

# Henrich Himler und der Chainbair of Gas



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*by Daniel Vidosh – 3rd Generation Holocaust Survivor*

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## PROLOGUE

### The Filing Cabinet That Ate Europe

In the beginning there was a desk.  
Not a god — nein — a desk.  
Mit Stempel. Mit Formular.  
Triplicate.

“Ordnung muss sein,” said the clerk while misplacing Poland.

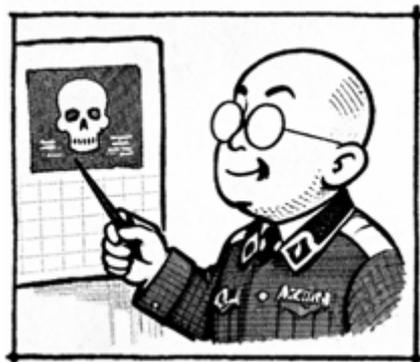
I, the grandson of smoke and numbers, sit in a café where spoons clink like typewriters and history keeps asking for more paper.

They were not wolves.  
Wolves are efficient.  
These were men who argued about hat angles while trains waited.

“Jawohl, Herr Obergruppenführer, the apocalypse has been scheduled for Tuesday, after lunch.”

And the coffee was always too weak.

---



# CHAPTER I

## Henrich Himler – The Chicken Farmer of Destiny

Himmler enters like a misplaced parent at a school play.

“Meine Herren,” he whispers, adjusting his spectacles, “we vill build a mystical empire of... paperwork.”

An SS officer leans over:

“Reichsführer, your chicken farm reports are mixed with the deportation lists.”

“Ach! The hens must be relocated to the East.”

Pause.

“Reichsführer... those are not hens.”

Himmler, solemn:

“Everything is hens if properly categorized.”

They discuss genocide the way accountants discuss umbrella depreciation.

Internal monologue (Himmler):

*I am the architect of eternity. Why does no one respect my poultry metaphors?*

SA man in the corner:

“Chef, the Blitzkrieg is stuck in traffic.”

“Stamp it,” Himmler says. “Everything moves when stamped.”



## CHAPTER II

### Heydrich – The Man Who Thought He Was Music

Heydrich walks in like a violin solo that hates you.

“Efficiency!” he snaps. “We vill optimize terror.”

An SS adjutant raises a hand:

“Sir, the terror has been filed under ‘miscellaneous.’”

Heydrich:

“Who filed terror as miscellaneous?!”

SA voice from the back:

“It had no proper cover sheet.”

Heydrich’s smile is a razor.

Internal monologue (Heydrich):

*I am the future. Why do I smell fear and cheap ink?*

He conducts meetings like orchestras:

“Violins — deportations.

Cellos — shootings.

Flutes — statistics.”

But the music keeps collapsing into coughing.



## CHAPTER III

### Hitler – The Man Who Argued With Maps

Hitler talks to the map.

“Du bist falsch. I vill correct you.”

The generals stand like furniture.

“Mein Führer,” one whispers, “winter exists.”

Hitler:

“Not ideologically.”

Another general:

“The Russians are not retreating.”

Hitler, furious:

“They are retreating incorrectly!”

Internal monologue (Hitler):

*History is a stage. Why do my actors freeze to death?*

He moves divisions like salt shakers.

“Here — victory.

Here — destiny.

Here — no fuel.”

An SA veteran mutters:

“Chef, even the map looks tired.”



## CHAPTER IV

### The SA – Beerhall Philosophers of Doom

They argue about uniforms while the war burns.

“Brown is a revolutionary color.”

“Brown is spilled soup.”

“Brown is destiny.”

They sing:

*Wir marschieren in circles,  
left, right, falsch herum,  
the Reich is a tavern  
and we forgot the drum.*

One says:

“I joined for the camaraderie.”

Another:

“I joined for the boots.”

Third:

“I joined by mistake and now I cannot find the exit.”

---



## CHAPTER V

### The Eastern Front – Where Ideology Met Weather

Snow speaks better German than they do.

Tank commander:  
“Engine kaputt.”

Infantryman:  
“Worldview also kaputt.”

They write reports:

“Morale: frozen.  
Supplies: theoretical.  
Victory: postponed.”

