

# CONTENTS



ONE:	Enemies of the State	7
TWO:	The Reign of the Reich	28
THREE:	Echoes of Thunder	34
FOUR:	Blood, Toil, and Tears	46
FIVE:	Family Camps	57
SIX:	Tall Order	67
SEVEN:	The Secret Room	84
EIGHT:	There Is No God	97
NINE:	Crawling with Germans	104
TEN:	Liberation!	115
ELEVEN:	A Faithful Friend	120
TWELVE:	Heat of the Naked Flames	127
THIRTEEN:	Not in the United States	131
FOURTEEN:	Who Is Luciano?	135
FIFTEEN:	Glimmer of Light	145
SIXTEEN:	I Need a Favor	151
SEVENTEEN:	Risk-free Territory	160
EIGHTEEN:	Educated Man	174
NINETEEN:	The Number Forty	184
TWENTY:	A Spectacle of Yourself	197
TWENTY-ONE:	The Enemy of God	205



CHAPTER ONE  
ENEMIES OF THE STATE



JERRY COULD feel his heart pounding like a hammer in his chest. Blood gushed from his left shoulder as he rounded the corner of what was once a bakery in the city of Bialystok, Poland. Many times he had casually walked to the bakery with friends, purchased soft white bread and eaten it while it was still hot. But bread was the last thing on his mind as he fled for his life like a wounded animal, pursued by three Nazi soldiers.

Minutes earlier, he and his beloved father had run out the back door as the soldiers burst through the front of their home. Shots rang out, one hitting his father and another striking Jerry in the shoulder. His father dropped to his knees and with an impassioned cry, yelled, “Run, Jerry! *Run!*”

## THE MYSTERY

As he rounded the corner, he remembered the narrow alley between the bakery and a shoe store. At the end of the alley stood about two dozen old wooden crates piled against a six-foot fence. On one side of the crates was a 14-inch-high gap into which he often crawled. That opening led to a crawlspace underneath the bakery, a cramped but suitable hideout for smoking cigarettes with another teenage friend, something his father would have frowned upon . . . if he knew.

Jerry's eyes were wild with terror, not only because he had been shot and was being chased by Nazis, but for fear of what had happened to his father. As he crawled under the bakery floor he heard another two shots ring out. He stopped moving and whispered, "Dear God . . . what is happening?"

The ground was damp and cold and there was barely room for him to lift his head. He tried to inspect his bleeding shoulder. It appeared to be just a flesh wound but it scared him. The bullet had entered at the back of his shoulder, missed the bone and passed through the front, tearing the flesh as it went. It was burning as though it had been clamped in a red-hot steel vise, causing uncontrollable groans to well up

from within him. His breathing was deep and fast and his chest heaved and burned as the chilled night air was drawn into his lungs. He clenched his teeth and closed his eyes to try to stop the tears, both from the pain of his shoulder and the dread that gripped his heart. Even with his right hand held tightly over the injury, his sleeve was crimson with blood down to his wrist.

His eyes widened in fear at the thought that entered his mind. *What if he had left a trail of blood?* Suddenly he heard footsteps! It was the unmistakable sound of leather-soled boots crunching the stones in the alley. Jerry held his blood-drenched hand over his mouth to quiet his loud breathing. He could hear voices, and through the cracks of the wooden foundation he could see the legs of the three soldiers who had terrorized his family. *His mother and sister!* What had happened to them, and to his grandmother, back at the house? He prayed that the soldiers had left them alone. As far as he knew, it was only the men who were being rounded up and shot.

From the German dialect he had learned, Jerry heard one of the soldiers say, "He's just a lad!" Then he said something Jerry couldn't un-

## THE MYSTERY

derstand. The footsteps then headed off into the distance, followed by silence.

Jerry slowly removed his hand from his mouth, took a deep blood-tasting breath, and gave a guarded sigh of relief. With daylight beginning to dawn, it would be twelve long hours before he dared to move, and in the safety of nightfall make his way back to his home.



WHAT WAS AN American family doing in Bialystok, Poland, in 1939? Six years earlier, Samuel Adamson sat on his farm porch in Texas, reading the newspaper. Samuel sure looked like a farmer. He was a wiry-framed five foot ten with a weathered body that showed signs of the outdoors. The hot southern sun had left him tanned with an earthy appearance, as he leaned forward with interest in what he was reading. His pipe sat as stationary in his mouth as he did in his old wooden chair. It was September 1933. On the home-front Robert A. Chesebrough, the chemist who invented Vaseline, had died. The ninety-six-year-old attributed his long life to eating a spoonful of the sticky substance each day. Samuel raised an eyebrow and mumbled, "Probably choked to death."

