

DXCIV

He woke up to a new day in the concentration camp. He felt quite exhausted and did not sit up for a while. He was lying on the floor with dozens of people in this damp room, which was obviously used as a barn in the past. He tried to remember how many days he had been here, but he could not. It had been weeks, maybe months. The things he remembered about his life before here were fading from his mind day by day. He couldn't remember his mother's face or voice. Even his own name seemed to belong to a stranger now. Everyone here was calling him with the number 594 they had engraved on his arm. His whole life consisted of this place that smelled of blood and death, and he knew he could not get out of here alive. His thoughts were interrupted when the door suddenly opened. The guard shouted something in a foreign language and everyone lying on the ground stood up in panic. Number 594 noticed that the person lying next to him was not moving, but he did not find it strange. He could have died of starvation or disease in his sleep, there were many ways to die here.

Everyone in the room quickly went to the square of the concentration camp. There were hundreds of people here, along with other prisoners. A few officers would select some of them and take them to different areas of the camp, and each group was given different tasks. Number 594 was chosen for the group tasked with burying the prisoners who died the previous day. He might have been disturbed if he had been chosen for this task before, but seeing dead people no longer affected him. He started to move towards his duty station with the other prisoners in his group. The place where they buried the bodies was at the back of the prison camp and there were not many people there. While walking there, he saw two officers making bets by making the prisoners fight each other. When one of the prisoners fell to the ground, an officer started laughing and took his friend's money. The officer who lost the bet got angry and took out his gun and shot the prisoner on the ground twice in the chest. While the officers walked away laughing, the poor man died struggling. The group leader of number 594 ordered them to carry the man lying lifeless on the ground to the cemetery and they continued on their way.

When they reached the cemetery, they saw that there were more corpses than ever before. Number 594 thought that new prisoners might have arrived in the camp, because when the new ones arrived, the old and useless

prisoners were immediately killed. His superior ordered them to dig big holes and sat under a tree. He took a cigarette out of his pocket and started watching them. After a few hours of work, they buried many corpses of the elderly, women and children. Usually they buried 15-20 people in a pit. Number 594 thought that these people had disappeared from the world without a trace, as if they had never existed. When he realized that this would happen to him one day, he stopped working and just stood there. This was not a feeling he felt for the first time. He had gradually lost all hope for life since he was brought here by force, and he now understood better that there was no way to get out of here alive. Realizing that he had not been working for a few minutes, the officer came to him shouting and hit number 594 on the back with the whip in his hand. The poor man fell to the ground in pain. The officer hit him a few more times and then ordered the other captives to pick him up off the ground. Number 594 slowly sat up, groaning in pain. The attendant gestured for him to continue working and continued shouting in a foreign language. However, number 594 was now exhausted and continued to stand still. The officer raised his hand to hit him again with the whip, but number 594 made a last effort and grabbed the man's hand and pushed him away with all his might. The officer, who did not expect this, fell on his back to the ground. Even though Number 594 knew this was a fight he couldn't win, he jumped at the officer and tried to hit him several times. Maybe he could have succeeded if the other captives had helped, but none of them could move because of fear. After a few seconds, his weak body could not resist the officer, and the officer managed to throw him off and pull the gun from his waist. After a few seconds of pause, the officer fired his gun repeatedly until he ran out of bullets. Poor number 594 felt pain all over his body and his blood began to gush out. He collapsed to the ground in a few seconds. All he could see was the sky, and for the first time since the day he arrived, everything was this peaceful and beautiful. He felt several people dragging him on the ground and he threw himself into the well he had just dug. It didn't hurt anymore and he didn't feel anything. While he was lying among the lifeless bodies at the bottom of the well, everything he could not remember about his previous life began to flash before his eyes. When soil started to be thrown on him, the songs his mother sang to him when he was little echoed in his mind. He smiled slightly with the peace and joy of getting out of here and passed away.