you take your hands of my things.“ Maria shook her head and pointed towards his mother. She was a tall woman with long red hair and she seemed as if there was something she didn't want to say or something she didn't want to believe. „Mother, what's going on? Why is Maria going through my things?

„She's packing them,“ explained Mother.

„Packing them? Why, what have I done?“ he asks, while trying to think of something **naughty** he had done the previous days. But he couldn't think of anything, in fact he had behaved in a perfectly decent manner towards everyone.

„Come downstairs with me, we'll talk down there.“ said mother, walking towards the dining room where the Fury hat been to dinner the week before.

Downstairs he looked at her without saying anything for a moment, his mother looked as if she had been crying.

„Now you don't have to worry, Bruno,“ said Mother „in fact it's going to be a great adventure.“

„What is? Am I being sent away?“

„No, not just you, we all are. Your father and I, Gretel and you. The four of us are leaving.“ she replied.

Bruno thought about this and **frowned**. He wasn't particularly bothered if Gretel was being sent away because she was a **hopeless case** and only caused trouble. But it seemed unfair that they all had to go with her.

„But where are we going exactly and why can't we stay here?“ he asks.

„Your father's job“ explained Mother. „You know how important it is, don't you? Sometimes when someone is very important he is asked to go somewhere else to do a special job. A special job that needs a very special man to do it. And you wouldn't want Father to go to this new job on his own and miss us terribly there, would you?“

„Who would he miss the most?“ asked Bruno. „Me or Gretel“

„He would miss you both equally“ his mother replied.

Bruno respected this answer, especially since he knew he was their favourite.

„But what about the house? Who's going to take care of it while we're gone?“

Mother **sighed** and looked around the room as if she might never see it again.

„We have to close up the house for now, but we'll come back to it someday. The cook, Lars and Maria will come to live with us in our new house. But that's enough questions for now. You should go upstairs and help Maria with your packing.“

But Bruno had more questions to ask before he could **allow the matter to be settled**.

„How far is it? The new job I mean. Is it further than a mile away? Are we leaving Berlin?“ he asked.

„Oh my, I'm afraid so. You will have to say goodbye to your friends for the time being. I'm sure you'll see them again“ said Mother with a laugh. It was a strange kind of laugh because she didn't look happy.

„Say goodbye to them? Say goodbye to Karl and Daniel and Martin? But they are my three best friends for life!“ his voice

came dangerously close to shouting, which was not allowed indoors.

„You will make other friends“ said Mother as if making three best friends for life was an easy thing. „We just don’t have a choice. **Honestly**, only last week you were complaining about how much things have changed here recently,“ she added, snapping at him now and standing up to show that she was **serious**.

„Well, I don’t like the way we have to turn all the lights off at night now,“ he **admitted**.

„Everyone has to do that. It keeps us safe. And who knows, maybe we will be in less danger if we move away. Now, I need to go upstairs and help Maria. We don’t have as much time to prepare as I would have liked, thanks to some people.“

Bruno nodded and walked away sadly. He knew that "some people" was a grown-up’s word for "Father" and one he wasn’t supposed to use himself.

He went up the stairs slowly towards his room, but before going inside he looked back down and saw Mother walking into Father’s office – which was Out Of Bounds At All Times And No Exceptions- and heard her speaking loudly to him until Father spoke louder than Mother. Then the office door was shut and Bruno couldn’t hear his parents anymore, so he thought it would be a good idea to help Maria so that she wouldn’t go find things she was not supposed to.

## Chapter Two

### The New House

When he first saw his new house Bruno's eyes and mouth opened wide. Nothing compared to the old house. This new house was much smaller and Bruno could not see any boys that he could play with. There were no other streets around the new house. He felt as if he was in the loneliest place in the world. And something about the new house made Bruno think that no one ever laughed here; that there was nothing to be happy about.

„I think this was a bad idea“ said Bruno a few hours later to Maria. Maria wasn't the only maid at the new house. There were three others who were skinny and only talked in whispering words. The man who prepared the vegetables every day looked not only unhappy but also a little angry.

„We don't have the luxury of thinking. Some people make all the decisions for us. This is our new home and we just have to make the best of things“ said Mother.

Bruno thought that the whole thing was wrong and unfair and a big mistake. One day he was playing with his three best friends for life and now he was **stuck** here in this cold house with three whispering maids and a waiter who looked unhappy and angry at the same time. Bruno walked upstairs to his room and helped Maria unpacking.

„This isn't home and it will never be,“ he muttered, „I'm tired of hearing about father's job. That's all we ever hear about. If Father's job means that we have to move away from Berlin and my three best friends for life, he should think twice about his job.“

Just at that moment there was a creak outside in the hallway and Bruno was scared that it was Father who heard everything that Bruno had just said. A figure appeared, but it wasn't Father. It was a much younger man. He wore the same uniform like his father but without as many decorations on it. He had very bright blond hair. He looked as if he had never seen a child before. He gave Bruno a quick **nod** and then continued on his way. Back in his room Bruno slowly walked towards the small window. He was hoping that from here he might be able to see all the way back to Berlin. He put his face onto the glass window and saw what was out there, and this time when his eyes and mouth opened wide something made him feel very cold and unsafe.

### Chapter Three

#### The Hopeless Case

Bruno was sure that it would have made more sense if they had left Gretel behind in Berlin to look after the house because she was nothing but trouble.

Gretel was three years older than Bruno and she had made it clear that she was in charge. Bruno didn't like to admit that he was a little scared of her. She had some nasty **habits** like all sisters. She spent far too long in the bathroom without caring if Bruno had to use the toilet. She had a large collection of dolls that stared at Bruno when he went into her room. The only good thing was that she didn't seem to like the new house, Out-With, either. In her room they began to talk.

„I miss Karl and Daniel and Martin,” said Bruno.

„And I miss Hilda and Isobel and Louise,” said Gretel.

„I don't think the other children look friendly at all,” said Bruno and Gretel immediately stopped putting one of her **terrifying** dolls onto a shelf and turned around to stare at him.

„The other children? What other Children? I haven't seen any other children,” said Gretel, sounding confused.

Bruno looked around the room. There was a window here but Gretel's room was on the **opposite** side of the hall, facing his, and as a result faced the opposite direction. Bruno walked towards the door, **indicating** that Gretel should follow him.

„They're out there,” said Bruno, who walked over to his own window. He didn't turn back to check that Gretel was in the room; he was too busy watching the children.

„Well?” he said, turning around and seeing his sister standing in the doorway. „Don't you want to see them?”

„Of course I do,” she replied and walked towards him and the window.

It was a bright, sunny day that first afternoon at Out-With and the sun reappeared from behind the clouds just as Gretel looked through the window, but after a moment her eyes could see exactly what Bruno had been talking about.

## Chapter Four

### What They saw Through the Window

First of all, they weren't children at all. Not all of them. There were small and big boys, fathers and grandfathers. Perhaps a **few** uncles too.

„Who are they?“ asked Gretel „and what sort of place is this?“

„I'm not sure. But it's not as nice as home, I do know that much,“ said Bruno, sticking as close to the truth as possible.

„And where are all the girls? And the mothers and grandmothers?“ she asked.

„Perhaps they live in a different part,“ **suggested** Bruno.

It started off nicely enough. There was a garden directly beneath Bruno's window. About twenty feet (~6 meters) further along from the garden everything changed. There was a huge **wire fence** that ran along the length of the house, going further along in either direction, further than they could possibly see. The fence was very high, higher than the house. There were huge wooden posts like **telegraph poles**, holding the fence up. The top of the fence was spiralled and they could feel an **unexpected** pain when looking at the sharp **spikes** sticking out of it. There wasn't any grass after the fence. The ground was made out of something like sand.

„You see?“ said Bruno, feeling quietly **pleased** with himself because whatever was out there, he had seen it first and he could see it whenever he wanted because it was in front of his window.

„I don't understand. Who would build such a nasty-looking place? This must be the countryside it's the only explanation. When we're in Berlin we're in the city. That's why there are so

many people and so many houses. In geography class we learned that in the countryside there are huge areas like this one where farmers live and work along cows and sheep, and they send all the food to feed us“ said Gretel.

Bruno thought about it and shook his head. „I don't think so.“

„You're nine. How would you know? When you get to my age you'll understand these things a lot better.“

„That might be so,“ said Bruno, „but if this is the countryside, where are all the animals you're talking about? And if they grew food here, then I think the ground would have to look a lot better than that.“

„So this isn't a farm and this isn't the countryside,“ said Gretel.

„I don't think so,“ he replied.

„Who are all those people? And what are they all doing there?“ she asked in a quiet voice.

Then they looked out the window. Everywhere they looked they could see people, tall and short, old and young. Some stood still in in groups, trying to keep their heads up, as a shouting soldier marched in front of them. Some were formed into a chain and pushed **wheelbarrows**. A few stood near the huts in quiet groups, staring at the ground. Others were on **crutches** and many had bandages around their heads. Some were being led by groups of soldiers to a place where they could no longer be seen. Bruno and Gretel could just see hundreds of people, but the camp spread out so much that there must have been thousands out there. A group of children was being shouted at by a group of soldiers. The more they were shouted at, the closer they huddled together, but then one of the soldiers **lunged** towards them and they separated and seemed to do what he had wanted them to do, which was stand in a single line. When they did, the soldiers all started to

laugh and applaud them. It looked like some sort of **rehearsal** but the children were crying and they were very dirty. The last thought he had about this place, was that they all wore the same clothes: a pair of grey striped pyjamas with a grey striped cap on their heads.



# World War II, The Holocaust and Concentration Camps explained

## World War II

World War II, also known as the Second World War, was a conflict that took place between 1939 and 1945 that involved all the world's major countries. It was the most **destructive** war in history and millions of people were killed. It was fought between the Axis (Germany, Japan, and Italy) and the Allies (Britain, the US, and the Soviet Union among others). It began because the leader of Germany, Adolf Hitler, wanted to expand German territory. His Nazi party wanted to create a state with only certain kinds of people in it. This led to the Holocaust. The Axis was eventually defeated by the Allies.

## The Holocaust

The Holocaust was a huge campaign of **discrimination** and murder carried out by the Nazis during World War II. The Nazis were anti-Semitic (hated Jewish people) and decided to kill all the Jews in the areas of Europe they occupied. They called this the Final Solution. Jews were forced to live in ghettos, which were parts of towns that were sealed off without enough food and medical help. Millions of people, including Jews, Roma (travellers), gay people, and political prisoners were also taken to concentration camps. These were work camps where healthy adults were made to work extremely hard, although this only saved their lives **temporarily**. Many workers died of starvation and illness, or were sent to the gas chambers to be killed. Those who could not work were killed immediately by being shot or gassed. Around 6 million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust."

## Concentration Camps

Concentration camps were prisons where people, especially Jews, were made to work by the Nazis. In 1942, eight of the Nazi camps were equipped with gas chambers. These were used to murder large numbers of people by **suffocation**. The Nazis called this "The Final Solution". Conditions in the camps were terrible. There was not enough food and guards committed **acts of violence** against the prisoners. The work performed by the prisoners was extremely important for the war effort and included building weapons. But this did not mean that they were treated any better. Working too hard on too little food and rest was responsible for many deaths. Only once allied soldiers liberated (freed) the camps did the extent of the horror become clear to the world.

This is a brief collection of the dk findout Webseries  
<http://www.dkfindout.com/uk/history/world-war-ii/>

## Chapter Five

### **Out of Bounds at all Times and no Exceptions**

There was only one way to find out what the place was and that was to speak to Father. But since arriving at Out-With Bruno hadn't seen his father. When he walked to Father's office he could see a group of five men outside it and so he watched from a distance. They certainly weren't as **handsome** as Father. Nor were their uniforms as freshly pressed. Nor were their voices so booming or their boots so polished. They all tried to get Father's **attention**. Bruno could only understand a few of their phrases.

-...made mistakes from the moment he got here. It got to the point where the Fury had no choice but to ...

-...discipline and **efficiency**. We have lacked that since the start of 42 and without that...

