

# Anne Frank : thinking myself out

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## SOUND: OPENING MUSIC

- MIEP: Dear Baki, ....*(long pause)*. It feels strange to be writing from this room, so far away from home. The woman from the Red Cross said that I was lucky that they had a space for me, since there were so many in the camp, and so few beds available. She wasn't going to take me, I think, but when she saw my scar....they must have had sympathy for me.
- PETER 2: *(a young man, maybe late 20s, pushed out of his home by the Milosevic in the early 90s, writing in his diary)* We buried Andelko's father today. The Serbs had shot him in the face so many times, that Andelko couldn't identify him that way – they had to take off his shirt so he could see his father's birthmark before they knew it was him. *(pause)* I hate whoever started this stupid war.
- OTTO: *(middle-aged man from Armenia, witness to the Turkish genocide)*. I finally was able to go back to my village today, but now I realize that was a mistake. I went to find Matias' house, but when I got there, I saw that the Turks had destroyed everything...and everyone. *(pause)* I saw things there I will never be able to forget.
- EDITH 2: *(walks in, reading from paperback copy of DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, a modest 1940s coat and dress, and a yellow star sewn on to her coat)*  
“In May, 1940, the Germans arrived in Amsterdam, and life became very hard. Jews were required to wear yellow stars on our clothing. We had to be inside by 8 o'clock at night, we couldn't go to movies or theatre, and could only shop in Jewish stores, etc, etc. But life, as they say, went on.”
- DUSSEL: Those words, written by a 13 year old girl in her private diary, are some of the first sentences in a book that's become one of the most famous personal stories every told – the *Diary of Anne Frank*.
- KERLI: Over the next two years, from 1942 to 1944, Anne Frank wrote down what happened to her as she was swept up into one of the ugliest, most brutal campaigns for ethnic cleansing the world has ever seen, a campaign that ended with over 8 million people murdered in Nazi death camps, including over 6 million Jews – like her.
- MIEP: But the thing in her book that matters most was that she wasn't just writing *her* story – she was telling my story too – from Rwanda.
- DUSSEL 2: When the Hutus destroyed our village because we were Tutsis.

- PETER 2: And mine, from Bosnia, when the Serbs drove us from our homes, and butchered us in the streets...
- KERLI 2: Because we were Muslims.
- OTTO And my grandfather's story from 1915, when the Turks invaded Armenia and forced his brother, the village postmaster, to identify the homes of Armenians.
- EDITH 2: So they could be taken out and shot.
- MIEP: What Anne Frank reveals is the one shining thing in the middle of this hatred – her diary reveals hope.
- OTTO: She was given her diary in June of 1942, on her 13<sup>th</sup> birthday, and began using it immediately.
- KERLI: *(reading from diary)* " June 13<sup>th</sup>; I think Harry is in love with me, but I'm not sure how I feel about him. He is 16."
- EDITH: "June 15<sup>th</sup>: Mr Keptor, the math teacher with the hairy ears, is making me write a paper called "why I am a chatterbox."
- MIEP: "June 16<sup>th</sup>. Harry was waiting for me this morning to walk to school."
- ANNE: *(our heroine emerges from upstage, in period costume, reading from the book again)* " June 21; our whole class is trembling now, because we're waiting to find out who will be moved up and who will stay in this class. I think this should be easy for them to decided, since one quarter of our class are cuckoos, but sometimes teachers are the biggest freaks on earth, and you can't tell what they'll do.
- MIEP: In Rwanda, I too was worried about moving ahead to the gifted students' class, but I had an advantage over others – my teacher was not a freak at all. He was my uncle.
- DUSSEL 2: *(everyone else becomes students in his class, except for Otto. Dussel is dressed in a somewhat threadbare suit and tie from the 1970s or 80s, slightly out of fashion for the 90s. Writes "April 1, 1994" on a blackboard on stage)* Now, ladies and gentlemen, I know we're almost done today, but please, just a few more minutes of your attention. There is a very big test on Thursday, and I need EVERYONE here studying their hardest between now and then.
- MIEP: He had studied university in the United States, and come back to Rwanda to run a free school for the children of our tribe, the Tutsi.