Internal monologue (anonymous soldier):  
*We were promised eternity and received mud.*

A voice in the blizzard:

“Wer hat den Blitzkrieg abgestellt?”

---



# CHAPTER VI

## The Chainbair of Gas

A throne made of valves and levers that no one fully understands.

Technician:  
“Who designed this?”

Bureaucrat:  
“It was a committee.”

The machine breaks down because it requires a form signed by itself.

Himmler arrives with a chicken manual.

Heydrich brings a spreadsheet.

Hitler brings a speech.

The lever does not move.

Silence.

From somewhere far away — trains, ghosts, the sound of history writing in permanent ink.

---



# EPILOGUE

## After the Stamps

They believed in a thousand-year Reich and could not survive a winter.

They built systems that ate their builders.

In the café, I close the notebook.

The waiter asks:

“Noch etwas?”

I answer:

“Nein. The rest is already ash.”

And outside, the city lives —  
without their paperwork.

---



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## **CHAPTER: *Gefreiter Mendel Kohn Reports for Duty in Three Different Cities Simultaneously***

Mendel Kohn received his marching orders in Kraków, Berlin, and a village that had already been renamed twice.

“Present yourself immediately,” the paper said, “yesterday.”

He saluted the clerk.

“Which front?”

The clerk checked a map of office corridors.

“You are assigned to Corridor B, Eastern Section, provisional.”

“In Russland?”

“In principle.”

The SA men were arguing whether snow was Bolshevik.

“Snow falls equally on all races,” said one.

“Defeatist talk,” said another. “Snow is a supply problem.”

Mendel wrote in his notebook:

*Weather: politically unreliable.*

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# HENRLICH HIMLER UND DER CHAINBAIR OF GAS

*A Bureaucratic Epic in Marching Circles*

by Daniel Vidosh – 3rd Generation Holocaust Survivor

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## BOOK I — THE ARCHIVE THAT BREATHES

The archive was not listed on any city map, but every tram stopped in front of it by mistake.

In Budapest — or what the paperwork insisted was still Budapest — I found it between a tobacco shop that sold no tobacco and a travel agency that only offered departures to 1938.

The door had three handles:

- *Dienstlich*
- *Privat*
- *Endgültig*

All opened into the same corridor.

Inside, a clerk without a century stamped my identity card.

“Purpose of visit?”

“Ich suche Geschichte.”

He nodded sympathetically.

“History is in Room 6B, unless it has been reassigned.”

---

The folders were warm.

Each one hummed like a badly tuned radio.

On the first:

**GEFREITER MENDEL KOHN — simultaneously indispensable and missing**

I opened it and the past began filling out forms in my name.

---

## CHAPTER 1 — MENDEL KOHN RECEIVES AN ORDER THAT HAS NOT YET BEEN WRITTEN

Mendel Kohn was the kind of soldier who stood at attention even when sitting down.

He had reported for duty in 1939 with:

- one uniform too large
- one pair of boots marked *left / also left*
- a certificate declaring him fit for clerical work in the field and field work in the clerical

The sergeant looked at his papers.

“You are assigned to Transport.”

“Where to?”

“Wherever the list goes.”

“And the list?”

“Is being corrected.”

This satisfied everyone.

---

The barracks functioned according to a precise philosophical system:

1. Nothing existed until stamped.
2. Once stamped, it could never be found again.
3. The war would be won through correct filing.

An SA veteran explained it over ersatz coffee.

“Der Krieg ist eigentlich ein Verwaltungsproblem.”

“What about the enemy?” asked Mendel.

“Which department?”

---

Mendel wrote in his notebook:

*Enemy: pending classification.*

---

## CHAPTER 2 — THE OFFICE OF ADVANCED DESTINY (BERLIN)

In Berlin, Himmler was explaining eternity to a room full of terrified stationery.

“Gentlemen,” he said, adjusting his glasses so that reality became theoretical, “we vill create a spiritually pure filing system.”

An adjutant raised a hand.

“Reichsführer, the forms are multiplying.”

“Good. That is a sign of ideological fertility.”

Another officer:

“The trains are waiting for instructions.”

“Have they filled Form A38?”

“There is no Form A38.”

Himmler smiled with poultry-like patience.

“Then they must wait until it exists.”