-it's clear what the numbers say. It's clear, Commandant...

-... and if we build another imagine what we could do then...

Father held a hand in the air and the other men fell silent.

„Your suggestions are very **appreciated**. Here we have a fresh beginning, but let that beginning start tomorrow. For now, I'd better help my family settle in or there will be as much trouble from in here as there is for them out there, you understand?“ said Father with his loud and clear voice.

The men started to laugh and shook Father's hand. As they left they stood in a row together like toy soldiers and their arms shot out in the same way that Father had taught Bruno to salute, the palm stretched flat, moving from their chests up into the air in front of them in a fast motion as they cried out the two words that Bruno had been taught to say whenever anyone

said it to him. Then Father returned to his office, which was Out of Bounds At All Times And No Exceptions.

Bruno tapped carefully on the door and as he did-so, he heard the booming voice from inside call out, „Enter!“

The rest of the house might have been a little dark but this room was something else. It had a very high **ceiling** and a carpet that Bruno thought he might sink into. The walls were covered with dark mahogany shelves lined with books. In the centre of all this, seated behind a massive desk was Father who looked up from his papers and smiled as Bruno entered.

„Hello, Father.“

„Hello Bruno. I'm sorry I couldn't make it to your room yet. I was very busy.“

„I don't like it here. My three best friends for life aren't here and there are no other houses around us. I want to go home“ said Bruno quietly.

„Bruno you are home. Sometimes there are things we need to do in life that we don't have a choice in. This is one of them. This is my work, important work. Important to our country. Important to the Fury. You'll understand that someday, I remember when I was a child there were things I didn't want to do, but when my father told me that they were important and so I just did them,“ said Father, sounding tired of the conversation.

„So you know how I feel,“ said Bruno hopefully.

„Yes, but I learned that it makes me the happiest when I accept my Father's decisions because he knew what was best for me. Do you think that I would be so successful if I hadn't learned when to argue and when to keep my mouth shut and follow **orders**?“

„Did you do something bad in work? I know that everyone says you're important and that the Fury has big things in mind for you. But if he sends you to a place that is horrible as this one is, it must be a **punishment**. You should go and apologize to the Fury and maybe that will be an end to it," Bruno said, faster than he could really think about whether or not it was right thing to say to his father.

„I don't think you are being very **brave**. What you are is being disrespectful. But you will be quiet now," said Father **raising his voice** because none of the rules at home ever applied to him. „I tried to **be considerate** of your feelings, because I know that this is difficult for you. But the moment has come when you will simply have to accept it the way it is. And now you will go back to your room."

„But I have one more question and it's not about that. Who are all those people in the distance in the huts. They're all dressed the same," Bruno asked, trying not to be rude.

„Those people... well they are not people at all, Bruno. You have nothing to do with them so go and **settle** into your new home and be good," said Father nodding his head and smiling slightly.

Before Bruno was out the door Father called him back for a moment and gave him a signal to **imitate** him. So Bruno pushed his feet together and shot his right arm into the air before clicking his **heels** together while speaking as clearly as he could „Heil Hitler!"

## Chapter Six

**How Mother Took Credit for Something That She Hadn't Done Several** weeks after Bruno arrived at Out-With with his family and without a visit of his three best friends for life, he **decided** that he'd have to find something to do or he would slowly go **mad**. To keep himself entertained Bruno spent a long Saturday morning and afternoon creating a new **diversion** for himself. At some **distance** from the house, where Gretel couldn't see him, there was a large tree with thick **branches** that were strong enough to support a boy like him. He only needed two things to create his new entertainment: a long piece of **rope** and a **tyre**. But a tyre was difficult to find. Today Mother and Father weren't at home. Mother had gone to the city and Father was last seen **heading** in the direction of the huts. But as usual there were many soldiers in and around the house. As he walked outside he saw Gretel speaking to Lieutenant Kotler, that he had seen in the hallway on his first day at Out-With, and Bruno decided that he would be the person to ask **although** he didn't like Lieutenant Kotler. He couldn't hear what him and Gretel were talking about, but it must be very funny because Gretel was laughing loudly whilst playing with her hair.

„Hello,“ said Bruno.

„What do *you* want?“ asked Gretel looking very **unpleased** as she added „ You'll have to forgive my younger brother Kurt, he's only nine, you know.“

„Good morning little man. What has you up so early on a Saturday morning?“ asked Kotler, while ruffling through Bruno's hair.

„It's not early. It's almost ten o'clock. I wonder whether there are any spare tyres around?“ asked Bruno.

„Well what do you want it for anyway?“

„I thought I'd make a **swing**. With a tyre and some rope on a branch of a tree“ said Bruno.

Lieutenant Kotler stared at him and looked as if he was thinking about either giving him a straight answer or try to **irritate** him as he usually did. Then he caught sight of Pavel, the old man who came every afternoon to help **peel** the vegetables and to serve meal.

„Hey you! Come over here you!“ shouted Kotler in a **harsh** way that made Bruno feel ashamed to be a part of this at all. When Pavel came over he said to him „Take this little man to the **storage**. In there you will find many tyres. The boy will select one and you will carry it wherever he asks you to. And afterwards you will wash your hands before touching any of the food, you filth! Is that understood?“ Pavel nodded, which made his head **bow** even lower than it already was. Bruno didn't like how Kotler talked to Pavel and even Gretel looked a little uncomfortable.

The accident took place a couple hours after Bruno had built the swing. He lay flat out across the centre of the tyre and used his feet to give himself a good push. This worked very well until his grip on the tyre slipped and he fell face down onto the ground. When he stood up he could feel that both his arm and leg were very **sore**. His hand was scratched and on his elbow he could see a nasty cut. His leg felt **worse**, there was a wide gash, right where his shorts ended, that started to bleed rather badly. When Bruno looked up he saw Pavel coming quickly towards him.

„You were going too high,“ said Pavel in a quiet voice that made Bruno feel safe. Pavel carried him towards the house. Taking him into the kitchen and settling him on one of the chairs.

„Where’s Mother? What’s going to happen am I going to bleed to death?“

Pavel gave a gentle laugh and shook his head.

„I’m the only one here, your mother is still in the city. You’re not going to bleed to death,‘ he said. ‘Don’t move for a moment.’

Bruno watched as he moved around the kitchen, pulling the green **first-aid** box from a cupboard and filling a small bowl with water. He returned to his kneeling position, dipping a dry cloth into the bowl whilst touching Bruno’s knee gently.

‘It’s only a small cut. It won’t even need stitches.’

Bruno frowned and hit his lip nervously as Pavel cleaned the wound of blood and then held another cloth to it quite tightly for a few minutes. When he pulled it away again, gently, the bleeding had stopped.

‘It’s not that bad,‘ said Pavel, but in a gentle and kindly voice. ‘Don’t make it worse by thinking it’s more painful than it actually is.’

Somehow this made sense to Bruno.

Pavel took a bandage from the first-aid box and taped it to the cut.

‘There,‘ he said. ‘All better, eh?’

Bruno nodded. ‘Thank you,‘ he said.

‘You’re welcome,‘ said Pavel. ‘Now you need to stay sitting there for a few minutes before you walk around on it again, all right? Let the wound relax.

And don’t go near that swing again today.’

Bruno nodded. Pavel went over to the sink and washed his hands carefully before returning to the potatoes.

‘Will you tell Mother what happened?’ asked Bruno.

‘I think she’ll see for herself,‘ said Pavel.

‘Yes, I suppose so,‘ said Bruno. ‘Perhaps she’ll want to take me to a doctor. It could be worse than it seems.’

‘It’s not,‘ said Pavel, who barely seemed to be listening to what Bruno was saying.

‘Well, how do you know?’ asked Bruno quickly, ‘You’re not a doctor.’

Pavel stopped peeling the carrots for a moment and looked at Bruno. He sighed and seemed to consider it for quite a long time before saying, ‘Yes I am.’

Bruno stared at him in surprise. This didn’t make any sense to him. ‘But you’re a waiter,‘ he said slowly. ‘How can you be a doctor too?’

‘Young man,‘ said Pavel, ‘I certainly am a doctor. Just because a man **glances** up at the sky at night does not make him an astronomer, you know.’

Bruno had no idea what Pavel meant but something about what he had said made him look at him closely for the first time. He was quite a small man, and very skinny too. He was older than Father but younger than Grandfather, which still meant he was quite old.

‘But I don’t understand,‘ said Bruno, wanting **to get to the bottom** of this. ‘If you’re a doctor, then why are you waiting on tables? Why aren’t you working at a hospital somewhere?’

Pavel hesitated for a long time before answering, ‘Before I came here, I **practised as** a doctor,‘ he said finally.

‘Weren’t you any good then?’

Pavel smiled. 'I was very good,' he said. 'I always wanted to be a doctor, you see. From the time I was a small boy. From the time I was your age.'

'I want to be an explorer,' said Bruno quickly.

'I wish you luck,' said Pavel.

'Thank you.'

'When did you arrive at Out-With?' asked Bruno.

Pavel put the carrot and the peeler down for a few moments and thought about it. 'I think I've always been here,' he said finally in a quiet voice.

'You grew up here?'

'No,' said Pavel, shaking his head. 'No, I didn't.'

'But you just said-'

Before he could go on, Mother's voice could be heard outside. As soon as he heard her, Pavel jumped up quickly from his seat and returned to the sink with the carrots and the peeler hanging his head low and not speaking again.

'What on earth happened to you?' asked Mother when she appeared in the kitchen, leaning down to **examine** the plaster, which covered Bruno's cut.

'I made a swing and then I felt off it,' explained Bruno. 'And then the swing hit me on the head and I nearly fainted, but Pavel came out and brought me in and cleaned it all up and put a bandage on me.'

Pavel turned his body slightly in their direction but didn't lift his head. 'The wound has been cleaned,' he said quietly.

'Go to your room, Bruno,' said Mother, who looked very uncomfortable now.

Bruno stepped off the chair, turned and left the room but was still able to hear Mother saying thank you to Pavel.

He heard one last thing before going upstairs and that was Mother's last line to the waiter who claimed to be a doctor. 'If the Commandant asks, we'll say that I cleaned Bruno up.' Which seemed terribly selfish to Bruno and a way for Mother to take credit for something that she hadn't done.

## Chapter Seven

### Why Grandmother Stormed Out

The two people Bruno missed most of all from home were Grandfather and Grandmother.

A week or so before they left Berlin, there had been great **excitement** in the house and it had something to do with the fact that Father was now to be addressed as 'Commandant' by Maria, Cook and Lars the butler, as well as by all the soldiers. There had been nothing but excitement for weeks. First the Fury and the beautiful blonde woman had come to dinner and then it was this new business of calling Father 'Commandant'. Mother had told Bruno to **congratulate** Father and he had done so, although he wasn't entirely sure what he was congratulating him for.

On Christmas Day Father wore his brand-new uniform, the **starched** and pressed one that he wore every day now. The other soldiers seemed to respect him more now that he had it. Bruno had been allowed to wear the cap for a short period, **provided** his hands were clean when he put it on.

Grandfather was very proud of his son when he saw him in his new uniform but Grandmother was the only one who seemed unimpressed. After dinner she sat down in one of the armchairs and looked at Father, shaking her head as if he were a big disappointment to her.

'I wonder - is this where I went wrong with you, Ralf?' she said.

'Now, Mother,' said Father in a tolerant voice.

'You know this isn't the time.'

'Standing there in your uniform,' she continued, 'as if it makes you something special. Not even caring what it means really. What it stands for.'

'This is a party, Mother,' said Father with a sigh.

'And it's Christmas. Let's not **spoil** things.'

'I remember when the Great War began and you told us how you **joined up**,' said

Grandfather proudly, 'And now look at you. It makes me so proud to see you in such a high position. 'Oh, will you listen to yourself!' cried Grandmother. 'Which one of you is the most **foolish**, I wonder?'

'But, Nathalie,' said Mother, 'don't you think Ralf looks very handsome in his new uniform?'

'Handsome, did you say? You foolish girl! Is that really that important? Looking handsome?'

