Schindler's List

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS KENEALLY

Born in Sydney, the Australian writer Thomas Keneally grew up in the timber and dairy town of Kempsey, New South Wales. His father flew in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II. As a teenager, Keneally entered the seminary to become a Catholic priest, but although he did become a deacon, he left before being ordained as a priest. In 1962, he published his first story, and he went on to publish over 50 books. Though Keneally is well-regarded as a writer of both fiction and nonfiction, his most famous work remains *Schindler's List*, which was originally published as *Schindler's Ark* in 1982 and then adapted into a critically acclaimed movie in 1993. Keneally lives with his wife in Sydney and has two daughters.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Though *Schindler's List* doesn't take place on an active battlefield, World War II is the context behind virtually all of the major events in the book. Fascism, a far-right nationalist political philosophy that began in Italy around World War I, rose to prominence in the 1930s and 1940s and is particularly associated with Adolf Hitler (the leader of Germany's Nazi Party) and Benito Mussolini. Hitler was also a strong anti-Semite (someone who hates Jewish people) and made "racial purity" a key part of his political platform, leading to the deaths of an estimated six million Jews in the Holocaust.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Thomas Keneally has credited several early 20th-century modernist writers as major influences on his work. The Irish poet W.B. Yeats and the Irish writer James Joyce—particularly his sweeping novel *Ulysses*—are two of his favorites. (Keneally himself has Irish heritage.) Keneally was also influenced by his predecessors and contemporaries in Australian literature. He particularly gives credit to Patrick White's novel *Voss* for showing him the possibilities of what an Australian writer can do. *Schindler's List* is one of a multitude of books that portray Jewish people's plight during the Holocaust. Others include *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*, and *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Schindler's List (originally titled Schindler's Ark)
- **When Written:** Early 1980s
- **Where Written:** Australia
- **When Published:** 1982
- **Literary Period:** Contemporary
- **Genre:** Nonfiction Novel, Historical Fiction
- **Setting:** Europe in World War II
- **Climax:** World Warr II ends, and Schindler gives a speech in his factory.
- **Antagonist:** Amon Goeth
- **Point of View:** Third Person

EXTRA CREDIT

An Active Retirement. Thomas Keneally has remained a prolific author well into his eighties. His most recent book, *The Dickens Boy*, was published in 2020. He jokingly said, "Does anyone write a good book at 83? Well, I think I have."

Fact or Fiction. Though *Schindler's List* was well-reviewed, its win of the Booker Prize was controversial. The Booker Prize is an award for fiction, and some critics felt that because *Schindler's List* is based on a true story and could be considered closer to historical reporting than fiction, it shouldn't have been eligible for a fiction prize.

PLOT SUMMARY

In the fall of 1943, Oskar Schindler, wearing an expensive suit with a swastika on it, leaves his apartment in Cracow, Poland, to take a limo to the villa of the Płaszów concentration camp commandant, Amon Goeth. There, he meets Goeth's Jewish maid, Helen Hirsch, whom Goeth abuses. During a private conversation they have in the kitchen, Hirsch offers her life savings to Schindler, hoping he will find a way to save her sister. Schindler accepts the money and tells Hirsch that the most important thing is to keep her health.

Schindler first comes to Cracow soon after September 1939, when Germany invades Poland at the start of World War II. He is a Sudeten German from Moravia, which was once part of Austria but is now part of Czechoslovakia. Schindler's father was a heavy drinker and not much of a churchgoer, while Schindler's mother was a devout Catholic. Schindler grew up racing motorcycles and turns out to be more similar to his father. His eventual wife, Emilie, however, is religious like his mother. The death of Schindler's mother caused a rift between him and his father.

Germany invades Schindler's homeland of Moravia in 1939, and shortly after, he meets a German named Eberhard Gebauer, who offers Schindler a position in the Abwehr, covertly gathering intelligence in Poland. In Cracow, Schindler

meets a Jewish accountant named Itzhak Stern. The two talk and begin to trust each other. Schindler tells Stern about an enamelware factory that he's interested in taking over, and Stern agrees to take a look at the books. That enamelware factory becomes Emalia, which earns a reputation among local Jews as a safe place to work, run by a humane man.

Schindler builds relationships with many other local Jews during his time running the enamelware factory. One of them, Leopold (Poldek) Pfefferberg, nearly shoots Schindler when he first sees him at the door, looking like an SS officer. Once the two get to talk, however, they find out they have a lot in common. Pfefferberg becomes one of Schindler's most trusted allies, showing a particular skill for obtaining items on the black market.

