

“When I was born; my parents had bought me a bottle of wine. Tablas Creek was the vineyard. The bottle was made that day, May 1st, 1925. It was the cheapest wine on the rack. They kept it for me. Mama told me it would age while I aged, breathed while I breathed. So I never opened it.”

She walks down the stairs into the cellar. On a three shelf rack, lays a single bottle in the row closest to the floor. She slowly moves towards the rack, moving her aged cane back and forth to push her closer to the rack. By the time she finishes her fifteen foot departure, she stares at the dark green bottle. Her hands shake while bending over for a grab at the bottle. Her feeble hand swoops up the bottle and uses the momentum to bring herself upright. She holds the bottle, still shaking, and it reads, “Tablas Creek. 1972”

She makes herself climb back upstairs and sits in the maroon, leather chair. Her short, grey hair does not fulfill the rich, dark brown past. Her bangs hide the shrapnel wound from one of her own bombs.

During her twenty-five year indenture with Mossad, the Israeli special intelligence agency, she was part of the QRF (Quick Reaction Force) to eliminate the masterminds behind the slaughter of Jewish athletes in the 1972 Olympic Games. While planting a bomb in a Palestinian hotel, she was brought down by an early explosion. She presses, “REC.” on the tape recorder.

“My name is Madeline Blanch, when recruited into Mossad at the age of twenty-five, I have been sent into hot areas for the purpose of finding and eliminating targets. That was my skill set. 1953, I was sent into East Berlin to find and arrest a Nazi colonel from the SS. I extracted him from Germany and back to Israel for trial and later execution.”

Madeline pulls the cork from the bottle and she rests it on the table for some time to breath. The smell reminds her of a different time.

After sitting in a train car filled with over sixty other Polish Jews for almost six hours, the oxygen has near ran out. Madeline, at age fifteen, holds her grip strong onto her mother’s wrist. She has now not seen her father, nor her younger brother Jacob since the beginning of the trek.

The thick black smoke from the chimney of the train engine flows back with the already cold wind and down into each cart. The dense smog causes everyone in her cart to asphyxiate and heave. The smell of vomit and dark clouds fills Madeline's nostrils. Her eyes cross with her mother's. Madeline's mother, Elaine, the wife of a baker and store-owner, looks at her beautiful daughter's dark brown hair. She recognizes that it is the same as hers. A tear rolls down both their cheeks. Train comes to a slow stop. After the screeching from brakes sops there is a dead silence. After about five minutes of them still scrunched up in the tight, cold cart, freezing cold water comes shooting through the vents. Panic and movement separates Madeline from her mother. She presses up against a wall, where she sees a man wearing a grey uniform, commanding the other grey uniforms to keep hosing down the carts.

Her pale, spotted, left index finger pushes the record button. "The date is September 12th, 1999. I have decided, by myself, to record this testament of a mission that went horribly wrong. I must tell my own story to explain my reasoning for how I carried out the mission." She lets out a violent series of coughs. She pulls a white handkerchief from her green sweater to cover her mouth. After she is done, she notices four distinct droplets of blood spreading and getting wider.

"The only way to tell this story, hhh, the only way to tell this story, is to tell my own. When I was fourteen, the National Socialists invaded my home country of Poland. Being a Polish Jew, my family and I were forced to sign up for a new housing plan in Warsaw. We were loaded onto a train and shipped like livestock. We were forced to sit in there for 6 hours. And then we were forced to lie in freezing cold water for four more hours until they let us out. Uh, I was brought in with my family, and then we were separated. Jacob and my father were taken to one of the buildings on the left, and my mother and I were brought to the third floor of a building on the right. Me being a fourteen year old girl had no idea of what was happening. We all heard the Fuhrer's cries for the extermination of our people. The grey soldier spat on us. Gunshots echoed throughout the ghetto. The women were separated from the men while the both were not allowed into the street.

The gates were locked and very few German guards stayed.” The phone rings and Madeline stops the recording. She picks it up and answers. While talking to her book publisher. She published her book over two years ago on her intelligence gathering to the events leading up to the “6 Day War.” Her prophets went to Mossad Intelligence. Her publisher is probably talking to her about that very thing. She hangs up and grabs the recorder.