'Children, upstairs,' said Mother quickly. 'Go to your rooms.'

'That's all you soldiers are interested in anyway,' Grandmother said, ignoring the children altogether. 'Looking handsome in your uniforms. Dressing up and doing the terrible, terrible things you do. It makes me **ashamed**.

'Children, upstairs now!' said Mother, and this time they had no choice but to stand up and obey her.

But they only closed the door and sat on the stairs. However, Mother and Father's voices were muffled and hard to understand.

Finally, after a few minutes, the door slammed open and Grandmother took her coat from the rack in the hallway.

'Ashamed!' she called out before she left. 'That a son of mine should be-'

'A **patriot**,' cried Father, who perhaps had never learned the rule about not interrupting your mother.

'A patriot indeed!' she cried out. 'It makes me sick. And to see you in that uniform makes me want to tear my eyes out!' she added before storming out of the house.

Bruno hadn't seen much of Grandmother after that and hadn't even had a chance to say goodbye to her before they moved to Out-With, but he missed her very much and decided to write her a letter.

That day he sat down with a pen and paper and told her how unhappy he was. He told her about the tall fence and the wooden telegraph poles and the huts, but mostly he told her about the people living there and their striped pyjamas, and then he told her how much he missed her.



Chapter Eight  
**Bruno Remembers That He Used to Enjoy  
Exploration**

Nothing changed for quite a while at Out-With.

It had been several weeks since he had even thought about sending another letter to Grandfather or Grandmother.

The soldiers still came and went every day of the week, holding meetings in Father's office. Lieutenant Kotler still stood in the driveway talking to Gretel while she laughed and played with her hair.

But then things changed. Father decided it was time for the children to return to their studies, and both Mother and Father agreed that a tutor should come to the house every day and fill their mornings and afternoons with lessons. A few mornings later a man called Herr Liszt arrived and it was time for school again. Herr Liszt was a **mystery** to Bruno.

Although he was friendly enough most of the time, something in his eyes made Bruno feel there was anger inside him just waiting to get out.

'How much do you know of your history anyway, young man?' asked Herr Liszt.

'Well, I know I was born on the 15. of April 1934' said Bruno.

'Not your history,' interrupted Herr Liszt. 'I mean the history of who you are, where you come from. The Fatherland.'

'Not very much,' he admitted finally, 'although I know quite a bit about the Middle Ages. I like stories about adventures and exploring.'

'Then this is what I am here to change. To get your head out 'of your storybooks and teach you more about where you come from. About the **great wrongs** that have been done to you.'

Bruno nodded and felt quite pleased. He thought that he would learn why he was forced to move to Out-With, the greatest wrong that has been done to him.

There was only one thing that he wanted to do now more than ever and that was exploring. 'When I was a child,' Bruno said to himself later, sitting in his room, 'I used to enjoy exploring. And that was in Berlin. I've never really done any exploring here. Perhaps it's time to start.' And then, before he could change his mind, Bruno jumped off his bed and prepared to leave the house. There was no point doing any exploring inside. After all, this wasn't like the house in Berlin, which he could just about remember had hundreds of **nooks and crannies**, and strange little rooms. No, this was a terrible house for exploration. If there was any to be done it would have to be done outside.

Before heading off in the direction of the small huts, he wanted to investigate the bench. Looking left and right to make sure that no one was coming, he ran over to it and read the words on the plaque to himself. 'Presented on the occasion of the opening of the Out-With Camp June 1940.'

Then he took a deep breath and began his journey. The one thing Bruno tried not to think about was that he had been told many times by both Mother and Father, that he was not allowed anywhere near the fence or the camp, and that exploration was not allowed at Out-With.

## Chapter Nine

### What Bruno Finds While Exploring

He walked and walked, and when he looked back the house that he was living in became smaller and smaller. He never saw anyone close to the fence and couldn't find any doors to let him through.

After walking for an hour and he almost wanted to go back he saw a person far away. In fact it was a boy. He was just sitting there, minding his own business. Although there was a fence separating them, he knew that you could never be too careful with strangers. He continued to walk, and before long they were facing each other.

'Hello,' said Bruno.

'Hello,' said the boy.

The boy was smaller than Bruno. He wore the same striped pyjamas that all the other people on that side of the fence wore. He wasn't wearing any shoes or socks and his feet were dirty. On his arm he wore a band with a star on it. His skin was almost the colour of grey. When the boy looked at him all Bruno could see was a big pair of sad brown eyes staring back. Bruno was sure that he had never seen a skinnier or sadder boy in his life.

'I've been exploring,' he said.

'Have you?' said the little boy.

'Yes. For almost two hours now,' Bruno said, **exaggerating** a little bit.

'Have you found anything?' asked the boy.

'Very little.'

'Nothing at all?'

'Well, I found you,' said Bruno after a moment.

Bruno sat down on the ground on his side of the fence and crossed his legs like the little boy and wished that he had brought some chocolate with him or perhaps a pastry that they could share.

'I live in the house on this side of the fence. My room is on the first floor. I can see right over the fence from there. I'm Bruno, by the way,' said Bruno.

'I'm Shmuel,' said the little boy.

'I've never heard of your name,' said Bruno.

'Shmuel.' He thought about it. 'Shmuel,' he repeated.

'I like the way it sounds when I say it. Shmuel. It sounds like the wind blowing.'

'Bruno,' said Shmuel, nodding his head happily, 'yes; I think I like your name too. It sounds like someone who's rubbing their arms to keep warm.'

'I've never met anyone called Shmuel before,' said Bruno.

'There are **dozens** of Shmuels on this side of the fence,' said the little boy. 'Hundreds probably. I wish I had a name all of my own.'

'I've never met anyone called Bruno,' said Bruno, 'other than me, of course. I think I might be the only one.'

'Then you're lucky,' said Shmuel.

'How old are you?' he asked.

'I'm nine,' he said. 'My birthday is April the 15th 1934.'

Bruno stared at him in surprise. 'I don't believe it,' he said.

'Why not?' asked Shmuel.

'No,' said Bruno, shaking his head quickly. 'I don't mean I don't believe you. I mean I'm surprised, that's all. My birthday is on April 15th 1934 too. We were born on the same day. Isn't that strange?'

'Very strange,' said Shmuel. 'Because there may be dozens of Shmuels on this side of the fence but I don't think that I've ever met anyone with the same birthday as me before.'

'We're like twins,' said Bruno.

'A little bit,' agreed Shmuel.

Bruno felt very happy all of a sudden. A picture came into his head of Karl and Daniel and Martin, his three best friends. For life, and he remembered how much fun they used to have together back in Berlin and he realized how lonely he had been at Out-With.

'Do you have many friends?' asked Bruno.

'Oh yes,' said Shmuel. 'Well, sort of.'

Bruno frowned. He had hoped that Shmuel might have said no as it would give them something else **in common**.

'Close friends?' he asked.

'Well, not very close,' said Shmuel. 'But there are a lot of us - boys our age, on this side of the fence. We fight a lot of the time though. That's why I come out here. To be on my own.'

'It's so unfair,' said Bruno. 'I don't see why I have to be stuck over here on this side of the fence where there's no one to talk to and no one to play with. I'll have to speak to Father about it.'

'Where did you come from?' asked Shmuel.

'Berlin.'

'Where's that?'

Bruno opened his mouth to answer but found that he wasn't sure. 'It's in Germany, of course,' he said. 'Don't you come from Germany?'

'No, I'm from Poland,' said Shmuel.

Bruno frowned. 'Then why do you speak: German?' he asked.

'Because you said hello in German. So I answered in German. Can you speak Polish?'

'No,' said Bruno, laughing nervously. 'I don't know anyone who can speak two languages. And especially no one of our age.'

'Mama is a teacher in my school and she taught me German,' explained Shmuel.

'Poland, that's not as good as Germany, is it?'

Shmuel frowned. 'Why isn't it?' he asked.

'Well, because Germany is the greatest of all countries,' Bruno replied.

Bruno felt a strong desire to change the subject because the last thing he wanted was for Shmuel to think that he was being unkind.

'Where is Poland anyway?' he asked after a few silent moments had passed.

'Well, it's in Europe,' said Shmuel.

Bruno tried to remember the countries he had been taught.

'I think Poland is in Denmark,' said Bruno, became more **confused** even though he was trying to sound clever. 'Because that's many miles away,'

'But this is Poland,' Shmuel said finally.

'Is it?' asked Bruno.

'Yes it is. And Denmark is quite far away from both Poland and Germany.'

Bruno frowned. He'd heard of all these places but he always found it hard to get them straight in his head.

'I've never been to Berlin,' said Shmuel.

'And I don't think I'd ever been to Poland before I came here. That is, if this really is Poland.'

'I'm sure it is,' said Shmuel quietly. 'Although it's not a very nice part of it.'

'No.'

'Where I come from is a lot nicer.'

'It's certainly not as nice as Berlin,' said Bruno. 'In Berlin we had a big house with five floors if you counted the basement and the little room at the top with the window. And it was much nicer before things changed.'

'How do you mean?' asked Shmuel.

'Well, it used to be very quiet there,' explained Bruno, who didn't like to talk about how things had changed. 'And I was able to read in bed at night. But now it's quite noisy sometimes, and scary, and we have to turn all the lights off when it starts to get dark.'

'Where I come from is much nicer than Berlin,' said Shmuel.

'Everyone there is very friendly and we have lots of people in our family and the food is a lot better too.'

'Do you like exploring?' asked Bruno after a moment.

'I've never really done any,' admitted Shmuel.

'I'm going to be an explorer when I grow up,' said Bruno, 'Can I ask you something?' he added after a moment.

'Yes,' said Shmuel.

Bruno thought about it. He wanted to phrase the question just right.

'Why are there so many people on that side of the fence?' he asked. 'And what are you all doing there?'

## Chapter Ten

### The Fury

Some months earlier the Fury had visited the family.

An hour before the Fury was due to arrive Gretel and Bruno were brought downstairs, where they received a rare invitation into Father's office.

Everyone was wearing fine clothes and it seemed a little extravagant, especially because Bruno and Gretel weren't even invited to dinner; they had eaten an hour earlier.

'Now, children,' said Father, sitting behind his desk. 'You know that there is a very special evening ahead of us, don't you?'

They nodded.

'And that it is very important for my career that tonight goes well.'

They nodded again.

'Then there are a number of important rules which need to be set down before we begin.' Father was a big believer in rules.

'Number one,' said Father, 'when the Fury arrives you will stand in the hall quietly and prepare to greet him. You do not speak until he speaks to you. Is that understood?'

'Yes, Father,' said Bruno.

'If the Fury ignores you then you do not say anything either, but look directly ahead and show him the respect that such a great leader **deserves**.'

'Of course, Father,' said Gretel in a very clear voice.

'And when Mother and I are at dinner with the Fury, you are both to remain in your rooms very quietly. And not interrupting us. Is that understood? I don't want either of you causing chaos.'

Bruno and Gretel nodded and Father stood up to show that this meeting was at an end.

When the doorbell rang Bruno and Gretel took their places standing side by side by the staircase and Mother waited beside them. Father gave them all a quick glance, looking pleased by what he saw, and then opened the door. Two people stood outside: a rather small man and a taller woman.

Father saluted them and asked them inside, where Maria, her head bowed even lower than usual, took their coats.

The Fury was far shorter than Father and not, Bruno supposed, quite as strong. He had dark hair, which was cut quite short, and a tiny **moustache** – so tiny in fact that Bruno wondered why he bothered with it at all or whether he had simply forgotten a piece when he was **shaving**. The woman standing beside him, however, was quite the most beautiful woman he had ever seen in his life. She had blonde hair and very red lips. 'And these are my children, Fury. Gretel and Bruno,' said Father as Gretel and Bruno stepped forward.

'And which is which?' the Fury said, which made everyone laugh except for Bruno, who thought it was perfectly **obvious** which was which. The Fury stretched out his hand and shook theirs.

'What charming children,' said the beautiful blonde woman. 'And how old are they?'

'I'm twelve but he's only nine,' said Gretel, 'and I can speak French too,' she added.