Hans Frank, the Nazi governor of Poland, begins implementing harsher measures against the Jewish population. First, they are rounded up and confined to ghettos. Later, the ghettos are "liquidated," with some Jewish residents being murdered on the spot while others are sent to live in Płaszów. At one point, Schindler and his German mistress, Ingrid, are disturbed to see a little girl (Genia) dressed in all **red** being rounded up with the rest of the people in the Cracow ghetto.

Life for Płaszów prisoners is dangerous, particularly because Commandant Amon Goeth is a cruel, erratic man who doesn't hesitate to punish minor offenses with summary executions. Those prisoners lucky enough to get assigned to Schindler's Emalia, however, are spared from the worst treatment—though Schindler constantly struggles, using his charm and connections, to keep it that way.

Eventually, the news comes that Płaszów will disband and all its Jewish prisoners will be sent to other camps (with many likely to die there or in transit). Schindler gets the idea of building a factory at Brinnlitz, which is in Moravia near his old home. The factory will ostensibly be producing arms for the war effort, and Schindler claims he'll need his skilled Jewish workers from Emalia in order to meet production quotas.

Schindler begins putting together his titular **list** of Jews from Płaszów who will be rescued to his new factory at Brinnlitz rather than shipped to somewhere worse, like the Auschwitz concentration camp. The process of narrowing down the list is difficult, in part due to the meddling of a prisoner named Marcel Goldberg, who takes charge of who does and doesn't make the list. Ultimately, however, Schindler is able to add over a thousand names, including the majority of his most trusted allies.

The male prisoners are shipped out first, and they arrive at Brinnlitz after only some minor disruptions. The female prisoners, however, are first shipped to Auschwitz and remain there for over a week. Despite enduring terrible conditions, they all survive until Schindler is finally able to sort out the mess and get them on a train to Brinnlitz.

At Brinnlitz, it becomes clear that Germany is losing the war. Schindler and his workers are still in danger, however, particularly because Nazi hardliners like Commandant Hassebroeck and Commandant Liepold oversee Schindler's camp and are always looking for opportunities to interfere with it. Fortunately for Schindler, however, many of the SS guards assigned to his camp are middle-aged and have little interest in causing trouble.

Finally, news comes over the radio that Germany has surrendered. For Schindler, however, the celebration is brief because he must flee the country (in case the Russians find him and assume he's a cruel camp leader like Liepold). He heads west with a small party, where they find sympathetic American soldiers.

After the war, Schindler doesn't accomplish anything of note, although he continues to be honored and recognized for what he did during the war. He briefly moves to South America, then comes back, while his wife stays behind. He maintains close contact with many of the Jewish people he rescued, and they are more than happy to do what they can to support him. When Schindler dies, many of the people he saved show up at the funeral, and his death is mourned around the world.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Oskar Schindler – Oskar Schindler is a Sudeten German-born industrialist from the region of Moravia who becomes an unlikely hero to the over 1,200 Jewish people from Cracow, Poland, that he saves from the Holocaust. He is handsome and gregarious, able to charm almost anyone he meets. Oskar has many allies who help him on his mission, with perhaps the most enduring ally being Itzhak Stern, who helps plant the idea of saving the Jews in Oskar's mind soon after Schindler arrives in Poland. Though Schindler's plan faces opposition from all directions, his most prominent enemy is the cruel camp commandant at Płaszów, Amon Goeth, who at times seems to mistakenly believe he and Oskar are good friends (an impression that Schindler uses to his advantage). Schindler would be remembered as generous, with a passion for saving Jews that, by the end of the war, starts to border on religious. But in many ways, he is not a traditionally virtuous man. He drinks excessively, occasionally getting himself in trouble—although he also frequently gets himself out of bad situations by offering a gift of alcohol or calling an old drinking buddy. He also has little sexual shame: though he is married to Emilie, he keeps a German mistress named Ingrid while simultaneously having an affair with his Polish secretary Klonowska (who is always the first person Schindler calls for help when he gets thrown in jail). Though at times Schindler may seem selfishly motivated to seek a profit, he is

nevertheless generous and self-sacrificing, eventually eschewing his business interests and risking his own safety when he creates his titular **list** of Jewish prisoners to transfer his factory in order to save them from dying in concentration camps. Indeed, by the end of the book, he has given away everything he has for the benefit of his former prisoners. Over the course of the book, Schindler transforms from a relatively ordinary man into a man so selfless that his deeds inspire legends among his former prisoners for decades after the war, though the flaws that make him human remain. Though his life after the war is less noteworthy, he remains a well-respected figure after his death, particularly among the Jews he helped save.

