

June 18, 1943

Dear Journal,

Hello, my name is Mia. I am currently hiding from my father in order to save my life. I am surrounded by strangers and I am trusting them with my life. I don't know where I am, but all I know is I must be as quiet as a mouse, or else I could compromise everybody's safety in this shelter. Some kind soul gave me this book to write my feelings and thoughts in, to keep me quiet because I may be eleven, but I am still the youngest one here. You may be wondering, Mia, how could anyone ever get in this situation? Well it all started in my sweet humble home in Germany. I wish I could tell you what city I lived in, but I honestly can't remember. I think all this new information has come in so quickly, that I had to bump some out. Anyways, we were a Jewish family, well my mom, brother and I were. My dad never agreed with the Jewish ways, but don't get me wrong, we still loved him deeply. My brother was obviously my parents' favorite child. He NEVER got in trouble, and everything he did was so "amazing". We were watching a news story about bombings in Japan, and right on time, like it was planned, sirens went off. My parents told me to take my brother and run to the neighborhood bomb shelter. Yeah, you heard me right, neighborhood bomb shelter. My brother, father and I made it. I wish I could say the same thing about my mother. After a month, my father and the three other fathers that made it, went out into the atomic abyss. They came back three days later with weird uniforms. They told us it was for "work", and that the rest was classified. I never questioned it, because I didn't want to start a fight in front of the whole neighborhood, or at least what was left of it. There were five kids, one mom, and three dads. When we finally were able to get out of that retched place, what I saw was horrendous. Synagogues destroyed, houses, office buildings, everything was rubble. That's when it just began. My father kept on trying to get us to come with him to go to a "safe place," but he was acting weird after he got his new "job" and we didn't know if we could trust him anymore. My brother and I stole, ate slept, then ran. We had nowhere to go, just places not to be. My dad sometimes found us wandering the streets. Apparently, his new job involved him to patrol the streets, I didn't know what they were looking for, but it seemed urgent. I also started to notice a lot of "fainted" people laying on the street. I figured it was because of the lack of food, and the sicknesses going around, but boy was I wrong. My naive, little, self. My father eventually lured my brother to come with him, I told him not to. And sure enough the next day my dad was walking the streets, and my brother wasn't. I'm not sure what happened to him, but I am pretty sure he is living the life of luxury right now. He was my father's favorite after all. Besides, I don't think he would kill- would he? Anyways, one day I was wandering around town, until a young woman with a baby came up to me. She informed me about the awful things happening. The ghetto, mass murders, Nazis, Hitler, the whole thing. I was shocked and frightened of everyone and everything around me. Scared for my life, I followed her, and she led me here. Don't ask me exactly where here is, because I wouldn't be able to

tell you. But, look at the bright side, they have food, they are nice to me, and only have one rule, don't make any noise. I am fine with those standards, anyways, I must get going, tonight we are having a feast for celebration in my arrival. I heard we get two pieces of bread today!

~ Mia Schmidt

Name: Claire E