“We were sent there to rot. That was our soul purpose, to die like an unfed animal. After a week of only drinking water, me and my mother began vomiting. I lost most of my hair after three weeks. I remember looking at my ceiling and wondering about the life before. I imagined that some kind of wealthy daughter locked in her room for punishment. I thought about my punishment. I began thinking of everything I had done wrong. See, the Nazi’s did not want to kill us. They wanted to punish us. By one month, an Austrian captain by the name of Luther Lars seized control of the ghetto. A young officer with strawberry blonde hair looked like a good fit for his uniform. He came into the ghetto once a day for what he called castigation. A fancy word for picking a Jew girl and a Jew boy, and having a German rifleman kill them in the middle of the street.

After a two months of this horror, I wanted to get picked. My legs shook, I had almost no hair on my head, and I had lost my ability to menstruate. I vomited a yellow sludge from which had no origin. My mom, equally deteriorating, had me praying every day.

One day at noon, during castigation, the two German riflemen went into the building from which I had seen Jacob and my father go into. And sure enough my eight year old brother, who now had a bald head and a swollen belly. I looked from the fogged window as fifteen other people stood by in our room.

Jacob had no tears on his face. I think back now and realize that I had no tears. Not because I didn’t feel it, but because I could not physically produce them anymore. My heart shredded layer by layer as Mr. Lars’ soul darkened shade by shade.

The rifleman made my Jacob kneel down in a pile of ash and dust. The soldier raised his Mauser to the head of my brother. As he pulled the trigger I felt emptiness.

Jacob fell into a pool of his own blood. One minute later a hefty soldier, who wore a tan backpack, poured liquid fire onto the carcass of Jacob. “

She lights a cigarette and begins to talk, “From then, everything slowed down. Mother had lost faith, and I had not seen my father for over seven months. One night I was awoken by the screaming of women. ‘He’s here!’ I heard repeated and repeated throughout the room. I was lying on the cold concrete floor when, in the threshold of the door, stood a man wearing a grey uniform and his boots were pitch black, but they glistened with the illumination of the moon. He took a few steps into our room when he looked directly at my mother. He walked towards her, taking out a Hitler Youth knife. He grabbed her by the her frail underarm and dragged her to the center of the room. The rest of the girls had formed a circle around them unintentionally. That animal, took his knife and cut her red blouse off her body, all with me watching, the tearing sound pounds my head like an irritating migraine. The Captain unbuckles his belt while spreading her legs apart and pulling his pants off. There were two armed guards at the door just watching.”

Madeline sobs and coughs again, “None of us could move. We received minimal bread and water everyday. I wish I could forget this. As he defiled my mother, I lifted my arm to signal the man to stop. A man, no an animal. He looked right at me. As soon as he was done, he looked at me sobbing. He took me by my underarm and brought me right next to my nude mother. He squeezed my face with the palm of his hand atturn me to watch him stab my mother to death.”

She stops the recording and moves slowly to the kitchen. She pours herself a glass of water. She spills some from her constant trembles. Tears pour down her face as she sips from the plain glass Mason Jar. She reaches above the refrigerator and takes down a metal tine, that is molded like a red London telephone booth with a small girl on the phone. She takes the square top off the rectangular prism and inside: a suppressor and magazine of 9mm short rounds. She takes them to her couch and sits down.

“It was another two years until I saw the Captain. The ghetto had been filled with gunfire and explosions. I pushed myself to move around. The soldiers were killing Jews until they ran out of bullets. Rumors had passed through the women that the Russians

have made their advance into Poland. At first, the Germans had been shooting at us, then they started to burn each building to cover their retreat into Germany.