Itzhak Stern – Itzhak Stern is Oskar Schindler's Jewish accountant, as well as his constant companion and co-conspirator. Stern is also Schindler's "confessor," acting at times as his conscience, and he arguably inspires all of Schindler's ventures when he quotes Schindler the line from the Talmud about how "he who saves the life of one man saves the world entire." Stern is a pragmatist who, in the days before Schindler arrives in Cracow, has already started to learn how to navigate the Nazi bureaucracy. Stern starts out as the accountant for Abwehr agent Sepp Aue, who takes over the business where Stern works (which formerly had a Jewish owner). He meets Schindler (who is also working with the *Abwehr* at the time) when Schindler shows him the balance sheet of a company he's looking to acquire, the enamelware manufacturer Rekord. From Schindler's first factory in Cracow (Emalia) to the Brinnlitz camp, Stern manages the logistics of Schindler's businesses as well as helping to facilitate his real work: secretly rescuing as many Jews as possible from the Holocaust. Despite several setbacks and close calls, Stern helps Oskar lead his Jewish prisoners to the end of the war. Afterwards, Stern becomes one of Schindler's main advocates, since Schindler's membership in the Nazi Party makes him vulnerable to arrest after the war.

Amon Goeth – Amon Goeth is a big, imposing man who was an early joiner of Germany's National Socialist Party (the Nazis) and who becomes the commandant of the concentration camp called Płaszów, located near Cracow in Poland. He abuses his Jewish maid, Helen Hirsch, and is a sadistic, volatile leader who encourages summary executions in his camp (at least until new regulations come down from above). But Goeth is also friendly with Oskar Schindler and other industrialists in the camp, like Bosch and Madritsch, and he throws lavish parties at his villa. Despite his cruelty, Goeth also has a twisted sense of honor, and after Schindler wins Helen Hirsch over a hand of blackjack, Goeth honors their agreement. Goeth is about the same age as Schindler, and he has a similar penchant for drinking and pursuing women. But the superficial similarities between Goeth and Schindler only serve to highlight the deeper differences between them: Goeth is a man who abuses his power ruthlessly, whereas Schindler does everything in his power to treat people with mercy. Ultimately, Goeth's drinking gets the best of him: after being arrested for his black-market dealings, he becomes sick in prison and withers away from diabetes. Captured by the U.S. Army, Goeth is shocked when Schindler testifies against him—in his delusion, he genuinely believed Schindler thought well of him. Goeth is eventually hanged for his war crimes.

Leopold (Poldek) Pfefferberg – Poldek Pfefferberg is a young Jewish man from Cracow and one of Oskar Schindler's most trusted companions. According to author Thomas Keneally, Pfefferberg is also one of the driving forces who helped get *Schindler's List* written in the first place. A confident 27-year-old when he first meets Schindler, Pfefferberg shows remarkable ingenuity, which he frequently uses to get himself out of trouble. After being captured by Nazis, he bluffs his way out of captivity by presenting an important-looking forged document. When Pfefferberg sees Oskar Schindler visiting his mother, Mina Pfefferberg, he nearly decides to shoot Oskar. Fortunately, he holds back, and when he finally has a chance to talk with Schindler, the two find they have a lot in common. Pfefferberg becomes Schindler's black market runner, able to procure just about anything Schindler needs. When things take a turn for the worst and the ghetto in Cracow is liquidated, Pfefferberg is one of the last alive inside. He loses contact with his wife, Mila, and is apprehended in the street by Amon Goeth himself. Though Goeth has an opportunity to kill Pfefferberg, he spares him when Pfefferberg salutes and greets him (which amuses Goeth). Pfefferberg is almost overlooked for Schindler's **list** but manages to make the cut after forming an unusual alliance with a cruel SS officer named Hans Schreiber. Pfefferberg is again separated from his wife when the female Schindler Jews are sent to Auschwitz. Ultimately, however, the Pfefferbergs make it out alive, a testament to how much luck and ingenuity were needed to survive as a Jew in Nazi-occupied territory. Long after the hanging of Amon Goeth, Pfefferberg continues to be haunted by Goeth in his dreams.