'Yes, but why would you want to?' asked the Fury, and this time no one laughed.

Then the Fury, who was the rudest guest Bruno had ever **witnessed**, turned round and walked directly into the dining

room and **promptly** sat down at the head of the table - in Father's seat! – without another word.

The Fury and Eva stayed for the best part of two hours and neither Gretel nor Bruno were invited downstairs to say goodbye to them. Bruno watched them leave from his bedroom window and noticed that when they stepped towards their car, which he was impressed to see a **chauffeur**, the Fury did not open the door for his companion but instead climbed in and started reading a newspaper, while she said goodbye once again to Mother and thanked her for the lovely dinner.

What a horrible man, thought Bruno.

## Chapter Eleven

### Shmuel Thinks of an Answer to Bruno's Question

'All I know is this,' began Shmuel. 'Before we came here I lived with my mother and father and my brother Josef in a small flat above the store where Papa makes his watches. I had a beautiful watch that he gave me but I don't have it anymore.'

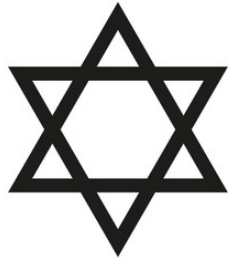
'What happened to it?' asked Bruno.

'They took it from me,' said Shmuel.

'Who?'

'The soldiers, of course,' said Shmuel as if this was the most obvious thing in the world.

'And then one day things started to change,' he continued, 'I came home from school and my mother was making bands for us from a special cloth and drawing a star on each one. Like this.' Using his finger he drew a design in the dusty ground beneath him.



'And every time we left the house, she told us we had to wear one of these armbands.'

'My father wears one too,' said Bruno. 'On his uniform. It's very nice. It's bright red with a black-and-white design on it.'

Using his finger he drew another design in the dusty ground on his side of the fence.



'Yes, but they're different, aren't they?' said Shmuel.

'No one's ever given me an armband,' said Bruno.

'But I never asked to wear one,' said Shmuel.

'All the same,' said Bruno, 'I think I'd quite like one. I don't know which one I'd prefer though, your one or Father's.'

Shmuel shook his head and continued with his story. He didn't often think about these things any more because remembering his old life above the watch shop made him very sad.

'We wore the armbands for a few months,' he said.

'And then things changed again. I came home one day and Mama said we couldn't live in our house any more.'

'That happened to me too!' shouted Bruno, delighted that he wasn't the only boy who'd been forced to move.

'The Fury came for dinner, you see, and the next thing I knew we moved here. And I hate it here,' he added in a loud voice, 'Did he come to your house and do the same thing?'

'No, but when we were told we couldn't live in our house we had to move to a different part of Cracow, where the soldiers built a big wall and my mother and father and my brother and I all had to live in one room.'

'All of you?' asked Bruno. 'In one room?'

'And not just us,' said Shmuel, 'there was another family there and the mother and father were always fighting with each other.'

'You can't have all lived in the one room,' said Bruno, shaking his head. 'That doesn't make any sense.'

'All of us,' said Shmuel, nodding his head. 'Eleven in total.'

Bruno opened his mouth to contradict him again he didn't really believe that eleven people could live in the same room together - but changed his mind.

'We lived there for some more months,' continued Shmuel, 'all of us in that one room. There was one small window in it but I didn't like to look out of it because then I would see the wall and I hated the wall because our real home was on the other side of it. And this part of town was the bad part because it was always noisy and it was impossible to sleep. Then one day the soldiers all came with huge trucks,' continued Shmuel, 'and everyone was told to leave the houses. Lots of people didn't want to and they hid wherever they could find a place but in the end I think they caught everyone. And the trucks took us to a train and the train . . .' He **hesitated** for a moment and bit his lip. Bruno thought he was going to start crying and couldn't understand why.

'The train was horrible,' said Shmuel, 'there were too many of us in the **carriages** for one thing. And there was no air to breathe. And it smelled awful.'

'That's because you all crowded onto one train,' said Bruno, remembering the two trains he had seen at the station when he left Berlin.

'We weren't able to get out of our carriage.'

'The doors are at the end,' explained Bruno.

'There weren't any doors,' said Shmuel.

'Of course there were doors,' said Bruno with a sigh. 'They're at the end,' he repeated 'just past the buffet section.'

'There weren't any doors,' insisted Shmuel, 'if there had been, we would all have got off.'

Bruno mumbled something under his breath along the lines of 'Of course there were', but he didn't say it very loud so Shmuel didn't hear.

'When the train finally stopped,' continued Shmuel, 'we were in a very cold place and we all had to walk here.'

'We had a car,' said Bruno, out loud now.

'And Mama was taken away from us, and Papa and Josef and I were put into the huts over there and that's where we've been ever since.'

Shmuel looked very sad when he told this story and Bruno didn't know why; it didn't seem like such a terrible thing to him, and after all much the same thing had happened to him.

'Are there many other boys over there?' asked Bruno.

'Hundreds,' said Shmuel.

Bruno's eyes opened Wide. 'Hundreds?' he said, amazed, 'that's not fair at all. There's no one to play with on this side of the fence. Not a single person.'

'We don't play,' said Shmuel.

'Don't play? Why ever not?'

'What would we play?' he asked, his face looking confused at the idea of it.

'Well, I don't know,' said Bruno, 'All sorts of things Football, for example. Or exploration.'

Shmuel shook his head. He looked back towards the huts and turned back to Bruno then. He didn't want to ask the next question but the pains in his stomach made him.

'You don't have any food on you, do you?' he asked.



'Afraid not,' said Bruno. 'I meant to bring some chocolate but I forgot.'

'Chocolate,' said Shmuel very slowly, his tongue moving out from behind his teeth. 'I've only ever had chocolate once.'

'Only once? I love chocolate. I can't get enough of it although Mother says it'll **rot** my teeth.'

'You don't have any bread, do you?'

Bruno shook his head. 'Nothing at all,' he said, 'dinner isn't served until half past six. What time do you have yours?'

Shmuel **shrugged his shoulders** and pulled himself to his feet.

'I think I'd better get back,' he said.

'Perhaps you can come to dinner with us one evening,' said Bruno, although he wasn't sure it was a very good idea.

'Perhaps,' said Shmuel, although he didn't sound **convinced**.

'Or I could come to you,' said Bruno, 'perhaps I could come and meet your friends,' he added hopefully. He had hoped that Shmuel would **suggest** this himself but there didn't seem to be any sign of that.

'You're on the wrong side of the fence though,' said Shmuel.

'I could crawl under,' said Bruno, reaching down and lifting the wire off the ground. In the centre, between the wooden telegraph poles, it lifted quite easily and a boy as small as Bruno could easily fit through.

Shmuel watched him do this and backed away nervously.

'I have to go back,' he said.

'Some other afternoon then,' said Bruno.

'I'm not supposed to be here. If they catch me I'll be in trouble.' He turned and walked away and Bruno noticed again just how small and skinny his new friend was. He didn't say anything about this because he knew only too well how unpleasant it

was being criticized for something as silly as your height, and the last thing he wanted to do was be unkind to Shmuel.

'I'll come back tomorrow,' shouted Bruno to the departing boy and Shmuel said nothing in reply; in fact he started to run off back to the camp, leaving Bruno all on his own.

Bruno decided that that was more than enough exploration for one day and he walked back home, excited about what had happened and wanting nothing more than to tell Mother and Father and Gretel - who would be so jealous that she might just explode - about his adventure that afternoon and his new friend with the funny name and the fact that they had the same birthday, but the closer he got to his own house, the more he started to think that that might not be a good idea. By the time he went through his front door he had decided that it was better to keep the whole story to himself for the moment.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Symbols used by: <http://de.allbuch.online/wiki/Hakenkreuz> and <https://de.fotolia.com/tag/judenstern>

## Chapter Twelve

### The Bottle of Wine

Every afternoon when classes were finished Bruno took the long walk along the fence and sat and talked with his new friend Shmuel until it was time to come home.

Bruno was late arriving at the place in the fence where he met Shmuel every day, but as usual his new friend was sitting cross-legged on the ground waiting for him.

'I'm sorry I'm late,' he said, handing some bread and cheese through the wire, 'I was talking to Maria.'

'Who's Maria?' asked Shmuel, not looking up as he **gobbled** down the food hungrily.

'She's our maid,' explained Bruno. 'She's very nice although Father says she's **overpaid**. But she was telling me about this man Pavel who **chops** our vegetables for us and waits on table. I think he lives on your side of the fence.'

Shmuel looked up for a moment and stopped eating. 'On my side?' he asked.

'Yes. Do you know him? He's very old and has a white jacket that he wears when he's serving dinner. You've probably seen him.'

'No,' said Shmuel, shaking his head. 'I don't know him.'

'But you must,' said Bruno irritably, as if Shmuel were being **deliberately** difficult. 'He's not as tall as some adults and he has grey hair and **stoops** over a little.'

'I don't think you realize just how many people live on this side of the fence,' said Shmuel, 'there are thousands of us.'

'But this one's name is Pavel,' insisted Bruno, 'when I fell off my swing he cleaned out the cut so it didn't get infected and put a

bandage on my leg. Anyway, the reason I wanted to tell you about him is because he's from Poland too. Like you.'

'Most of us here are from Poland,' said Shmuel, 'although there are some from other places too, like Czechoslovakia and-'

'Yes, but that's why I thought you might know him. Anyway, he was a doctor in his home town before he came here but he's not allowed to be a doctor any more and if Father had known that he had cleaned my knee when I hurt myself then they would have been trouble.'

'The soldiers don't normally like people getting better,' said Shmuel, swallowing the last piece of bread, 'it usually works the other way round.'

Bruno nodded, even though he didn't quite know what Shmuel meant, and gazed up into the sky. After a few moments he looked through the wire and asked another question that had been preying on his mind.

'Do you know what you want to be when you grow up?' he asked.

'Yes,' said Shmuel, 'I want to work in a zoo.'

'A zoo?' asked Bruno.

'I like animals,' said Shmuel quietly.

'I'm going to be a soldier,' said Bruno in a determined voice, 'like Father.'

'I wouldn't like to be a soldier,' said Shmuel.

'I don't mean one like Lieutenant Kotler,' said Bruno quickly, 'not one who strides around as if he owns the place and laughs with your sister and whispers with your mother. I don't think he's a good soldier at all. I mean one like Father. One of the good soldiers.'

'There aren't any good soldiers,' said Shmuel.

'Of course there are,' said Bruno.

'Who?'

'Well, Father, for one,' said Bruno. 'That's why he has such an **impressive** uniform and why everyone calls him Commandant and does whatever he says. The Fury has big things in mind for him because he's such a good soldier.'

'There aren't any good soldiers,' repeated Shmuel.

'Except Father,' repeated Bruno, who was hoping that Shmuel wouldn't say that again because he didn't want to have to argue with him. After all, he was the only friend he had here at Out-With. But Father was Father, and Bruno didn't think it was right for someone to say something bad about him. Both boys stayed very quiet for a few minutes, neither one wanting to say anything he might regret.

'You don't know what it's like here,' said Shmuel eventually in a low voice.

'You don't have any sisters, do you?' asked Bruno quickly, pretending he hadn't heard that because then he wouldn't have to answer.

'No,' said Shmuel, shaking his head.

'You're lucky,' said Bruno. 'Gretel's only twelve and she thinks she knows everything but she's a hopeless Case really. She sits looking out of her window and when she sees Lieutenant Kotler coming she runs downstairs into the hallway and **pretends** that she was there all along. The other day I caught her doing it and when he came in she jumped and said, why, Lieutenant Kotler, I didn't know you were here, and I know **for a fact** that she was waiting for him.'

Bruno hadn't been looking at Shmuel as he said all that, but when he looked again he noticed that his friend had grown even more pale than usual.

'What's wrong?' he asked, 'you look as if you're about to be sick.'

'I don't like talking about Lieutenant Kotler. He scares me,' said Shmuel.