OTTO: But in the streets of Rwanda, the Hutus, the majority tribe, began to make noise about their Tutsi neighbors

DUSSEL 2: Even though we were but a tiny portion of the whole country, the Hutus decided to stir the anger of their people against us., to try and drive us away from our homes.

MIEP: All that spring, as we walked to school, the Hutu drivers would steer their motorbikes toward us, trying to run us down, swinging at our heads with clubs that they carried by their sides.

ANNE: *(from the diary)* But all of our happiness changed in 1940, with the entrance of the Germans into Amsterdam. Overnight, our worlds became very, very small, and very dangerous.

### **SOUND: RWANDA TRUCK BREAK IN**

DUSSEL 2: But in our school, in Rwanda, we kept the children focused on improving their minds, learning their arithmetic and English, and off the hatred that began to surround us – until the news of April 6.

SOLDIER: *(enters, wearing military fatigue coat)* Get down! Get down now you dogs! You have no place here in Rwanda! Your place is in the river, with the rest of the excrement!

DUSSEL 2: *(calmly, to students)* Boys and girls, please get down, and stay calm, this gentleman is excited, he will calm down too.

SOLDIER: Are you insulting me, pig?! *(pushes him with club)* Huh? What did you say to me? Put your hands up! On your Head – NOW!

DUSSEL 2: I said that I'm sure that you are a gentleman, and that you will leave these children in peace so they can return to their lessons.

SOLDIER: Their lesson now is to leave! Get out of our country, go back where you belong! School is done for today – get your ugly faces out of my sight, and never come back here again. Go! Get out!

*The students all look at Dussel for guidance*

DUSSEL 2: Go, children, it's alright. I will let you know when you should come back here *(they're hesitant to leave him along with soldier)* No, go, it's alright, the gentleman won't hurt me.

SOLDIER: Don't insult me, slave. On your knees. Now! *(holds up club, as if to hit Dussel)*

DUSSEL 2: Yes, I'm doing it , I'm doing it. (*Anne has stayed behind in the room, unseen by soldier*)

SOLDIER: You've been told that your kind isn't welcome here.

DUSSEL 2: But we are all brothers in this land.

SOLDIER: No Tutsi pig is a brother of mine. We've told you to leave, now we'll show you the door. Your school is finished now – if you get out of here alive today, you'll never be back here again, do you understand? (*no response*) I asked if you understood! (*hits Dussel with his club*)

DUSSEL 2: Yes, yes, I understand.

SOLDIER: I want this village cleared by 6 o'clock tonight – all of you, out of here, and don't ever come back.

DUSSEL 2: But we have many things here, our homes and property.

SOLDIER: Sell it, burn it - I don't care what you do –be gone by 6. If you're not, you'll wish you'd never seen the light of this place.

*Goes to leave – spies Miep hiding in the corner*

Come here, girl. Move! (*she goes to him, he grabs her hair in back of her head*) Were you told to leave here? Yes? (*she can't answer*) Are you deaf, you ugly pig? Were you told to leave this room?

MIEP: Yes.

SOLDIER: You can't follow directions?! Is that it?

MIEP: No (*he twists harder*) No! I was scared for him, for what you'd do.

SOLDIER: You *should* be scared. You should all be scared to see what will happen if you don't listen to me. (*releases her*). Get your ugly face out of village, and don't ever come back.

*He leaves, noise subsides.*

DUSSEL 2: You shouldn't have done that. These people are dangerous.

MIEP: I couldn't leave you alone with him.

DUSSEL 2: You need to listen. When those men say something, don't fight, just do it.

MIEP: He had blood in his eyes, I could see it.

DUSSEL 2: He still has it. He will, until we are gone, or dead.

MIEP: Will we go?

DUSSEL 2: Yes..you go home now, tell my sister to begin getting ready...we will have to leave this afternoon..immediately. I need to clean up here first...

MIEP: Why clean up....we're leaving, aren't we?

DUSSEL 2: Yes, but I want to make sure I leave nothing here with the children's names...nothing that will show them who they are. Go...I'll be home soon. *(she leaves – he bends over and starts collecting loose papers from the ground).*