When the Russians came they gave us what supplies they could manage. I never saw my father after that. I searched and searched but found nothing. We were moved to the State of Israel in 1948. In 1949, Mossad started to gather intelligence on Nazi war criminals. The policy for them was to arrest the criminal on sight and bring them back to Israel for trial, followed by execution. After I rejuvenated my health, I joined Mossad in 1953 after my mandatory year in the military. I was recommended by my superiors. I was first in charge of intelligence, where I tracked down the rest of the war criminals not tried in the Nuremburg Trials. In 1954 I passed my field exam. My first assignment was the classified operation to arrest the Kristopher brothers. They were both executioners responsible for the deaths of over three hundred Jews. I had extracted them both successfully from each of their homes in Brazil. Then a new policy came in effect for Mossad operatives to kill targets on sight. My next mission was find a Doctor who had been living in East Berlin since the Russian invasion. The doctor uh I think Hans was his name, had never been in Berlin at that time. He put a pistol in his mouth during the seize on his mansion.

Then, in 1960 I found a name on my desk, Luther Lars. Captain Luter Lars had been living with his wife and one son in Belgium. A small village by the name of Flemish Brabant. He bred horses in the country and sold them to breed with strong racing horses. I was assigned with the kill or capture of Luther Lars. A name of which I had thought of every single day of my life. Fate had dealt me the hand of my choice. I would be lying if I said I had not thought about his name appearing on my desk. My first kill.”

Madeline shoved her hand in between the cushion and takes out a Browning HI Power pistol. She attaches her suppressor to the end of the barrel and loads the magazine into the chamber as she turns her head to look at the brass plated full metal jacket slide into the chamber.

“It would be a month of prep and training until I got dropped in. By 1961, I was waiting for the sanction of this operation. Then, the government of Israel approved my drop into Belgium. On April 17th I took a plane to Brussels and then drove to the village

of Flemish Brabant. All I had were phony papers, five hundred Belgian Francs, and a Browning HI Power pistol with two extra magazines.

It was a six hour drive to the village from Brussels to the village. Once I got to the village it took me no more than five minutes to find his land plot. I parked my car in a golden tall grass field and walked over three miles to his ranch. There was a main house build with a dark oak wood. Then, the stable was 500 meters from the main house. I stayed one kilometer away, perched on a hill with a great overview of the property. There was little activity in the yard. I had not spotted Lars until he went outside around 4:00 to tend the horses. The house was two stories tall and average size for length. I decided to make my approach at night.

There was a window open on the south side of the building. I waited until thirty minutes after midnight to start walking in. I attached my suppressor to the cold metallic barrel of my sidearm.

At about 500 meters out, I noticed the tall grass brushing against my knees. I was calm. However, this was a vendetta, unknown by anybody, even Luther Lars. At this time I was within 100 meters of the house. I could hear the sweet sound of crickets and some kind of natural buzzing from the grass.

I got to the window and lifted one leg through the window and then pulled my body through. There was absolute silence. I moved heel-to-toe to the staircase. Large creaks fly out as I moved up with a steady pace. There are only two rooms upstairs. I looked to the left and went through that door. It was he parent's room. I was standing right over the monster's bed when I lifted my pistol. Now I was ruffled up. So many thoughts going through my head. The rape of my mother and the murder of my baby brother. I saw this man's wife, a beautiful, dark haired woman. I drew the hammer back and locked the safety. At this moment, finger had founded its way to the trigger. Suddenly I heard the squeal of rusted door bolts behind me. A small dark haired boy with his night outfit on. It was light blue, like the noon sky. We were looking eye-to-eye, no words were said. I pulled the trigger. The boy flew backwards. A mixture of pink brain matter and dark red blood splatter against the tan wall. Both of the parents woke up and panicked. The wife jumps out of bed and I fire two more rounds into her chest. I tell the Luther Lars to stay where he is. He is sobbing. As we looked at each

other, I could tell that he didn't recognize me. The white sheets cover his legs. I put one shot into his right knee.

I went home to Jerusalem. I confirmed the mission a failure. If you read the report you'll see specifics, but overall, that is my story."

Madeline presses the cold metal suppressor against the roof of her mouth. She sighs and closes her eyes. Then, she pulls the trigger. The shell casing quickly ejects from the pistol and goes towards the coffee table. The shell casing lands on the the power button on the television.

"Developing news from the Gaza strip brings chaos throughout Palestine, and in other news, A Nazi war criminal has turned him self in at almost 95 years of age."