---

Internal memorandum:

**Subject:** Metaphysical significance of hole punches

**Conclusion:** Circular.

---

## CHAPTER 3 — MENDEL GUARDS A TRAIN THAT IS GUARDED BY ANOTHER TRAIN

Mendel's first transport assignment consisted of guarding a train that contained guards guarding another train.

"Who are we guarding?" he asked.

The corporal checked.

"You are guarding secrecy."

"And inside the wagons?"

"Confidential."

A civilian railway official approached.

"Excuse me, this train is scheduled to arrive yesterday."

"Impossible," said the corporal. "Yesterday is fully booked."

---

Snow began falling in the wrong language.

Mendel wrote:

*Weather has crossed the border without permission.*

---

## **CHAPTER 4 — HEYDRICH INVENTS A MEETING THAT CANNOT END**

Heydrich conducted meetings the way other men conducted electricity.

“Agenda item one: efficiency.”

“Agenda item two: clarification of agenda item one.”

Hours passed.

Years passed.

A stenographer died and was replaced without interrupting the sentence.

Coffee was promoted to Major.

At the far end of the table an SS officer whispered:

“Are we winning?”

Heydrich replied without looking:

“Victory has been scheduled.”

---

## CHAPTER 5 — THE MAP THAT REFUSES TO OBEY

Hitler moved armies like misplaced commas.

“This city will fall.”

“It has already fallen, mein Führer.”

“Then it will fall again correctly.”

A general coughed in a defeatist manner.

“The troops require winter clothing.”

Hitler stared at the map until it apologized.

“Winter is a rumor spread by defeatists.”

---

## CHAPTER 6 — MENDEL IN POLAND, WHICH HAS BEEN FILED UNDER 'TEMPORARY'

The village had three names:

- the old one
- the new one
- the one people used when no one listened

Mendel was ordered to inventory absence.

“How many inhabitants?” he asked.

The mayor showed him an empty square.

“All accounted for.”

“Where are they?”

The mayor pointed at a stack of forms.

“Transferred to statistics.”

---

Mendel wrote:

*Population: grammatical.*

---

## CHORUS OF THE CORRIDOR

The SA men, now employed as ideological caretakers of a warehouse containing only echoes, held a philosophical debate.

“Was ist Blitzkrieg?”

“Fast confusion.”

“Was ist Endsieg?”

“A final version of the draft.”

“Was ist Realität?”

“Classified.”

---

## RETURN TO THE ARCHIVE — PRESENT DAY

The clerk asked me:

“Are you finding what you need?”

“I am finding too much.”

“That is normal. History exceeds storage capacity.”

A folder fell open by itself.

Inside:

A cafeteria menu from 1944.

Soup — unavailable

Victory — delayed

Cake — requisitioned

Stamped: **FINAL**

---

## BOOK II — THE EASTERN FRONT AS A CLERICAL ERROR

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### CHAPTER 1 — MENDEL KOHN IS PROMOTED DUE TO A MISPLACED CASUALTY LIST

The promotion arrived before the battle.

It was folded into his bread ration and stamped in three different inks, each contradicting the other.

**To Gefreiter Mendel Kohn**

You have distinguished yourself by not being where you were expected to fall.  
You are hereby promoted to the rank of *Interim Acting Assistant for Temporary Heroism (Eastern Conditions)*.

The sergeant read it aloud.

“Congratulations. You are now responsible for morale.”

“What is morale?” asked Mendel.

“Morale is when the report says everyone is happy.”

“And if they are not?”

“Then the report must be corrected.”

Mendel wrote in his notebook:

*Promotion: survival filed as achievement.*

Outside, the steppe stretched like an unsigned document.

---

## CHAPTER 2 — THE SUPPLY SYSTEM DECLARES WAR ON DISTANCE

The trucks arrived without fuel.

The fuel arrived without containers.

The containers arrived in Greece.

A quartermaster explained the situation using a pointer and a loaf of black bread.

“You see, according to this chart, the front is here.”

He tapped the crust.

“The supplies are here.”

He tapped the air.

“And reality,” he concluded, “is a temporary deviation.”

An officer burst in:

“The men are freezing!”

The quartermaster nodded.

“Have they submitted the proper request for warmth?”