Emilie Schindler – Emilie Schindler is a patient, religious woman who married Oskar Schindler at relatively young age and who has a similar temperament to Schindler's mother. Emilie and Oskar live together in Zwittau until Oskar heads out for Cracow, leaving Emilie behind. Although Emilie is aware of Oskar's multiple affairs (including with his German mistress, Ingrid, and his Polish secretary, Klonowska), she remains devoted to Oskar, even as she seems to privately disapprove of some of his choices. After visiting Oskar briefly in Cracow, Emilie remains in Zwittau until Oskar comes back to build his new Brinnlitz camp nearby. There, she moves back into an apartment with Oskar (who gives up some of his old affairs but who continues to take new lovers). Though Oskar will get the majority of the credit for his camp's success—in part because of his magnetic personality—Emilie plays a crucial role behind the

scenes, in particular using her training as a nurse to tend to inmates. Though Emilie may seem subservient to Oskar, she also demonstrates independence throughout the book. After the war, Oskar runs a failed business in Brazil before heading back to Germany, and Emilie stays behind in Brazil and builds her own life without Oskar.

Helen Hirsch/Lena – Helen Hirsch is the Jewish maid of the cruel Płaszów concentration camp leader, Commandant Amon Goeth. Goeth abuses her—she is thin and often sports visible bruises. During a fateful party at Goeth's villa, Hirsch runs into Oskar Schindler in the kitchen and senses that he is sympathetic to her situation. Out of desperation, she gives Schindler her life's savings and begs him to help her sister get out of Płaszów safely. Schindler takes the money and reassures her that she just needs to hold on. He tells her Goeth won't shoot her (though at the time, this is far from certain). Ultimately, Hirsch's fate is decided when Goeth and Schindler are drinking and playing cards. Schindler bets everything on a chance to win Hirsch and succeeds; though he's disappointed, Goeth keeps up his end of the deal. Hirsch's experience shows firsthand how cruel and arbitrary Nazi leadership could be in occupied countries. It also shows the extraordinary luck that often played a role in determining survivors' fates.

Victoria Klonowska – Victoria Klonowska is Oskar Schindler's attractive, blonde Polish secretary and lover. A hard-headed and efficient Polish nationalist, she often works on Schindler's behalf in order to get him released from SS prison. From the beginning, Klonowska is influential, telling Oskar of where he can go to get a drink and meet like-minded people and helping to handle his administrative affairs. Though Schindler already has a wife, Emilie, and other women in his life, like his mistress Ingrid, Klonowska never seems jealous. Oskar frequently shows his gratitude for Klonowska's work, at one point getting her a poodle for Christmas (something that's very difficult to acquire on the black market). When Schindler moves his operations to Brinnlitz, Klonowska stays behind in Cracow, again apparently with no hard feelings. Klonowska is one of Schindler's many talented allies who helped him out of hard situations and ran his business's day-to-day operations.

Henry and Leopold Rosner – Brothers Henry and Leo Rosner are a pair of Jewish musicians, Henry on the violin and Leo on the accordion. They are some of the many Jewish people who owe their lives to Oskar Schindler's rescue efforts. Henry has a wife name Manci and a son named Olek. Though the Płaszów concentration camp leader, Commandant Amon Goeth, is a violent anti-Semite, he frequently calls the Rosner brothers to his villa for parties and seems to enjoy their music. The Rosner brothers' music seems to have a strange effect on the Nazis—Henry even suggests that their repeated playing of a mournful tune indirectly leads an SS officer to commit suicide. Goeth's preference for their music is so strong that Henry Rosner has to hide his violin when he travels out of Płaszów to Brinnlitz, so that he will be able to leave. Both Henry and Leo endure heart-wrenching periods of being separated from their families, though in the end they survive. The Rosner brothers represent the complicated relationships Nazis had with certain prisoners, sometimes admiring or favoring them even as they worked them to death.