'He scares me too a little,' admitted Bruno, 'he's a bully. And he smells funny. It's all that **cologne** he puts on.' And then Shmuel started to **shiver slightly** and Bruno looked around, as if he could see rather than feel whether it was cold or not.

'What's the matter?' he asked, 'it's not that cold, is it? You should have brought a jumper, you know. The evenings are getting colder.'

Later that evening Bruno was disappointed to find that Lieutenant Kotler was joining him, Mother, Father and Gretel for dinner. Pavel was wearing his white jacket as usual and served them as they ate. Whenever anyone needed anything, Pavel would bring it **immediately**, but the more Bruno watched him the more he was sure that catastrophe was going to strike. He seemed to grow smaller and smaller each week, if such a thing were possible, and he got **paler** every day. His eyes appeared heavy with tears and Bruno thought that one good blink might bring on a **torrent**. When Pavel came in with the plates, Bruno couldn't help but notice that his hands were shaking slightly under the weight of them. And when he stepped back to his usual position he seemed to **sway** on his feet and had to press a hand against the wall **to steady himself**. Mother had to ask twice for her extra helping of soup before he heard her, and he let the bottle of wine empty without having opened another one in time to fill Father's glass.

'Herr Liszt won't let us read poetry or plays,' complained Bruno, 'I asked him if we could read them just one day a week but he said no, not while he was in charge of our **education**.'

'I'm sure he has his **reasons**,' said Father.

'All he wants us to do is study history and geography,' said Bruno, 'I'm starting to hate history and geography.'

'I enjoyed history very much when I was a boy,' said Lieutenant Kotler. 'And although my father was a professor of literature at the university, I preferred the **social sciences** to the arts.'

'I didn't know that, Kurt,' said Mother, turning to look at him for a moment, 'does he still teach then?'

'I don't really know.'

'Well, how could you not know?' she asked, frowning at him, 'don't **you keep in touch** with him?'

Kotler looked to Bruno as if he **regretted** having **brought the matter up** in the first place.

'Kurt,' repeated Mother, 'don't you keep in touch with your father?'

'He left Germany some years ago. 1938, I think it was. I haven't seen him since then.'

Father stopped eating for a moment and stared across at Lieutenant Kotler, frowning slightly.

'And where did he go?' he asked.

'I **beg your pardon**, Herr Commandant?' asked Lieutenant Kotler, even though Father had spoken in a perfectly clear voice.

'I asked you where he went,' he repeated, 'your father. Where did he go when he left Germany?'

Lieutenant Kotler's face grew a little red and he **stuttered** as he spoke.

'I believe ... I believe he is currently in Switzerland,' he said finally.

'The last I heard he was teaching at an university in Berne.'

'Oh, but Switzerland is a beautiful country,' said Mother quickly.

'He can't be very old, your father,' said Father, his deep voice silencing them all. 'I mean you're only what? 17? 18 years old?'

'I've just turned 19, Herr Commandant.'

'So your father would be . . . in his forties, I expect?'

Lieutenant Kotler said nothing but continued to eat.

'Strange that he chose not to stay in the Fatherland,' said Father.

'We're not close, my, father and I. Really, we haven't spoken in years.'

'And what reason did he give; might I ask,' continued Father, 'for leaving Germany at the moment of her **greatest glory** and her most **vital need**, when it is **incumbent** upon all of us to play our part in the **national revival**? Was he **tubercular**?'

Lieutenant Kotler stared at Father, confused. 'I beg your pardon?' he asked.

'Did he go to Switzerland to take the air?' explained Father, 'or did he have a **particular** reason for leaving Germany?' he added after a moment.

'I'm afraid I don't know, Herr Commandant. You would have to ask him.'

'Well, that would be rather difficult to do. Did he have **disagreements** with **government policy**.'

The young lieutenant opened his mouth and then swallowed, despite the fact that he hadn't been eating anything.

'Never mind,' said Father cheerfully, 'perhaps it is not an **appropriate** subject of conversation for the dinner table. We can discuss it **in more depth** at a later time.'

'I'd love to go to Switzerland,' said Gretel after a lengthy silence.

'Eat your dinner, Gretel,' said Mother.

'But I was just saying!'

'Eat your dinner,' Mother repeated and was about to say more but she was interrupted by Father calling for Pavel again.

'What's the matter with you tonight?' he asked as Pavel opened the new bottle, 'this is the fourth time I've had to ask for more wine.'

Bruno watched him, hoping he was feeling all right, although he managed to release the cork without any accidents. But after he had filled Father's glass and turned to refill Lieutenant Kotler's, he lost his grip of the bottle somehow and it fell crashing, glug-glug-glugging its **contents** out directly onto the young man's lap. What happened then was both unexpected and extremely unpleasant. Lieutenant Kotler grew very angry with Pavel and no one stop him doing what he did next.

Later that night, when Bruno went to bed, he thought about all that had happened over dinner. He remembered how kind Pavel had been to him on the afternoon he had made the swing, and how he had stopped his knee from bleeding and been very gentle in the way he administered the green ointment. And while Bruno realized that Father was generally a very kind and thoughtful man, it hardly seemed fair or right that no one had stopped Lieutenant Kotler getting so angry at Pavel, and if that was the kind of thing that went on at Out-With then he'd better not disagree with anyone any more about anything; in fact he would do well to keep his mouth shut and cause no chaos at all.

## Chapter Thirteen

### **Bruno Tells a Perfectly Reasonable Lie**

For several weeks after this Bruno continued to leave the house when Herr Liszt had gone home for the day and Mother was having one of her afternoon naps, and he made the long trek along the fence to meet Shmuel, who almost every afternoon was waiting there for him, sitting cross-legged on the ground, staring at the dust beneath him.

Every day Bruno asked Shmuel whether he would be allowed to **crawl** underneath the wire so that they could play together on the other side of the fence, but every day Shmuel said no.

'I don't know why you want to come on this side of the fence anyway,' said Shmuel.

'You haven't tried living in my house,' said Bruno, 'it only has three floors. How can anyone live in so small a space as that?'

He had forgotten Shmuel's story about the eleven people all living in the same room together. One day Bruno asked why Shmuel and all the other people on that side of the fence wore the same striped pyjamas and cloth caps.

'That's what they gave us when we got here,' explained Shmuel, 'they took away our other clothes.'

'But don't you ever wake up in the morning and feel like wearing something different? I don't even like stripes,' said Bruno, although this wasn't actually true. In fact he did like stripes and he felt angry that he had to wear clothes that were too tight for him when Shmuel got to wear striped pyjamas all day long.

A few days later Bruno woke up and for the first time in weeks it was raining heavily.

This was bad news for it meant that he wouldn't be able to leave the house and meet Shmuel. That afternoon Bruno lay on his bed with a book but found it hard to concentrate, and just then the hopeless Case came in to see him.

'I'm reading,' said Bruno.

'What are you reading?' she asked him.

'I told you, I'm trying to read,' he said in a **grumpy** voice.

'I've got nothing to do,' she replied. 'I hate the rain.'

'I hate the rain too,' he said, 'I should be with Shmuel by now. He'll think I've forgotten him.' The words were out of his mouth quicker than he could stop them and he felt a pain in his stomach and got angry with himself.

'Who did you say you should be with?' she asked.

'I never said I should be with anyone,' he said.

'Bruno!' she said in a threatening voice.

And although he had never bothered to ask her, there was every chance that she was just as lonely as he was at Out-With. But at the same time there was the **undeniable fact** that Shmuel was his friend and not hers and he didn't want to share him. There was only one thing for it and that was to lie.

'I have a new friend,' he began. 'A new friend that I go to see every day. And he'll be waiting for me now. But you can't tell anyone.'

'Why not?'

'Because he's an **imaginary** friend,' said Bruno, trying to look **embarrassed**, 'we play together every day.'

'An imaginary friend. Honestly, Bruno, you're a hopeless case.'

Bruno smiled because he knew two things. The first was that he had **got away with** his lie and the second was that if anyone was the hopeless case around it was her.

'Leave me alone,' he said.

'Well, tell me this, Bruno. What do you and this imaginary friend do together?'

Bruno thought about it. He realized that he actually wanted to talk about Shmuel a little bit and that this might be a way to do it without **spilling his secret**.

'We talk about everything,' he told her. 'I tell him about our house back in Berlin.'

'How interesting,' said Gretel **sarcastically**, 'and what does he tell you?'

'He tells me about his family and the adventures he had coming here.'

'He sounds like a **barrel of laughs**,' said Gretel.

'And yesterday he told me that his grandfather hasn't been seen for days and whenever he asks his father about him he starts crying and hugs him so hard that he's worried he's going to **squeeze** him to death.'

These were things that Shmuel had told him, but for some reason he hadn't really understood at the time how sad that must have made his friend. When Bruno said them out loud himself he felt terrible that he hadn't tried to say anything **to cheer Shmuel up**.

'I'd **keep it to myself** if I were you.'

'Well,' said Bruno, 'you won't tell anyone, will you?'

She shook her head. 'No one.'

Then she left the room and Bruno tried to return to his book, but he stared out at the rain instead and wondered whether Shmuel was thinking about him too.

## Chapter Fourteen

### Something He Shouldn't Have Done

For several weeks the rain was on and off and on and off and Bruno and Shmuel did not see as much of each other as they would have liked. When they did meet Bruno found that he was starting to worry about his friend because he seemed to be getting even thinner by the day and his face was growing more and more grey.

Father's birthday was coming up soon and Mother arranged a party for all the officers serving at Out-With. Every time she sat down to make more lists for the party, Lieutenant Kotler was there beside her to help. Bruno decided to make a list of his own. A list of all the reasons why he didn't like Lieutenant Kotler.

There was the fact that he never smiled. On the rare occasions when he spoke to Bruno, he addressed him as 'little man'. Not to mention the fact that he was always in the living room with Mother and making jokes with her, and Mother laughed at his jokes more than she laughed at Father's. Once a dog approached the fence and when Lieutenant Kotler heard it he shot it. Then there was all that nonsense that Gretel came out with whenever he was around. And Bruno still hadn't forgotten the evening with Pavel.

One day Bruno went into the kitchen and got the biggest surprise of his life. There, sitting at the table, a long way from the other side of the fence, was Shmuel. Bruno could barely believe his eyes.

'Shmuel!' he said, 'what are you doing here?'

Shmuel looked up and his terrified face broke into a wide smile when he saw his friend standing there.

'Bruno!' he said.

'What are you doing here?' repeated Bruno; there was something that made him think he shouldn't be here in his house.

'He brought me,' said Shmuel.

'He?' asked Bruno 'you don't mean Lieutenant Kotler?'

'Yes. He said there was a job for me to do here.'

'What on earth are you doing?' asked Bruno.

'They asked me to **polish** glasses,' said Shmuel.

'They said they needed someone with tiny fingers.' As if to prove something that Bruno already knew, he held his hand out and Bruno couldn't help but notice that it was like the hand of a skeleton.

'I'd never noticed before,' he said.

'Never noticed what?' asked Shmuel.

In reply, Bruno held his own hand out.

'Our hands,' he said. 'They're so different. Look!'

Although Bruno was small for his age, and certainly not fat, his hand appeared healthy and full of life and the **veins** weren't visible through the skin.

Shmuel's hand, however, told a very different story.

'How did it get like that?' he asked.

'I don't know,' said Shmuel, 'it used to look more like yours. Everyone on my side of the fence looks like this now.'

Bruno frowned. He wondered what was going on at Out-With. Because he didn't want to look at Shmuel's hand any longer he opened the **refrigerator**. There was half a stuffed chicken left over from lunch time. He took a knife and cut himself a few healthy slices before turning back to his friend.

'I'm very glad you're here,' he said, speaking with his mouth full, 'I wish I could show you my room.'