---

## CHORUS OF FROZEN INFANTRY

*Wir haben den Sieg im Sommer bestellt,  
er kommt nicht durch den Schnee.  
Die Straße ist ein Formular,  
der Himmel tut nicht weh.*

One soldier:

“My rifle does not fire.”

Second soldier:

“Submit it for ideological repair.”

Third soldier:

“I submitted myself. No response.”

---

## CHAPTER 3 — GÖRING INVENTORIES THE SKY

Göring had created a new ministry:

### **The Office for the Ownership of Air.**

“Gentlemen,” he announced, adjusting a uniform that required its own postal code, “the sky belongs to us.”

An adjutant coughed.

“The enemy aircraft—”

“Unauthorized tenants.”

“We cannot reach them.”

“Raise the sky,” said Göring.

A secretary entered with a ledger.

“Excellency, we have counted the clouds. Several are missing.”

“Find them. Charge them with defeatism.”

Internal note:

**Subject:** Shortage of oxygen

**Solution:** Increase decorations.

---

## CHAPTER 4 — MENDEL GUARDS A WAREHOUSE OF WINTER

He was sent to protect a depot marked:

**CLOTHING FOR COLD CONDITIONS — DO NOT DISTRIBUTE WITHOUT PERMISSION**

Inside:

Coats

Boots

Blankets

All locked

The key had been reassigned to a committee.

The committee had been transferred west.

The west had been bombed.

Mendel saluted the coats.

“Remain at your post,” he told them.

They obeyed.

---

## CHAPTER 5 — GOEBBELS CORRECTS THE WEATHER

“The cold,” Goebbels declared into the microphone,  
“is a hostile rumor.”

A technician raised a mittened hand.

“The microphones are freezing.”

“Then broadcast warmth.”

“We have no warmth.”

“Broadcast it twice.”

The evening communiqué:

**The temperature at the front remains victorious.  
Troops report enthusiastic frostbite.**

Citizens listened in heated kitchens.

At the front, a soldier used the newspaper as socks.

---

## CHAPTER 6 — THE TRAIN THAT RETURNS WITH QUESTIONS

A train arrived from the East.

It contained:

- broken rifles
- unopened mail
- a typewriter still typing: **WHY**

The station commander checked the schedule.

“This train is not authorized to return.”

The typewriter continued:

**WHERE ARE WE GOING**

“Forward,” said the commander, and sent it back.

---

## **INTERLUDE — PRESENT DAY ARCHIVE**

The clerk brought me tea that had been requisitioned in 1942.

“Do you see the pattern?” he asked.

“Yes.”

“They built a machine that required reality to cooperate.”

“And reality refused.”

He stamped my silence.

---

## CHAPTER 7 — HEYDRICH'S LEGACY HOLDS A STAFF MEETING

The chair at the head of the table was empty.

No one sat in it.

Everyone obeyed it.

“Agenda,” said an officer to the chair.

The chair approved.

“Item one: the situation.”

The chair remained firm.

“Item two: clarification of the situation.”

A draft blew through the room.

All documents rearranged themselves into the word:

**LATE**

---

## CHAPTER 8 — MENDEL IS DECLARED A STRATEGIC POSITION

An order arrived:

**Due to cartographic shortages, Gefreiter Mendel Kohn is hereby designated as Hill 302. Hold your ground.**

He stood in the snow.

A lieutenant climbed him to get a better view.

“Any movement?”

“Yes,” said Mendel. “My left foot has retreated.”

“Cowardice,” said the lieutenant, falling off.

Artillery began adjusting its aim using Mendel as reference.

He wrote in his notebook:

*Topography: personal.*

---

## **CHORUS OF THE RETREAT THAT IS CALLED AN ADVANCE**

“Warum gehen wir rückwärts?”

“Strategische Zukunft.”

“Wo ist Berlin?”

“In den Befehlen.”

“Wo sind wir?”

“In der Fußnote.”

---

## CHAPTER 9 — HIMMLER VISITS THE FRONT AND INSPECTS THE ABSTRACT

He arrived with a suitcase full of spiritual graphs.

“The morale curve must ascend,” he explained to a row of icicles.

A general gestured at the horizon.

“The army is collapsing.”

Himmler made a note.

*Army: insufficiently mystical.*

He awarded medals to a map.