Julian Scherner – Julian Scherner is a police chief in Nazi-occupied Poland and an officer in the SS. As a middle-ranked man in the Nazi Party, Scherner oversees atrocities against Jews but is arguably more interested in his own personal enrichment than in party ideology. Though Oskar Schindler secretly despises Scherner (as well as the other police chief, Czurda), the two often drink together and have a working relationship. When Schindler ends up in prison, Scherner is at the top of the **list** that Schindler gives his secretary Klonowska to call. Because Scherner's name carries a lot of influence, he is successful in getting Schindler out of jail. Scherner is just one of many unsavory characters who nevertheless plays a key role in helping Schindler carry out his rescue plan, without even realizing it.

Rolf Czurda – Rolf Czurda is, along with Julian Scherner, a police chief in Nazi-occupied Poland and an officer in the SS. He attends raucous parties at the villa of Płaszów concentration camp leader, Commandant Amon Goeth, where the industrialists Oskar Schindler, Julius Madritsch, and Franz Bosch are also frequently guests. Though Czurda would not approve of Schindler's Jewish rescue plan if he knew the full details, he and Scherner are essential to Schindler's success, using their influence in the SS to help bail Schindler out. Czurda represents the many self-interested SS officials who end up helping Schindler not because they believe in his cause, but because they see an opportunity for personal advancement.

Franz Bosch – Franz Bosch is a manager of various businesses inside the Płaszów concentration camp, some legal and others illegal. He drinks and parties with Oskar Schindler, Julian Scherner, Rolf Czurda, and Julius Madritsch at Commandant Amon Goeth's villa. Though Schindler doesn't like Bosch, the two find each other useful. Bosch asks Schindler for bribes, often claiming they are for an aunt whose home was recently bombed out. In exchange, Bosch helps bail Schindler out of prison when necessary. Bosch represents the transactional nature of the many deals Schindler makes to help keep his rescue operation afloat.

Julius Madritsch – Julius Madritsch is the owner of a very profitable factory at the Płaszów concentration camp, but like Oskar Schindler, he treats his Jewish prisoners humanely. With the help of his manager, Raimund Titsch, Madritsch smuggles extra bread in to his prisoners to make sure they are properly nourished. Although Madritsch attends parties at camp commandant Amon Goeth's villa—with the likes of Julian Scherner, Rolf Czurda, and Franz Bosch—he generally leaves early. When Schindler is making plans to build a new factory in

Brinnlitz, he invites Madritsch to join him. The careful Madritsch ultimately refuses—not because he disagrees with Schindler's mission but because he doesn't believe it will work. After the war, Madritsch is held in high regard by former prisoners and has a memorial erected in his honor at a park in Israel. Though Schindler remains the most famous savior of Jewish people in the Holocaust, Madritsch represents the rare few other men who followed their consciences and tried to do good within the system.

Olek Rosner – Olek is the young son of Henry and Manci Rosner, who is five years old at the beginning of the German occupation of Cracow. He is initially hidden so that he will not be taken to the Płaszów concentration camp, but eventually, his family decides it will be safer to smuggle him inside. He makes Oskar Schindler's **list** and is transported to Brinnlitz, but he's rounded up and shipped to Auschwitz for medical experimentation. There, however, he gets a tattoo (meaning he isn't marked for immediate extermination), and he survives the Holocaust.

Manci Rosner – Manci Rosner is an Austrian woman living in Cracow; she's Henry Rosner's wife and Olek's mother. Manci makes Oskar Schindler's **list** and is rescued from the Płaszów concentration camp, but like the other women, she is first sent to Auschwitz. There, while in a train car waiting to be shipped out, she is surprised to see her son and husband. They try to reassure her so that she won't feel guilty about going ahead to Brinnlitz. Ultimately, the whole family survives the Holocaust.

Lisiek – Lisiek is a Jewish orderly and a compatriot of Poldek Pfefferberg who meets an unfortunate early end at the hands of the Płaszów concentration camp leader Commandant Amon Goeth. Before Lisiek's death, he and Pfefferberg get in trouble for trying to sneak through a room while Goeth is having sex. Ultimately, however, Lisiek is killed over an even more trivial matter: he saddles up a horse for Franz Bosch without asking for Goeth's permission first.

Abraham Bankier – Abraham Bankier is a Jewish businessman who plays a critical role in Oskar Schindler's plan to rescue Jews from the Holocaust. He excels at both legal and illegal business matters, helping Schindler secure the funds for his enamelware factory in Cracow and eventually becoming the plant manager. When Bankier is late to pick up his Blauschein—his proof that he is a skilled worker and allowed to stay in Cracow—he is nearly shipped off in a cattle car, but Schindler saves him at the last minute.