'He told me not to move from this seat or there'd be trouble.'  
He looked at Shmuel, who seemed very hungry because he kept staring at the chicken.  
'I'm sorry, Shmuel,' he said quickly, 'I should have given you some chicken too. Are you hungry?'  
'That's a question you never have to ask me,' said Shmuel.  
'Wait there, I'll cut some off for you,' said Bruno, opening the fridge and cutting more slices.  
'No, if he comes back,' said Shmuel, shaking his head quickly.  
'If who comes back? You don't mean Lieutenant Kotler?'  
'I'm just **supposed** to be cleaning the glasses,' he said.  
'He's not going to mind,' said Bruno, 'It's only food.'  
'I can't,' said Shmuel, looking as if he was going to cry, 'He'll come back. I should have eaten them when you **offered** them, now it's too late,' but then seemed to have made a decision, because he grabbed three slices and ate them all at once.  
'Thank you, Bruno.'  
Just at that moment Lieutenant Kotler came into the kitchen and stopped when he saw the two boys talking. Shmuel continued to polish the glasses, ignoring Bruno.  
'What are you doing?' Kotler shouted, 'didn't I tell you to polish those glasses?'  
Shmuel nodded his head quickly.  
'Who told you that you were allowed to talk in this house?' continued Kotler. 'Do you **dare** to **disobey** me?'  
'No, sir,' said Shmuel quietly, 'I'm sorry, sir.'  
'You have been eating,' said Lieutenant Kotler, 'did you **steal** something from that fridge?'  
Shmuel opened his mouth and tried to find words, but there were none. He looked at Bruno, his eyes **pleading** for help.  
'Answer me!' shouted Lieutenant Kotler.

'No, sir. He gave it to me,' said Shmuel, tears **welling up** in his eyes, 'he's my friend,' he added.  
'What do you mean he's your friend? Do you know this boy, Bruno?'  
'I've never spoken to him,' said Bruno, 'I've never seen him before in my life. I don't know him.'  
Lieutenant Kotler nodded and seemed **satisfied** with the answer.  
'You will finish polishing all these glasses,' said Lieutenant Kotler, 'and then I will bring you back to the camp, where we will have a discussion about what happens to boys who steal. This is understood, yes?'  
Shmuel nodded.  
'Come on, little man,' said Lieutenant Kotler, 'you go to the living room and leave this little to finish his work.'  
Bruno nodded and turned round and left the kitchen without looking back. He wondered how a boy who thought he was a good person really could act like such a **coward** to a friend.  
Every afternoon that followed, Bruno returned to the place in the fence where they met, but Shmuel was never there. After almost a week he was **convinced** that he would never be forgiven, but on the seventh day he was delighted to see that Shmuel was waiting for him.  
Shmuel,' he said, running towards him, 'I'm sorry, Shmuel. I don't know why I lied please forgive me.'  
'It's all right,' said Shmuel, looking up at him now. There was a lot of **bruising** on his face.  
'What happened to you? Does it hurt?'  
'I don't feel it any more,' said Shmuel.  
'It looks like it hurts.'  
'I don't feel anything any more,' said Shmuel.

'Well, I am sorry about last week,' said Bruno, 'I hate that Lieutenant Kotler. I'm very sorry, Shmuel, I can't believe I didn't tell him the truth. I've never let a friend down like that before. Shmuel, I'm ashamed of myself.'

And when he said that, Shmuel smiled and nodded and Bruno knew that he was forgiven, and then Shmuel did something that he had never done before. He lifted the bottom of the fence up. He reached his hand out and held it there and then the two boys shook hands and smiled at each other.

It was the first time they had ever touched.

## Chapter Fifteen

### The Haircut

There was the fact that Lieutenant Kotler had been transferred away from Out-With and wasn't around to make Bruno feel angry and upset all the time and no one called him 'little man' anymore. But the best thing was that he had a friend called Shmuel. He enjoyed walking along the fence every afternoon and was pleased to see that his friend seemed a lot happier these days.

One day, while sitting opposite him at their usual place, Bruno remarked, 'This is the strangest friendship I've ever had.'

'Why?' asked Shmuel.

'Because I've been able to play with all the other friends I had. And we never get to play together. All we get to do is sit here and talk.'

'I like sitting here and talking,' said Shmuel.

'Well, I do too of course,' said Bruno, 'but it's a pity we can't do something more exciting from time to time. A bit of exploring, perhaps.'

'Maybe someday we will,' said Shmuel, 'if they ever let us out.'

Bruno started to think more and more about the two sides of the fence and the reason it was there in the first place. He considered speaking to Father or Mother about it but suspected that they would either be angry with him. He decided to talk to the hopeless case.

Gretel's room had changed quite a lot. For one thing there wasn't a single doll in sight, she had thrown them all away. In their place she had hung up maps of Europe that Father had given her. Bruno thought she might be going mad.

'Hello,' he said.

'What do you want?' asked Gretel, who was **experimenting** with her hair.

'Nothing,' said Bruno.

'Then go away.'

'Gretel,' he said, 'can I ask you something?'

'If you make it quick,' she said.

'Everything here at Out-With-' he began, but she **interrupted** him.

'It's not called Out-With, Bruno, why can't you pronounce it right?'

'It is called Out-With,' he protested.

'It's not. Anyway,' said Gretel, 'what is it anyway? What do you want to know?'

'I want to know about the fence. I want to know why it's there. I don't understand why we're not allowed on the other side of it. What's so wrong with us that we can't go over there and play?' Gretel **stared** at him and then suddenly started laughing, only stopping when she saw that Bruno was being serious.

'Bruno,' she said, 'the fence isn't there to stop us from going over there. It's to stop them from coming over here. They have to be kept together with their own kind.'

'What do you mean, their own kind?'

Gretel sighed and shook her head.

'With the other Jews, Bruno. Didn't you know that? That's why they have to be kept together. They can't mix with us.'

'Why don't we like them?' he asked.

'Because they're Jews,' said Gretel.

'Well, can't we just **make up** and-' Bruno was interrupted by the sound of Gretel screaming. While experimenting with her hair Gretel had found a tiny egg. She showed it to Mother, who

looked through her hair before marching over to Bruno and doing the same thing to him.

'Oh, I don't believe it,' said Mother angrily. 'I knew something like this would happen in a place like this.'

It turned out that both Gretel and Bruno had **lice** in their hair, and Gretel had to be treated with a special shampoo that smelled horrible and afterwards she sat in her room for hours on end, crying her eyes out. Father decided that the best thing for Bruno was to start fresh and he got a **razor** and shaved all Bruno's hair off, which made Bruno cry.

'Don't worry. It'll grow back. It'll only take a few weeks,' Father said to calm him down.

'It's the **filth** around here that did it,' said Mother, 'if some people could only see the effect this place is having on us all.'

When he saw himself in the mirror Bruno couldn't help but think how much like Shmuel he looked now, and he wondered whether all the people on that side of the fence had lice as well and that was why all their heads were shaved too.

When Shmuel saw him the next day he started to laugh at Bruno's **appearance**.

'I look just like you now,' said Bruno sadly, as if this was a terrible thing to admit.

'Only fatter,' replied Shmuel.

## Chapter Sixteen

### Mother Gets Her Own Way

Over the next few weeks Mother seemed more and more unhappy and Bruno understood perfectly well why. After all, when they'd first arrived he had hated it, **due** to the fact that it was nothing like home. But that had changed for him over time, mostly due to Shmuel, who had become more important to him than Karl or Daniel or Martin had ever been. But Mother didn't have a Shmuel of her own. There was no one for her to talk to. One day Bruno overheard Father and Mother fighting in the office. He didn't hear much but he did hear enough to know that there was a chance they might be returning to Berlin, and to his surprise he didn't know how to feel about that. What he did know is that whatever happened, he would accept the decision without complaint.

There was one part of him that remembered that he had loved his own life back there, but so many things would have changed by now. And he'd grown used to life at Out-With: he didn't mind Herr Liszt, he'd got much closer to Maria, Gretel was still going through a phase and keeping out of his way (and she didn't seem to be so much of a hopeless case any more) and his afternoons with Shmuel filled him with happiness. Nothing at all changed for a few weeks. Bruno did exactly what was asked of him and caused no chaos at all and enjoyed the fact that he had one secret friend whom no one knew about. Then one day Father asked Bruno and Gretel into his office and informed them of the changes that were to come.

'Tell me this: are you happy here?'

'Yes, Father, of course,' said Gretel.

'Certainly, Father,' said Bruno.

'And you don't miss Berlin at all?'

'Well, I miss it terribly,' said Gretel, 'I wouldn't mind having some friends again.'

Bruno smiled, thinking about his secret.

'Friends,' said Father, nodding his head, 'yes, I've often thought of that. It must have been lonely for you at times.'

'Very lonely,' said Gretel.

'And you, Bruno,' asked Father, looking at him now, 'do you miss your friends?'

'Well, yes,' he replied, considering his answer carefully, 'but I think I'd miss people no matter where I went.'

That was an **indirect reference** to Shmuel but he didn't want to make it any more **explicit** than that.

'But would you like to go back to Berlin? If the chance was there?'

Bruno thought about it. 'Well, I wouldn't like it if you weren't there,' he said, because that was the truth.

'So you'd prefer to stay here with me?'

'I'd prefer all four of us to stay together,' he said.

'Well, for the moment I'm afraid that's going to be impossible,' said Father, 'I'm afraid that the Fury will not **relieve** me of my command just yet. Mother, on the other hand, thinks this would be a good time for the three of you to return home...' He paused for a moment and looked out of the window— the window that led off to a view of the camp, 'when I think about it, perhaps she is right. Perhaps this is not a place for children.'

'There are hundreds of children here,' said Bruno, without really thinking about his words before saying them, 'only they're on the other side of the fence.' A silence followed this **remark**. Father and Gretel stared at him and he blinked in surprise.

'What do you mean there are hundreds of children over there?' asked Father, 'what do you know of what goes on over there?' Bruno opened his mouth to speak but worried that he would get himself into trouble if he **revealed** too much. 'I can see them from my bedroom window,' he said finally, 'They're all wearing the striped pyjamas.'

'The striped pyjamas, yes,' said Father, nodding his head, 'she's absolutely right. You've been here for too long. It's time for you to go home.'

And so the decision was made. Bruno found that he was not looking forward to moving back to Berlin as much as he would have expected and he **dreaded** having to tell Shmuel.

## Chapter Seventeen

### Thinking Up the Final Adventure

The day after Father told Bruno that he would be returning to Berlin soon, Shmuel didn't arrive at the fence as usual and **neither** did he the day after.

On the third day, when waiting for ten minutes, he was about to turn back for home without seeing his friend again. But then Bruno saw him walking towards the fence, the boy in the striped pyjamas and Bruno broke into a smile. But even from a distance he could see that his friend looked even more unhappy than usual.

'I thought you weren't coming any more,' said Bruno, 'I came yesterday and the day before that and you weren't here.'

'I'm sorry,' said Shmuel, 'something happened.'

'Well?' asked Bruno, 'what was it?'

'Papa,' said Shmuel, 'we can't find him. He's lost. He was here on Monday and then he went on **work duty** with some other men and none of them have come back.'

'Well, that's very strange,' said Bruno, 'but I think there must be a simple explanation.'

'And what's that?' asked Shmuel.

'I imagine the men were taken to work in another town and they have to stay there for a few days until the work is done. I expect he'll turn up one day soon.'

'I hope so,' said Shmuel, who looked as if he was about to cry,

'I don't know what we're supposed to do without him.'

'I could ask Father if you want,' said Bruno, hoping that Shmuel wouldn't say yes.

'I don't think that would be a good idea. I don't think the soldiers like us. Well, I know they don't like us. They hate us.

But that's all right because I hate them too. I hate them,' said Shmuel.

'You don't hate Father, do you?' asked Bruno.

Shmuel bit his lip and said nothing. He had seen Bruno's father on **several** times and couldn't understand how such a man could have a son who was so friendly and kind.

'Anyway,' said Bruno after a suitable pause, 'I have something to tell you too.'

'You do?' asked Shmuel, looking up hopefully.

'Yes. I'm going back to Berlin.'

'When?' he asked, with his voice shaking.

'Well, this is Thursday,' said Bruno, 'and we're leaving on Saturday. After lunch.'

'But for how long?' asked Shmuel.

'I think it's forever. Mother doesn't like it at Out-With - she says it's no place **to bring up** two children - so Father is staying here to work because the Fury has big things in mind for him, but the rest of us are going home.'