---

## CHAPTER 10 — THE FRONT IS RECLASSIFIED AS A MISUNDERSTANDING

A directive circulated:

**The current operational difficulties are to be regarded as a semantic issue.  
The word “retreat” will be replaced by “elastic victory.”**

Mendel received the memo while stepping backward.

“Am I elastic?” he asked.

“Yes,” said the sergeant. “Until further notice.”

---

## RETURN TO THE ARCHIVE

The folder closed itself.

On its cover a new stamp appeared:

**PROCESSED — OUTCOME PENDING**

The clerk looked at me almost kindly.

“History,” he said,

“is a form that cannot be completed because the signatures are missing.”

“Whose signatures?”

He gestured toward all the unwritten pages.

---

---

# BOOK III — THE REICH OF PAPER RETREATS INTO ITSELF

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## CHAPTER 1 — BERLIN BECOMES AN OFFICE WITHOUT WALLS

By the time the war reached Berlin, Berlin had been transferred to a safer location on paper.

Street signs pointed to departments.

Crater No. 7 was now:

### **Ministry for Temporary Final Measures**

A tram stopped in front of a smoking ruin and a conductor announced:

“Endstation: Verwaltungsrealität.”

Passengers got out and began filling forms in the open air.

A policeman directed traffic that no longer existed.

“Move along, please. This catastrophe is administrative.”

---

## CHAPTER 2 — KALTENBRUNNER SEARCHES FOR AUTHORITY

Kaltenbrunner had been given control of everything that could no longer be controlled.

He entered an office carrying three briefcases:

- Authority
- Emergency Authority
- Absolute Authority (temporary)

All were empty.

“Where is the staff?” he demanded.

A clerk emerged from behind a fallen wall.

“Transferred to the front.”

“Which front?”

“The one approaching.”

He opened a file:

**SUBJECT: SITUATION**

Attachment missing.

---

## CHAPTER 3 — MENDEL GUARDS THE HEADQUARTERS THAT LEFT AN HOUR AGO

The order was clear:

**You will defend this building to the last man.**

The building had already relocated.

Mendel stood in the rubble holding a sign:

### **HAUPTQUARTIER**

A captain ran past.

“Is this the headquarters?”

“It was,” said Mendel.

“Where is it now?”

“Forward.”

“Where is forward?”

Mendel turned the sign around.

On the back it read:

### **RÜCKWÄRTS**

---

Mendel wrote:

*Strategic position: mobile absence.*

---

## CHAPTER 4 — DALUEGE REORGANIZES THE POLICE OF NOTHING

Daluege assembled the remaining policemen in a basement that had become the Central Office for Law.

“Discipline must be maintained,” he declared.

A bomb fell somewhere above them and changed the numbering of reality.

“First,” he continued,  
“we will regulate looting.”

“Who is looting?” asked a sergeant.

“Everyone.”

“Who will arrest them?”

“Everyone.”

They issued an ordinance:

**STEALING IS FORBIDDEN WITHOUT PERMISSION**

It was immediately filed under **THEORETICAL**.

---

## CHORUS OF BERLIN CIVILIANS

*Der Führer spricht im Radio noch,  
die Wände hören zu,  
die Stadt ist nur ein Formular,  
mit Asche als Menü.*

A woman asked a soldier:

“Is it over?”

“No,” he said. “It has been extended.”

---

## CHAPTER 5 — GOEBBELS BROADCASTS TO A CITY THAT IS NOT THERE

“Citizens,” the loudspeaker declared to a street that had been relocated into dust,  
“victory is a question of faith.”

A boy saluted a crater.

A dog carried a file folder in its mouth.

In the studio the engineer whispered:

“Minister, there is no electricity.”

“Then broadcast spiritually.”

The speech continued in perfect silence.

---

## CHAPTER 6 — HIMMLER ATTEMPTS TO NEGOTIATE WITH REALITY

Himmler drafted a new plan for the continuation of the end.

**Proposal:**

The war will be won through improved filing.

He sought out representatives of reality.

Reality was unavailable.

He left a note.

---

## CHAPTER 7 — MENDEL IS AWARDED A MEDAL FOR HOLDING THE LINE OF TYPOGRAPHY

A courier arrived carrying a typewriter ribbon.