Eberhard Gebauer – Eberhard Gebauer is an agent in a German intelligence agency called the Abwehr. He notices Oskar Schindler's gregariousness and sends him to Cracow for a position in the *Abwehr*. Perhaps Schindler accepts the position because he is looking to avoid serving as a solider, or perhaps he has not fully made his break with Nazi ideology yet. In any case, Schindler's position in the *Abwehr* proves to be a valuable asset and helps him get out of difficult situations later.

Raimund Titsch – Raimund Titsch is the manager of Julius Madritsch's uniform factory in Cracow (which becomes part of the Płaszów concentration camp). He is a quiet Austrian Catholic with a limp. He supports Madritsch's efforts to treat Jewish prisoners more humanely. During his regular chess matches with Commandant Amon Goeth, Titsch learns that it is best if he purposely loses, so that Goeth won't take out his anger on the prisoners.

Majola – Majola is the German mistress of the Płaszów concentration camp leader, Commandant Amon Goeth. She is sensitive and generally keeps away from the more gruesome parts of the camp. A rumor starts that she has threatened to withhold sex from Goeth if he continues to execute prisoners for no reason.

Adolf Hitler – Adolf Hitler is the leader of Nazi Germany and a driving force behind many of its nationalist, anti-Semitic policies. His voice haunts Oskar Schindler, who listens intently after an assassination attempt on Hitler's life, only to be disappointed several hours later when Hitler himself reveals that he survived the attempt.

Heinrich Himmler – Heinrich Himmler is one of the most powerful Nazis and a key force in carrying out the Holocaust. Near the end of the war, he secretly tries to position himself as a logical successor to Hitler. This involves using bureaucracy to change how the concentration camps are managed, in order to give the appearance to other nations that the camps are more humane than they actually are.

Mina Pfefferberg – Poldek Pfefferberg's mother, Mina, is a Jewish woman from Cracow. When Oskar Schindler comes to visit her, looking like an SS agent, Pfefferberg nearly shoots him—but instead they get to talking and find out they have a lot in common. Mina Pfefferberg is an interior designer who ends up decorating Schindlers apartment, in part because Germans like Schindler are the only ones who can think about interior decorating while World War II is underway.

Hans Frank – Hans Frank is the governor of Poland under the Nazis, and he earns a reputation for being brutal, particularly toward the Jewish population. Despite his party-line ideology and his anti-Semitism, however, he initially favors deporting Jewish people to Madagascar instead of attempting to exterminate them (which he believes wouldn't work).

Ingrid – Ingrid is Oskar Schindler's Sudeten German mistress. They live together, and some even assume that she's his wife. Like Klonowska, Ingrid seems to have few hard feelings about Schindler's many relationships with other women. She helps run things behind the scenes and at one point provides a care package for him while he's in prison.

Alexander Biberstein – Dr. Alexander Biberstein is the official doctor of the Judenrat and the brother of *Judenrat* president Marek Biberstein. He helps Poldek Pfefferberg get out of the

OD by diagnosing him with a bad back and showing him how to fake the injury. Despite some interference with Oskar Schindler's **list** from Marcel Goldberg, Biberstein is ultimately one of those rescued by Schindler. He helps Schindler prevent a typhus outbreak at Brinnlitz, and after the World War II, he attests to how Oskar and Emilie Schindler helped save many lives.

Reichert – Marek Biberstein tries to get Reichert, a man with connections in the SS, to pass on bribe money so that more Jews will be allowed to remain in the Cracow ghetto, despite orders for them to be moved out. The attempt is unsuccessful. Oskar Schindler says that Reichert is clearly a "crook," but Stern muses that sometimes dealing with crooks is the only available option.

Szymon Jereth – Szymon Jereth is the owner of Jereth's Box Factory, which is forcibly turned into the German Box Factory after the German invasion of Poland. The factory ends up being the backyard of Oskar Schindler's enamelware factory in Cracow. Jereth continues to work at the factory after the takeover. Then, after all Cracow Jews are sent to the concentration camp Płaszów, he is eventually added to Schindler's **list** and taken to Brinnlitz with his family.

Mrs. Dresner – Mrs. Dresner is Genia's aunt, Juda Dresner's wife, and Danka Dresner and Janek Dresner's mother. During the liquidation of the ghetto, she has a close call when her neighbors, who promised they had a fake wall to hide behind, will only allow Danka to hide behind the wall, not Mrs. Dresner. Mrs. Dresner and Danka endure even worse hardships when many of the "Schindler women" are first sent to Auschwitz instead of Brinnlitz. But ultimately, Schindler saves most of the Dresner family.