He said the word 'home', although he wasn't sure where 'home' was any more.

'So I won't see you again? I won't have anyone to talk to any more when you're gone I'll miss you Bruno,' said Shmuel.

'No,' said Bruno. He wanted to add the words, 'I'll miss you too, Shmuel,' to the sentence but found that he was a little embarrassed to say them, 'We'll have to say our goodbyes tomorrow. I'll try to bring you an extra special **treat**.'

Shmuel nodded but couldn't find any words **to express** his **sorrow**.

'I wish we'd got to play together,' said Bruno after a long pause, 'just once. We've been talking to each other for more than a year and we never got to play once. And do you know what

else?' he added. 'All this time I've been watching where you live from out 'of my bedroom window and I've never even seen for myself what it's like.'

'You wouldn't like it,' said Shmuel.

'I'd still like to have seen it,' said Bruno.

Shmuel thought for a few moments and then reached down and put his hand under the fence and lifted it a little, to the height where a small boy, perhaps the size and shape of Bruno, could fit underneath.

'Well? Why don't you then?'

Bruno blinked and thought about it. 'I don't think I'd be allowed. If I was caught I'd be in trouble,' he said **doubtfully**.

'That's true,' said Shmuel, lowering the fence again and looking at the ground with tears in his eyes, 'I suppose I'll see you tomorrow to say goodbye then.'

Neither boy said anything for a moment. Suddenly Bruno had an idea.

'Unless . . .' he began, thinking about it for a moment, 'don't you remember that you said I looked like you since I had my head shaved? If I had a pair of striped pyjamas too, then I could come over on a visit and no one would be any the wiser.'

Shmuel's face brightened up and he broke into a wide smile.

'Do you think so?' he asked, 'would you do it?'

'Of course, it would be a great adventure, our final adventure. I could do some exploring at last.'

'And you could help me look for Papa,' said Shmuel.

'Why not?' said Bruno, 'we'll take a walk around and see whether we can find any **evidence**. The only problem is getting a spare pair of striped pyjamas.'

Shmuel shook his head. 'There's a hut where they keep them. I can get some in my size and bring them with me. Then you can change and we can look for Papa.'

'Wonderful,' said Bruno.

'We'll meet at the same time tomorrow,' said Shmuel.

'Don't be late this time,' said Bruno, standing up and dusting himself down, 'and don't forget the striped pyjamas.'

Both boys went home in **high spirits** that afternoon. Bruno imagined a great adventure ahead and finally seeing what was really on the other side of the fence - and Shmuel saw a chance to get someone to help him in the search for his Papa. All in all, it seemed like a very **sensible** plan and a good way to say goodbye.



## Chapter Eighteen

### What Happened the Next Day

This morning he watched out of the window during morning classes with Herr Liszt, but it rained heavily. He watched during lunch from the kitchen, when it was definitely starting **to ease off** and there was even a bit of sunshine coming from behind a black cloud. Fortunately it came to a complete end around the time that Herr Liszt was leaving, and so Bruno put on a pair of boots and his heavy raincoat and left the house.

His boots squelched in the mud and he started to enjoy the walk more than he ever had before.

Shmuel was waiting for Bruno when he arrived and for the first time ever he wasn't sitting cross-legged on the ground and staring at the dust beneath him but standing, leaning against the fence.

'Hello, Bruno,' he said when he saw his friend.

'Hello, Shmuel,' said Bruno.

Shmuel held out his hands to Bruno, who opened his mouth in delight. He was carrying a pair of striped pyjama bottoms, a striped pyjama top and a striped cloth cap exactly like the one he was wearing. It didn't look particularly clean but it was a **disguise** and Bruno knew that good explorers always wore the right clothes.

'You still want to help me find Papa?' asked Shmuel, and Bruno nodded quickly.

Shmuel lifted the bottom of the fence off the ground and handed the outfit underneath to Bruno.

'Thanks,' said Bruno, wondering why he hadn't remembered to bring a bag to hold his own clothes in. The ground was so dirty

here that they would be ruined if he left them on the ground. He didn't have a choice really.

'Well, turn round. I don't want you watching me,' said Bruno, pointing at his friend as he stood there awkwardly.

Shmuel turned round and Bruno got changed.

'There,' he said. 'You can turn back now.'

Shmuel turned just as Bruno applied the finishing touch to his costume, placing the striped cloth cap on his head. Shmuel blinked and shook his head. If it wasn't for the fact that Bruno was nowhere near as skinny as the boys on his side of the fence, it would have been difficult to tell them apart. Shmuel pointed at Bruno's feet and the heavy boots he had taken from the house.

'You'll have to leave them behind too,' he said.

'But the mud,' he said, 'you can't expect me to go barefoot.'

'You don't have any choice.'

Bruno sighed but he knew that his friend was right, and he took off the boots and his socks and left them beside the pile of clothes on the ground. Shmuel reached down and lifted the base of the fence, but it only lifted to a certain height and Bruno had no choice but to roll under it, getting his striped pyjamas completely covered in mud as he did so. He laughed when he looked down at himself. He had never been so filthy in all his life and it felt wonderful.

Shmuel smiled too and the two boys stood awkwardly on the same side of the fence together for a moment.

Bruno wanted to give Shmuel a hug, just to let him know how much he liked him. Shmuel had an urge to give Bruno a hug too, just to thank him for all his many kindnesses, and his gifts of food and the fact that he was going to help him find Papa. Neither of them did hug each other though, and instead they

began the walk away from the fence and towards the camp. It didn't take long to get where they were going. Bruno opened his eyes in wonder at the things he saw. In his imagination he had thought that all the huts were full of happy families, some of them sat outside on rocking chairs in the evening and told stories about how things were so much better when they were children. He thought that all the boys and girls who lived here would be in different groups, playing tennis or football. He had thought that there would be a shop in the centre, and maybe a small café. As it turned out, all the things that he thought might be there - weren't.

Instead there were crowds of people sitting together in groups, staring at the ground, looking horribly sad; they all had one thing in common: they were all terribly skinny and they all had shaved heads, which Bruno thought must have meant there had been an outbreak of lice here too. In one corner Bruno could see three soldiers who seemed **to be in charge** of a group of about twenty men. They were shouting at them, and some of the men had fallen to their knees and were **remaining** there with their heads in their hands. In another corner he could see more soldiers standing around and laughing and aiming their guns in random directions, but not firing them. In fact everywhere he looked, all he could see was two different types of people: either happy, laughing, shouting soldiers in their uniforms or unhappy, crying people in their striped pyjamas, staring into the **void**.

'I don't think I like it here,' said Bruno after a while.

'Neither do I,' said Shmuel.

'I think I'd better to go home,' said Bruno.

'But Papa,' he said, 'you said you'd help me find him.'

Bruno thought about it. He had promised his friend that and he wasn't the sort to let his friends down.

'All right,' he said, 'but where should we look?'

'You said we'd need to find evidence,' said Shmuel.

'You're right. Let's start looking.'

So Bruno kept his word and the two boys spent an hour and a half searching the camp looking for evidence. They weren't sure exactly what they were looking for, but Bruno kept saying that a good explorer would know it when he found it. But they didn't find anything at all and it started to get darker.

'I'm sorry, Shmuel,' he said eventually. 'I'm sorry we didn't find any evidence.'

Shmuel nodded his head sadly. He wasn't really surprised. But it had been nice having his friend over to see where he lived.

'I think I should to go home now. Will you walk back to the fence with me?'

Shmuel opened his mouth to answer, but right at that moment there was a loud whistle and ten soldiers **surrounded** an area of the camp, the area in which Bruno and Shmuel were standing.

'What's happening?' whispered Bruno.

'It happens sometimes,' said Shmuel, 'they make people go on marches.'

'Marches!' said Bruno, appalled, 'I can't go on a march. I have to be home in time for dinner.'

'Ssh... Don't say anything or they get angry.'

Bruno frowned but was relieved that he and Shmuel were hidden in the centre of the crowd that was pushed together, and couldn't be seen. He didn't know what everyone looked so scared about - after all, marching wasn't such a terrible thing - and he wanted to whisper to them that everything was all right,

that Father was the commandant, and if this was what he wanted people to do then it must be all right. There was some sort of disturbance towards the back, where some people seemed unwilling to march, but Bruno was too small to see what happened and all he heard was loud noises, like the sound of gunshots.

'Does the marching go on for long?' he whispered because he was beginning to feel quite hungry now.

'I don't think so,' said Shmuel, 'I never see the people after they've gone on a march. But I wouldn't imagine it does.'

Bruno frowned. He looked up at the sky. The sky seemed to grow darker, almost black, and rain poured down heavily. Bruno closed his eyes for a moment and felt it wash over him. When he opened them again he wasn't so much marching as being **swept** along by the group of people.

Then his feet brought him up a set of steps, and as he marched on he found there was no more rain coming down any more because they were all marching into a long room that was surprisingly warm and felt completely **airtight**.

'Well, that's something,' he said, **glad** to be out of the storm, 'I expect we'll have to wait here till it stops raining and then I'll get to go home.'

Shmuel gathered himself very close to Bruno and looked at him full of fright. 'I'm sorry we didn't find your Papa,' said Bruno.

'It's all right,' said Shmuel.

'And I'm sorry we didn't really get to play, but when you come to Berlin, that's what we'll do.'

He looked down and did something quite **out of character for him**: he took hold of Shmuel's tiny hand in his and squeezed it tightly.

'You're my best friend, Shmuel,' he said, 'my best friend for life.'

Shmuel opened his mouth to say something back, but Bruno never heard it because at that moment the door at the front was suddenly closed and a loud metallic sound rang through from the outside. Bruno raised an eyebrow, unable to understand this, but he assumed that it had something to do with keeping the rain out and stopping people from catching colds.

And then the room went very dark and somehow, despite the chaos that followed, Bruno found that he was still holding Shmuel's hand in his own and nothing in the world would have **persuaded** him to let it go.

## Chapter Nineteen

### The Last Chapter

Nothing more was ever heard of Bruno after that. Several days later, after the soldiers had searched every part of the house one of them discovered the pile of clothes and the pair of boots that Bruno had left near the fence. When he was shown Father could not understand what had happened to his son. It was as if he had just disappeared and left his clothes behind him.

Mother did not return to Berlin quite as quickly as she had hoped. She stayed at Out-With for several months waiting for news of Bruno until one day, quite suddenly, she thought he might have made his way home alone. So she returned to their old house, but he wasn't there, of course. Gretel returned to Berlin with Mother and spent a lot of time alone in her room crying, not because she had thrown her dolls away and not because she had left all her maps behind at Out-With, but because she missed Bruno so much.

Father stayed at Out-With for another year after that and became very disliked by the other soldiers. He went to sleep every night, thinking about Bruno and he woke up every morning thinking about him too. One day he formed a theory about what might have happened and he went back to the place in the fence where the pile of clothes had been found a year before.

There was nothing particularly special about this place, but then he discovered that the base of the fence was not **attached** to the ground as it was everywhere else and that, when lifted, it left a gap large enough for a very small person (such as a little boy) to crawl underneath. He looked into the distance then and followed it through logically, step by step, and when he did he found that his legs seemed to stop working.

A few months after that some other soldiers came to Out-With and Father had to go with them, and he went and he was happy to do so because he didn't really mind what they did to him any more.

And that's the end of the story about Bruno and his family. Of course all this happened a long time ago and nothing like that could ever happen again.

Not **in this day and age**.

# Key Vocabulary

## Key Vocabulary

The words printed **red** indicate the transition into a new chapter.