“For exceptional steadfastness,” he read,  
“you are decorated with the Iron Comma, Second Class.”

“What did I do?” asked Mendel.

“You remained in the sentence.”

The front passed through them like a correction.

---

# INTERLUDE — THE ARCHIVE INSERTS THE NARRATOR

A new folder appeared in my hands.

It had my name.

Inside:

## REPORT ON CIVILIAN OBSERVER — UNRELIABLE DUE TO MEMORY

Date: 1944

Location: Undetermined

I went to the clerk.

“This is impossible.”

He stamped it.

“History,” he said,  
“is participatory.”

---

## CHAPTER 8 — THE MAP ROOM WITHOUT A MAP

In the bunker, generals stood around a table.

In the center:

Nothing.

Hitler moved invisible armies.

“This division will counterattack.”

A general nodded at the empty surface.

“They are advancing magnificently.”

Another whispered:

“Into what?”

“Into the future,” said the first.

---

## **CHORUS OF THE FINAL ORDERS**

“Hold the city!”

“Which city?”

“The symbolic one!”

“Where is it?”

“In the communiqué!”

---

## CHAPTER 9 — MENDEL RECEIVES HIS LAST TRANSFER

The document was unsigned.

**You are reassigned to peace.  
Report immediately.**

He asked the officer:

“Where is peace stationed?”

The officer checked a list.

“It has not yet arrived.”

---

Mendel sat on an ammunition box that contained kitchen utensils and waited.

For the first time, no one gave him an order.

Snow fell in a neutral language.

He wrote:

*Status: human.*

---

## RETURN TO THE ARCHIVE — PRESENT DAY

The building was closing.

“Come back tomorrow,” said the clerk.

“Will it still be here?”

He considered this as if it required authorization.

“Only in copies.”

I looked at the last open folder.

Inside:

Mendel’s notebook.

The final line:

*War: administratively concluded.*

Stamped:

**FILE REMAINS OPEN**

---

# BOOK IV — THE AFTERMATH THAT REFUSES TO BE FILED

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## CHAPTER 1 — THE DOCTOR WHO MEASURED SHADOWS

Josef Mengele

In the archive his folder was thicker than the others,  
not because it contained more truth  
but because it had been corrected more often.

Title:

MEDICAL SERVICES — SPECIAL RESEARCH INTO HUMAN  
ADMINISTRATIVE MATERIAL

Inside:

charts  
sketches  
measurements of eyes that never signed consent forms  
letters requesting more forms

Always more forms.

---

Mendel Kohn encountered the doctor not as a person  
but as a corridor that smelled of disinfectant and theory.

A clerk in a white coat stopped him.

“Name?”

“Mendel Kohn.”

“Purpose?”

“I was told to deliver a list.”

“Living or dead?”

“Undetermined.”

The clerk nodded.

“Mixed categories go to Research.”

---

## CHAPTER 2 — SCIENCE AS A RUBBER STAMP

The laboratory functioned like every other office:

clipboards  
waiting benches  
numbers that tried to become names and failed

Assistants spoke in professional whispers.

“Specimen requires classification.”

“According to which regulation?”

“The new one.”

“The new one contradicts the previous new one.”

“Then we need a newer one.”

A file note:

Objective:  
Prove a theory that has already been decided.

---

Mendel stood at attention holding his list.

No one took it.

He wrote in his notebook:

*Medicine: paperwork with instruments.*

---

## CHAPTER 3 — THE WAITING ROOM

The waiting room had no clock.

Time was issued verbally.

A child asked:

“When are we going?”

A nurse answered:

“You are already processed.”

Chairs scraped like slow typewriters.

On the wall:

an anatomical chart  
a railway schedule  
they had the same structure

---

## CHORUS OF ASSISTANTS

*Die Forschung geht weiter,  
der Bleistift ist scharf,  
der Mensch ist ein Formular,  
das man falten darf.*

One assistant:

“I studied in Vienna.”

Second:

“I studied in Prague.”

Third:

“I studied numbers.”

Silence.

---

## CHAPTER 4 — THE DOCTOR'S CORRESPONDENCE

Letters sent:

Berlin

Institutes

Colleagues who replied with stamps and polite enthusiasm

Results promising.

Material sufficient.

Request continuation.

The language of distance.