Genia – Three-year-old Genia is Juda and Mrs. Dresner's niece and Danka and Janek Dresner's cousin. She is originally from the country but comes to live with her aunt and uncle, and they pass her off as their real child. She is called "**Red**" or "Redcap" because she likes to wear red. Though very young, she makes an amazing escape from the SS on Krakusa Street by hiding in plain sight. Later, however, Oskar Schindler and Ingrid see a little girl in all red being lined up during an Aktion in the ghetto, implying that Genia didn't survive. She became the inspiration for the famous scene of the girl in the red coat in the film adaptation of *Schindler's List*.

Danka Dresner – Danka Dresner is Juda and Mrs. Dresner's daughter, Genia's cousin, and Janek Dresner's sister. She works as a clearing woman in a *Luftwaffe* (air force) base near Cracow. During the liquidation of the ghetto, she is temporarily separated from her mother when she is allowed to hide behind a fake wall, but her mother is forced to stay outside. Though she and her mother come close to dying when the "Schindler women" are shipped to Auschwitz, ultimately Schindler rescues them.

Janek Dresner – Janek Dresner is Juda and Mrs. Dresner's son, Genia's cousin, and Danka Dresner's brother. Schindler saves Janek and other members of the Dresner family from the Płaszów concentration camp and moves them to Schindler's factory in Brinnlitz. There, while Schindler is away, Janek makes a mistake during an inspection and is accused of sabotage. Despite Commandant Liepold's attempts to hold a hearing and swiftly dispose of Janek, Schindler cleverly helps Janek avoid death by starting his own hearing, then breaking it up before sentencing.

Symche Spira – Symche Spira is an Orthodox Jew in the OD who helps carry out the Nazis' orders in Cracow. At one point, he is Poldek Pfefferberg's boss. Spira acts loyal to the Germans and helps them brutally clear Jews from the ghetto. But ultimately, he and his whole family were executed, showing that no amount of Jewish loyalty was enough for the Nazis.

Mordecai Wulkan – Mordecai Wulkan is a jeweler who is approached by Spira's OD about sorting through the mountains of valuables left behind by dead Jewish people. Later, his workshop provides a ring for the wedding of Josef Bau and Rebecca Tannenbaum in Płaszów. Wulkan makes Oskar Schindler's **list** and survives the Holocaust.

Albert Hujar – Albert Hujar is a low-ranking SS officer who gets into an argument with a Jewish prisoner and is then ordered by Amon Goeth to shoot her. Reluctantly, he does. Later, he seems to have fewer reservations about carrying out executions, as he kills Dr. Blau along with all the patients in the hospital.

Adam Garde – Adam Garde is a Jewish engineer in the concentration camp Płaszów whom Schindler recruits for Emalia. Commandant Amon Goeth allows the transfer but first makes Garde build a conservatory for him (and during the project, breaks Garde's hand). Later, at Brinnlitz, Garde and Schindler listen to the radio intently after the attempted assassination of Adolph Hitler.

Regina Perlman – Regina Perlman is a young Jewish woman with a dark complexion who lives in Cracow with forged papers saying she's South American. Eventually, however, she gives up this cover to enter the concentration camp Płaszów with her parents. There she works at Oskar Schindler's Emalia, and eventually her whole family makes his **list** to be transferred to Brinnlitz.

Menasha Levartov – Menasha Levartov is a Rabbi in the concentration camp Płaszów. After Commandant Amon Goeth takes notice of him and just barely holds back from killing him, it's arranged for Levartov to go work at Oskar Schindler's Emalia. Schindler allows him to hold religious ceremonies, and later at Brinnlitz, Levartov takes care of the corpses from the Goleszów cattle car.

Josef Bau – Josef Bau is a Jewish artist from Cracow who falls in love with a girl named Rebecca Tannenbaum while they are both prisoners in the concentration camp Płaszów. He is

married to her in a clandestine ceremony where his mother, Mrs. Bau, is present. On his wedding night, he thinks the camp guards have discovered him missing and bolts back to his barracks, but it turns out to only be a false alarm.