<b>Naughty</b>	Adjective	When children are naughty, or their behaviour is naughty, they behave badly or do not do what they are told to do
To frown	Verb	to bring your eyebrows together so that there are lines on your face above your eyes to show that you are annoyed or worried
Hopeless case	Noun	a hopeless situation or in this case a person
To sigh	Verb	to breathe out slowly and noisily, expressing tiredness, sadness, pleasure, etc.
To allow a matter to be settled	Expression	To stop talking about a situation or subject that is being dealt with
Honestly	Adverb	in a way that is not telling a lie
Serious	Adjective	not joking or intended to be funny
To admit	Verb	to agree that something is true, especially unwillingly
<b>To be stuck</b>	Verb	To be unable to move, or set in a particular position, place, or way of thinking:
To nod	Verb	to move your head down and then up, sometimes several times, to show agreement or approval
<b>A habit</b>	Noun	something that you do often and regularly
Terrifying	Adjective	very frightening/scary
Opposite	Adjective	completely different
To indicate	Verb	to show, point, or make clear
<b>A few</b>	Determiner	some, or a small number of something:
To suggest	Verb	to mention an idea, possible plan, or action for other people to consider
A wire fence	Noun	structure that divides two areas of land, similar to a wall made out of a thin metal thread
A telegraph pole	Noun	a tall wooden pole to which phone wires are fixed
A spike	Noun	a narrow, thin shape with a

		sharp point at one end
Pleased	Adjective	happy or satisfied
A wheelbarrow	Noun	a large, open container for moving things in with a wheel at the front and two handles at the back
A pair of crutches	Noun	a stick with a piece that fits under the arm, that you lean on for support if you have difficulty in walking because of a foot or leg injury
To lunge	Verb	to you step forward with one leg and bend your knees
A rehearsal	Noun	a time when all the people involved in a play, dance, etc. practise in order to prepare for a performance
Handsome	Adjective	handsome man is physically attractive in a traditional, male way
The attention	Noun	notice, thought, or interest
The efficiency	Noun	the good use of time and energy in a way that does not waste any
To appreciate	Verb	to recognize how good someone or something is and to value him, her, or it
A ceiling	Noun	the inside surface of a room that you can see when you look above you
An order	Noun	something that someone tells you you must do
A punishment	Noun	the act of punishing someone for doing something wrong
Brave	Adjective	showing no fear of dangerous or difficult things
Considerate	Adjective	kind and helpful or keeping something in mind
To settle in	Phrasal Verb	to become familiar with somewhere new and to feel comfortable and happy there
To imitate	Verb	to behave in a similar way to someone else, or to copy the speech or behaviour of someone
A heel	Noun	the part of a sock or shoe that covers the heel (rounded back part) of the foot

To decide	Verb	to choose something, especially after thinking carefully about several possibilities
To go mad	Phrasal Verb	To go mentally ill or unable to behave in a reasonable way
A diversion	Noun	a different route that is used
At a distance	Noun	from a place that is not near
A branch	Noun	one of the parts of a tree that grows out from the main trunk and has leaves, flowers, or fruit on it
A rope	Noun	a piece of strong, thick string made of long twisted threads
A tyre	Noun	a thick rubber ring, often filled with air, that is fitted around the outer edge of the wheel of a vehicle
To head	Verb	to go in a particular direction
Although	Conjunction	despite the fact that
A swing	Noun	a seat joined by two ropes or chains on which you can sit and move backwards and forwards, often found on playgrounds
To irritate someone	Verb	to make someone angry or annoyed
To peel	Verb	to remove the skin of fruit and vegetables
Harsh	Adjective	unpleasant, unkind, cruel
A storage	Noun	a place to put things for use in the future or that are not often needed
To bow	Verb	to bend your head or body forward, especially as a way of showing someone respect
Sore	Adjective	painful and uncomfortable
Worse	Adjective	more bad → worse
First-aid	Noun	basic medical treatment
To glance	Verb	to give a quick short look
To get to the bottom of something	Phrasal Verb	to discover the real but sometimes hidden reason that something exists or happens
To practise as	Verb	to work in an important skilled job for which a lot of training is necessary
To examine	Verb	to look at a person or thing carefully and in detail in order



		to discover something about them
The excitement	Noun	a feeling of being excited, or an exciting event
To congratulate	Verb	to praise someone and say that you approve of or are pleased about a special or unusual achievement
Starched	Adjective	when a piece of clothing has been washed with starch in order to make it stiff
To provide	Verb	to give someone something that they need
To spoil	Verb	to treat someone or a situation too well
To join up	Phrasal Verb	If you join up, you become a member of one of the armed forces
Foolish	Adjective	unwise, stupid, or not showing good judgment
To feel ashamed	Phrasal Verb	feeling guilty or embarrassed about something
A patriot	Noun	a person who loves their country and, if necessary, will fight for it
A mystery	Noun	something strange or not known that has not yet been explained or understood
Nooks and crannies	Noun	small spaces that are hidden and small, narrow openings
To exaggerate	Verb	to make something seem larger, more important, better, or worse than it really is
A dozen	Noun	twelve
To have something in common	Phrasal Verb	to share interests, experiences, or other characteristics with someone or something
Confused	Adjective	unable to think clearly or to understand something
To deserve	Verb	to have earned or to be given something because of the way you have behaved or the qualities you have
A moustache	Noun	hair that a man grows above his upper lip
To shave	Verb	to remove hair from the body by cutting it close to the skin

		with a razor
Obvious	Adjective	easy to see, recognize, or understand
To witness	Verb	to see something happen
Promptly	Adjective	quickly, without delay, or at the arranged time
A chauffeur	Noun	someone whose job is to drive a car for a rich or important person
To hesitate	Verb	to pause before you do or say something, often because you are uncertain or nervous about it
A carriage	Noun	any of the separate parts of a train in which the passengers sit
To rot	Verb	To decay, to go bad
To shrug	Verb	to raise your shoulders and then lower them in order to say you do not know or are not interested
Convinced	Adjective	certain
To gobble	Verb	to eat food too fast
Overpaid	Adjective	paid too much, more than usual or more than necessary
To chop	Verb	to cut something into pieces
Deliberately	Adverb	Intentionally, on purpose
To stoop	Verb	to bend the top half of the body forward and down
Impressive	Adjective	If an object or achievement is impressive, you admire or respect it, usually because it is special, important, or very large
To pretend	Verb	to behave as if something is true when you know that it is not/ to claim something that is false
A cologne	Noun	a type of perfume
To shiver	Verb	to shake slightly (a little) because you feel cold, ill, or frightened
Immediately	Adjective	now or without waiting or thinking
Pale	Adjective	used to describe a person's face or skin if it has less colour than usual

A torrent	Noun	a large amount of water that is moving quickly
To sway	Verb	to move slowly from side to side
Steady	Adjective	under control, calm, not moving
Education	Noun	the process of teaching or learning, especially in a school or college, or the knowledge that you get from this
Social sciences	Noun	the study of society and the way people live
To keep in touch	Phrasal Verb	to continue to communicate with someone by using a phone or writing to them
To regret	Verb	a feeling of sadness about something sad or wrong or about a mistake that you have made, and a wish that it could have been different and better
To bring a matter up	Phrasal Verb	to start talking about something
To beg someones pardon	Phrasal Verb	to politely ask someone to repeat something they have said because you did not hear it
To stutter	Verb	to speak or say something, especially the first part of a word, with difficulty, for example pausing before it or repeating it several times
Great glory	Noun	when something is as good as it can be it is in it's great glory
Vital need	Noun	something that is necessary for the existence of something
Incumbent		
Revival	Noun	he process of becoming more active or popular again
Tuberculosis	Noun	a serious infectious disease that can attack many parts of a person's body, especially their lungs
Particular	Adjective	special, or this and not any other
A disagreement	Noun	an argument or a situation in which people do not have the same opinion
Government policy	Noun	any course of action by the

		government (the group of people who officially control a country) which intends to change a certain situation
Appropriate	Adjective	suitable or right for a particular situation or occasion
In more depth	Adjective	in a serious and detailed way
A content	Noun	everything that is inside of something
<b>Grumpy</b>	Adjective	annoyed and complaining
An undeniable fact	Noun	a certainly true fact, a fact that no one can doubt or hide
Imaginary	Adjective	something that is created by and exists only in the mind
Embarrassed	Adjective	
To get away with something	Phrase	to not get in trouble for doing something bad
Sarcasm	Noun	the use of remarks that clearly mean the opposite of what they say, made in order to hurt someone's feelings or to criticize something in a humorous way
A barrel of laughs	Phrase	something that is very funny, often used sarcastically
To squeeze	Verb	to press something firmly, especially from all sides in order to change its shape, reduce its size, or remove liquid from it
To cheer someone up	Phrasal Verb	to make someone happy again
To keep something to oneself	Phrasal Verb	to not tell anyone a secret that you know
<b>The veins</b>	Noun	a tube that carries blood to the heart from the other parts of the body
Refrigerator	Noun	
To be supposed to	Phrasal Verb	to have to; to have a duty or a responsibility to
To offer	Verb	to ask someone if they would like to have something or if they would like you to do something
To dare	Verb	to be brave enough to do something difficult or dangerous, or to be rude or silly enough to do something

		that you have no right to do
To disobey	Verb	to refuse to do something that you are told to do
To steal	Verb	to take something without the permission
To plead	Verb	to make an urgent, emotional statement or request for something
To well up	Verb	to start having tears in ones eyes
Satisfied	Adjective	pleased because you have got what you wanted, or because something has happened in the way that you wanted
A coward	Noun	a person who is not brave and is too eager (mentally weak) to avoid danger, difficulty, or pain
Bruise	Noun	an injury or mark where the skin has not been broken but is darker in colour
To experiment	Verb	to try something in order to discover what it is like or find out more about it
To interrupt	Verb	to stop a person from speaking for a short period by something you say or do, to stop something from happening for a short period
To stare	Verb	to look for a long time
To make up	Phrasal Verb	to forgive someone and be friendly with them again after an argument or disagreement
Louse (plural → lice)	Noun	a very small insect that lives on the bodies or in the hair of people and animals
Filth	Noun	thick, unpleasant dirt
Appearance	Noun	the way a person or thing looks to other people
An indirect reference		a mention of something indirectly
Explicit	Adjective	clear and exact
To relieve someone of something	Phrasal Verb	to not force someone to do something anymore
A remark	Noun	something that you say, giving your opinion about something or stating a fact
To reveal	Verb	to make known or show

		something that is surprising or that was previously secret
To dread	Verb	to feel extremely worried or frightened about something that is going to happen or that might happen
Neither	Determiner	not either of two things or people
Work duty	Noun	something that you have to do because it is part of your job, or something that you feel is the right thing to do
Several	Determiner	some; an amount that is not exact but is fewer than many
To bring up someone	Phrasal Verb	to care for a child until it is an adult
A treat	Noun	a special and enjoyable occasion or experience
To express sorrow	Phrasal Verb	To show great sadness
Doubtfully	Adjective	uncertain (not sure) about something
Evidence	Noun	one or more reasons for believing that something is or is not true
Having high spirits	Noun	being extremely happy and having a good time
Sensible	Adjective	based on or acting on good judgment and practical ideas or understanding
To ease off	Phrasal Verb	to gradually stop or become less
A disguise	Noun	something that someone wears to hide their true appearance
To be in charge	Phrasal Verb	being the person who has control of or is responsible for someone or something
To remain	Verb	to stay in the same place or in the same condition
The void	Noun	a large hole or empty space
To surround	Verb	to be everywhere around something
Airtight	Adjective	completely closed so that no air can get in or out
Glad	Adjective	Happy or pleased that something is happening or not happening

Something is out of character for someone	Phrase	Not usual for someone
To persuade	Verb	to make someone do or believe something
<b>In this day and age</b>	Phrase	at the present time

**Words From The Additional Pages:**

A major	Noun	a degree in your main subject at college or university
Commended	Adjective	formally praised
Unaware	Adjective	not understanding or realizing something
To trivialize	Verb	to make something seem less important than it really is
To undermine	Verb	to make someone less confident or to make something weaker
To mislead	Verb	to cause someone to believe something that is not true
An Issue	Noun	a subject or problem that people are thinking and talking about
<b>Destructive</b>	Adjective	causing, or able to cause, damage
Discrimination	Noun	treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, etc.
Temporarily	Adjective	not lasting or needed for very long
To suffocate	Verb	to die because of not having enough oxygen
Act of violence	Noun	something you do to hurt someone