The grammar of avoidance.

In the margin:

a coffee stain in the shape of Europe.

---

## CHAPTER 5 — MENDEL MISFILES A THEORY

A junior officer approached Mendel.

“You there — help carry these folders.”

“What are they?”

“Comparative studies.”

“Of what?”

“Twins.”

Mendel looked at the identical covers.

He placed them in different cabinets.

Nothing changed.

The officer panicked.

“You have destroyed the order!”

Mendel checked the labels.

“They are still identical.”

The officer:

“That is not the point!”

---

Mendel wrote:

*Difference: administrative necessity.*

---

## **CHAPTER 6 — THE CAMP AS A SELF-STAMPING MACHINE**

**Orders arrived already fulfilled.**

**Reports were written before events.**

**Statistics walked ahead of reality and reality was forced to follow.**

**A loudspeaker announced:**

**“Selection will begin at yesterday.”**

**An SS man asked:**

**“Who authorized yesterday?”**

**“Higher authority.”**

**“Which one?”**

**“Future.”**

---

## **INTERLUDE — PRESENT DAY**

**I closed the folder but it continued speaking through the cardboard.**

**The clerk did not look at me this time.**

**“Some files,” he said,  
“cannot be archived. They archive us.”**

**On the reading table lay a medical form.**

**Patient name:**

**Daniel Vidosh**

**Diagnosis:**

**Inherited memory — chronic**

---

## **CHAPTER 7 — THE DOCTOR WITHOUT A SYSTEM**

**Near the end the paperwork began to fragment.**

**Requests unanswered.**

**Deliveries lost.**

**Assistants transferred into smoke and rumor.**

**The doctor kept writing.**

**Research must continue.**

**Research must continue.**

**Research must—**

**No stamp.**

**For the first time the sentence had no authority.**

---

## CHAPTER 8 — MENDEL DELIVERS THE LAST LIST

The list contained only blank lines.

“Where do I file this?” he asked.

No one answered.

He walked through rooms that had become definitions of absence.

He placed the list on the desk.

The desk saluted him by collapsing.

---

Mendel wrote:

*End of procedure: undefined.*

---

## CHORUS OF UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

“Wo ist der Bericht?”

“Im Rauch.”

“Wo ist die Theorie?”

“Im Loch der Akte.”

“Wo ist der Mensch?”

Lange Pause.

“Nicht zuständig.”

---

## CHAPTER 9 — THE ESCAPE ROUTE OF PAPER

Documents began traveling west.

Names detached from crimes.

Curricula vitae invented new childhoods.

Ink crossed oceans more easily than bodies.

A memo:

Subject relocated.  
Responsibility in transit.

The archive stamped it:

INCOMPLETE

---

## RETURN TO THE ARCHIVE — NIGHT

The building was empty.

Only the folders remained awake.

Mendel's notebook lay open beside the medical files.

Two handwritings on the same page:

Mendel:

*Status: waiting for peace.*

Another line beneath it — my handwriting:

*Status: reading.*

For a moment the decades misfiled themselves.

---

# BOOK V — THE FILE THAT CLOSES ITSELF

---

## CHAPTER 1 — THE MAN WHO ORGANIZED DISTANCE

Adolf Eichmann

His folder was the most orderly.

Not thicker than the others —  
just aligned with terrifying precision.

Tabs:

- **Timetables**
- **Capacity**
- **Special Trains**
- **Correspondence (polite)**

Every page began with:

*In efficient execution of the matter...*

No verbs that touched the ground.

Only motion.

---

In the archive reading room, the clerk placed the file before me using white gloves.

“Logistics,” he said,  
“is the art of making absence arrive on time.”

---

## CHAPTER 2 — THE RAILWAY AS A SENTENCE

Mendel Kohn first encountered Eichmann as a voice behind a door marked:

### TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS

Inside, men discussed kilometers the way poets discuss longing.

“If we reroute through Hungary,” said one,  
“we gain twelve hours.”

“If we remove water,” said another,  
“we gain space.”

“What about the people?” asked a junior clerk.

Silence.

Then:

“Unscheduled.”

---

Mendel delivered his list.

Eichmann did not look up.

“Leave it in Incoming Reality.”

“There is no tray,” said Mendel.

Eichmann pointed to the floor.

