

A CRY IN THE DARK

Written by

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INT. A WIDE SEWER TUNNEL - NIGHT

SUPER: OCCUPIED HOLLAND - WORLD WAR II

ANICKA DROOM, (21), huddles in a blanket in the hard cement tunnel. Her hat and shoes on. Blond, sweet-faced, with heart shaped lips and dark circles under her eyes.

Something wriggles inside the blanket.

ANICKA

Shh, shh, shh. Please.

A little blond head emerges from the blanket.

JULES, (5 months), with frail curls and large inquisitive eyes. A beautiful baby, with a dirty smudge on his cheek.

Anicka drags herself up. Leaves Jules in the blanket. Rummages for food in her suitcase.

With a little knife, she reopens a tin of sardines. Pushes the fish around with the blade.

Draws circles with the oily blade up her finger to her wrist.

Presses harder until her wrist bleeds.

Jules gazes at Anicka with total adoration. Coos.

THE ANGEL (O.S.)

Of all God's creations, the little ones are the most precious.

Anicka shields her eyes.

A heavenly being, THE ANGEL, so brilliant only the edges of its form, its robes, its wings spread wide, and the halo around its face are clear. It comes from deep in the tunnel.

Tears roll down Anicka's face. She offers Jules up for the angel to take.

ANICKA

I can't keep him. I need to sleep.

Jules flails. Wails. Clutches at his mother.

The Angel vanishes.

Anicka lowers Jules to her lap. Sobs hard, hopeless gulps.

Jules yanks a lock of her hair. It springs up. He giggles.

A SHORT SHARP WHISTLE OF WARNING RINGS OUT.

Low lamp light shines down from above as a sewer grate is dragged away. A small circle of night sky appears above.

Three people climb down. Replace the grate.

LARA, (24), the leader, in men's clothes, followed by two young men in workers' clothes and caps: KRIS, full of himself and NELLS, shy and quiet, leap down with a wet splash.

LARA
Anicka? Baby?

Lara creeps to Anicka. Picks Jules up and bounces him. Anicka wipes back her tears. Her lip quivers.

LARA
It's crazy up there. They're not wasting bullets, when a bayonet will do.

Lara fishes out half a bar of unwrapped chocolate for Anicka. Anicka toys with it. Kris slides an arm around her.

KRIS
You should run away with me.

Anicka buries her head in his shoulder.

ANICKA
Jules won't sleep. He doesn't know day from night down here.

Nells watches Anicka, wistful as Kris eats her chocolate.

NELLS
I found this for your baby.

Nervous, he holds out a walnut-size bell on a string.

ANICKA
Thank you, Nells.

Jules stares at Lara. His face grows red. His lip quivers. Lara hands him off to Anicka.

Jules wails. Burrows into Anicka's blouse.

ANICKA
Hush-hush. You want the bell Julie?

Jules pounces on the bell, mouth first. It makes a muffled TINK as he sucks on it. Anicka grins at Nells. He glows.

Kris punches Nell's shoulder.

KRIS
You going to make dinner?

Nells hauls Anicka up. Lara helps her juggle the baby.

THEY MOVE DEEPER, AROUND A CORNER OF THE TUNNEL --

-- where an OLD COUPLE curl together, snore against the tunnel wall. Stars of David pinned to their coats.

A SHORT SHARP WHISTLE OF WARNING RINGS OUT.

EVERYONE FREEZES. Stares up.

LARA
(whispers)
It's nothing.

They wait. Eyes on the grate.

ABOVE THE SOUNDS OF AN ARMY MARCH ALONG THE STREET.

KRIS
Down, everyone down.

Nells rouses the old couple. Anicka crouches with Jules.

Only Anicka covers her ears as the flap of angel wings roar down on them.

TINK. TINK. TINK. Goes the muffled bell.

Jules gurgles.

Nells motions: cut the noise.

Anicka slips the bell out of Jules' mouth.

JULES SCREECHES.

SOLDIER ABOVE (O.S.)
Halt.

The marchers stop.

Anicka covers Jules' mouth.

He kicks and wails harder.

Anicka rips open her top. Tries to force him to nurse.

He flails. SCREAMS.

OVERHEAD, THE GRATE SLIDES BACK.

Pale star light filters in. Then a flashlight beam.

The old couple cling to each other. Lara and Kris belly crawl to the turn in the tunnel. Nells flattens to the wall.

Anicka shoves the bell in Jules mouth. Clutches him to her breast.

Jules quiets.

Above, a young NAZI SOLDIER, ducks his head in.

NAZI SOLDIER
I thought I heard something.

OFFICER (O.S.)
Go with him. Check it out.

The Nazi Soldier climbs down the ladder. A SECOND SOLDIER, angles his gun over the dark sewer. Covering him.

The Nazi Soldier jumps down with a thud. Listens.

TINK. TINK. TINK.

He arcs his light in the direction of the noise.

The refugees shrink back. Flash furious glances at Anicka.

Anicka rocks Jules. Brings her finger to her mouth.

ANICKA
(whispers)
Shh. Shh. Shh.

JULES GIGGLES AT HER HYSTERICAL FACE.

Lara pops up. Runs her finger over her throat at Anicka.

The Second Soldier lands.

NAZI SOLDIER
That way.

He points in the refugees' direction.

Terrified, the refugees plead with their eyes to Anicka.

Anicka squints as the GLORIOUS ANGEL appears in the tunnel before her. Unfurls it's wings. Reaches for the baby.

THE ANGEL

In your heart you know what's
right.

Anicka kisses Jules brow. Mouths "I love you". Jules lips
open around the bell, in a gummy smile.

She grabs the bell.

Smothers him against her breast.

Jules struggles.

The Nazi FOOTSTEPS ECHO. Inches from Lara and Kris's heads.

Jules falls limp.

Anicka clutches him to her heart. Sobs silent tears.

NAZI SOLDIER

It's just rats.

The soldiers turn back and climb out. The sewer cover scrapes
back into place. The marchers move on.

KRIS

Jesus Christ. I thought they were
going to kill us all.

Kris lights a match. The refugees glance at Anicka--

--Jules lies still in her lap.

Lara comes to her side. Squeezes her shoulder.

LARA

You got him quiet though.

Lara sees Jules dead. SUCKS IN HER BREATH. Horrified.

The refugee's cluster around. Curious. Get a good look.

LARA

What kind of monster are you?

Stricken Nells snatches up the bell. Backs away with Kris.

Anicka hugs Jules to herself.

ANICKA

Don't cry. Mommy loves you.