Overseas, the largest political group in Germany, Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party, had enacted a controversial program of involuntary sterilization. The program was for people who were said to be "idiots" or schizophrenics, suffer from depression or epilepsy, or have physical weaknesses like deafness or blindness. Samuel had followed the political life of Hitler since the early twenties. Not that he sought out what the man was doing, but simply because whatever he did was news. Hitler had joined the German Workers' Party in 1919 at age thirty, and the very first time he spoke his hearers were impressed with his oratory skills. In later recounting the experience in *Mein Kampf* Hitler wrote: "I spoke for thirty minutes, and what before I had simply felt within me, without in any way knowing it, was now proved by reality: I could speak! After thirty minutes the people in the small room were electrified and the enthusiasm was first expressed by the fact that my appeal to the self-sacrifice of those present led to the donation of three hundred marks."

Pleased with his verbal prowess, the German Workers' Party began promoting Hitler as their main attraction. He spoke passionately against the Treaty of Versailles with anti-Semitic out-

bursts, blaming the Jews for almost all of Germany's problems. Many empathized with his message and joined the Party.

In February 1920, the German Workers' Party began to hold its first mass meetings, with Hitler outlining its political platform. These Twenty Five Points of the German Workers' Party included: the union of all Germans in a greater German Reich; rejection of the binding Versailles Treaty; the demand for additional territories for the German people (*Lebensraum*); citizenship determined by race with no Jew to be considered a German; the confiscation of all income not earned by work; a thorough reconstruction of the national education system; religious freedom, except for religions which endanger the German race; and a strong central government for the execution of effective legislation.

As he read through the Twenty Five Points, Hitler asked the rowdy crowd for its approval on each one. And they certainly approved. "When after nearly four hours the hall began to empty and the crowd, shoulder to shoulder, began to move, shove, press toward the exit like a slow stream," Hitler recounted, "I knew that now the principles of a movement which could no longer



be forgotten were moving out among the German people... A fire was kindled from whose flame one day the sword must come which would regain freedom for the Germanic Siegfried and life for the German nation.”

Not long after that Hitler chose the symbol of his fledgling movement: the swastika, a symbol Samuel had seen often as the American press reported on this man's rising popularity. “In the red we see the social idea of the movement,” Hitler explained, “in the white the national idea, in the swastika the mission to struggle for the victory of Aryan man and at the same time the victory of the idea of creative work, which is eternally anti-Semitic and will always be anti-Semitic.”

But it wasn't until 1933 that Samuel became concerned about Adolf Hitler and his political aspirations. Samuel's mother was a German Jew living in Waldenberg, and even though many spoke of Hitler with a new sense of excitement, with each passing day he grew increasingly uneasy about the policies of the Nazi Party. In April of that year, Jews in Germany were officially prohibited from holding public office or civil service positions and were prevented from involvement in the legal field. Two weeks later, Samuel

## THE MYSTERY

read where Jewish students were affected by the “Law against Overcrowding in Schools and Universities.” Then, on July 14, the De-Naturalization Law allowed the Third Reich to remove the citizenship of Jews and other “undesirables.”

With his mother being Jewish, Samuel wished he could be nearer so he could keep an eye out for her. That was one of the reasons Samuel Adamson decided to leave his beloved farm in the hands of a trustworthy friend and move his small family to Germany.

Although their farm had been doing quite well, the 1929 stock market crash had a devastating effect on the U.S. As what was being called the Great Depression deepened its hold, unemployment increased to an all-time high. Throughout the country, it was common to see long lines outside rescue missions, as hungry people waited to get food for their families.

When the Adamsons’s farming market ground to a halt, it seemed a good time to start over somewhere else. They had just enough money to pay for the long boat trip and set up some sort of business.

After the death of Samuel’s father, his mother had carried on the family clothing store, building up a number of regular customers over the

years—and her business was going reasonably well until recently. But the Nazis had begun posting billboards all over the country saying “German people, defend yourselves! Do not buy from Jews!” They publicly burned books that were considered “un-German,” and were revising the school curriculum to teach “race science.” According to Wilhelm Frick, the Nazi Interior Minister, “The schools must constantly emphasize that the infiltration of the German people with alien blood, especially Jewish and Negro, must be prevented.”

Unsure of exactly what they were getting themselves into, on a cold January day in 1934, Samuel and his wife, Esther, sailed from New York with their two children. Lillian, age twelve, had been named after the popular actress Lillian Gish. When her parents were first married they saw the star in Victor Seastrom’s MGM film *The Wind*, and she left such an impression on them that they decided to name their first girl after her.

Two years younger, Jeremiah was named after the biblical prophet, at the insistence of his Jewish grandmother. He hated the name and was pleased that his friends called him Jerry. As he grew older he came to prefer the seasoned