---

Mendel wrote:

*Movement without destination: perfect order.*

---

## CHAPTER 3 — THE LANGUAGE OF FORMS

Eichmann's genius — if bureaucracy can possess such a word — was grammar.

Not:

people were taken

but:

units were processed

Not:

families

but:

categories

Not:

death

but:

final capacity utilization

Each sentence removed a heartbeat.

---

## CHORUS OF RAILWAY CLERKS

*Der Zug fährt pünktlich in die Nacht,  
die Liste nickt dazu,  
der Mensch steht nicht im Fahrplan drin,  
der Fahrplan ist tabu.*

A dispatcher asked:

“Where does this train go?”

The answer:

“According to schedule.”

---

## CHAPTER 4 — MENDEL MISSES A TRAIN ON PURPOSE

For the first time in the entire war, Mendel failed to obey an order correctly.

He stood on the platform holding a signal lamp.

Red.

Green.

Red again.

The train waited for his decision.

The officer shouted:

“Proceed!”

Mendel checked his notebook.

*Peace: not yet arrived.*

He dropped the lamp.

The delay lasted three minutes.

In the archive it lasts forever.

---

## CHAPTER 5 — CORRESPONDENCE

Letters from across Europe:

requests  
confirmations  
questions about numbers

Always numbers.

Never weather.  
Never crying.  
Never names spoken aloud.

One memo:

**The matter proceeds smoothly.**

Stamped by six offices.

---

## INTERLUDE — THE TRIAL AS A FOOTNOTE

The archive inserted a later document.

A glass booth.

Headphones.

Translation as destiny.

Language finally forced to contain verbs again:

“I did.”

“I arranged.”

“I was responsible for...”

But even here the sentences tried to escape into passive voice.

---

The clerk leaned toward me.

“Listen carefully,” he said.

“This is where the form begins to crack.”

---

## CHAPTER 6 — EICHMANN'S DESK WITHOUT EICHMANN

Back in the collapsing Reich, his office continued functioning after he had left it.

Files moved from:

**To Be Done**

to

**Done**

without human intervention.

A perfect machine.

Until the paper ran out.

The last sheet read:

**Destination: ?**

---

## CHAPTER 7 — MENDEL DELIVERS THE FINAL TIMETABLE

He found the railway office empty.

On the wall hung a clock without hands.

He placed the timetable on the desk.

All departure times:

blank

All arrival times:

blank

For the first time the system had no future tense.

---

Mendel wrote:

*Transport: completed into silence.*

---

## **CHAPTER 8 — THE ARCHIVE AND THE CAFÉ BECOME THE SAME ROOM**

The reading lamps turned into café lights.

The clerk into a waiter.

Outside, Budapest continued in the present tense.

He brought me coffee.

“Anything else?”

“Yes,” I said.

“The last file.”

He nodded and placed it on the table.

Title:

**MENDEL KOHN / DANIEL VIDOSH — JOINT STATUS REPORT**

Inside:

two notebooks

one in pencil

one in ink

---

## CHAPTER 9 — THE EXIT FROM THE SYSTEM

Mendel's final entry:

*Orders have ceased.  
I remain at attention for civilian life.*

My final entry:

*Reading concluded.  
File remains open.*

The pages overlapped.

For a moment we stood in the same sentence.

A soldier who survived by being misfiled.  
A grandson who survives by reading.

---

### FINAL CHORUS

*Kein Stempel mehr,  
kein Formular,  
die Sprache geht zu Fuß,  
der Mensch ist wieder Gegenwart,  
und nicht mehr nur ein Schluss.*

---

## LAST PAGE — THE FILE CLOSES ITSELF

I asked for the bill.

The waiter stamped it:

**PAID**

Underneath, in smaller letters:

**NOT SETTLED**

Outside, trams moved through evening snow that belonged to no ideology.

In my bag:

Mendel's notebook.

In it, one line I had not seen before:

*If peace arrives and I am not there, please forward me.*

Address:

**HOME (UNCLASSIFIED)**

---

# EPILOGUE — FORMS OF MEMORY

This book is a document that refuses efficiency.

A timetable that lists names instead of destinations.

A report written in the present tense.

The archive closes every night.

Every morning it opens again inside whoever remembers.

---

— FIN —

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