Mietek Pemper – Mietek Pemper is a young Jewish typist who works in the office of Płaszów concentration camp leader Commandant Amon Goeth along with Frau Kochmann. Though Goeth initially is intrigued by Pemper's photographic memory, ultimately, Pemper uses his amazing memory of the official documents he saw to testify against Goeth in court.

Marcel Goldberg – Marcel Goldberg a Jewish personnel clerk who ends up overseeing who does and doesn't make Oskar Schindler's **list** of Jews to transfer from the Płaszów concentration camp to Schindler's new factory at Brinnlitz. Unlike Schindler, he uses the list as a chance to make a profit and earns a bad reputation among the prisoners, some of whom resent Schindler for allowing Goldberg to take charge.

Commandant Johannes Hassebroeck – Hassebroeck is the Nazi commandant of the concentration camp Gröss-Rosen, which Oskar Schindler's new Brinnlitz camp is a part of. Hassebroeck sends a telegram to Commandant Liepold near the end of the war about a "final selection" that will eliminate many of the remaining Jews. (The end of the war and Schindler's maneuvering prevent this from happening at Brinnlitz, however.)

Commandant Josef Liepold – Josef Liepold is the commandant of Oskar Schindler's Brinnlitz camp. Unlike many of the middle-aged SS officers in the garrison at Brinnlitz, Liepold is not indifferent and is fiercely devoted to the concept of a "Final Solution" (a total extermination of Jewish people). Schindler is able to keep Liepold at bay for a while, but finally he is forced to use trickery to get Liepold deployed to active combat duty instead.

Dolek Horowitz – Dolek Horowitz is Richard Horowitz and Niusia Horowitz's father and Regina Horowitz's husband. He and his family make Oskar Schindler's **list**. When Richard is rounded up from Brinnlitz for medical experiments at Auschwitz, Dolek is taken with him, Richard survives there to be later discovered by Russians, while Dolek is shipped off to the concentration camp Mauthausen.

Regina Horowitz – Regina Horowitz is Richard Horowitz and Niusia Horowitz's mother and Dolek Horowitz's wife. Like the other Jewish women rescued by Oskar Schindler, Regina and her daughter Niusia are detained in Auschwitz before finally making it to Brinnlitz. While waiting for their train to leave, they are surprised to see Dolek and Richard also in Auschwitz.

Richard Horowitz – Richard Horowitz is Dolek and Regina Horowitz's son and Niusia Horowitz's brother. Though he makes it safely to Oskar Schindler's factory in Brinnlitz, he is rounded up for medical experiments in Auschwitz, and his father is taken too. There, he sees his mother and sister right as their train is about to leave Auschwitz for Brinnlitz. Richard survives in Auschwitz because he is given a tattoo, and he is found there by Russian soldiers.

Niusia Horowitz – Niusia Horowitz is Dolek and Regina Horowitz's daughter and Richard Horowitz's sister. Like the other Jewish women Oskar Schindler rescues, Niusia and her mother are detained in Auschwitz before finally making it to Brinnlitz. While waiting for their train to leave, they are surprised to see that Dolek and Richard are also in Auschwitz.

Uri and Moshe Bejski – The Bejski brothers are two of the Jewish people Oskar Schindler saves. Moshe specializes in forged documents, while Uri specializes in weapons. At Brinnlitz, Uri begins stockpiling weapons and keeping a small militia of Jews, but the Nazis are pushed out of the area before the militia is ever needed.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Hans Schindler – Hans is Oskar Schindler's father and Louisa Schindler's husband. Like his son, Hans is a gregarious, charming man who enjoys going out drinking. Louisa's death solidifies a growing rift between Hans and Oskar, although near the end of Hans's life, the two make amends.

Louisa Schindler – Louisa is Oskar Schindler's mother and Hans Schindler's wife. A patient, religious, and reserved woman, her death contributes to a long rift between Oskar and Hans.

Sepp Aue – Sepp Aue is a middle-aged German official who employs Itzhak Stern as an accountant. Though he seems more indifferent than sympathetic toward the Jews, he is instrumental in introducing Stern to Oskar Schindler.

Mila Pfefferberg – Mila Pfefferberg is Poldek Pfefferberg's delicate young wife. She suffers many hardships, including being separated from Poldek in the ghetto while he's out in the sewers and again when the "Schindler women" are sent from Płaszów to Auschwitz. Ultimately, though, Mila is able to persevere and survive.

Herman Toffel – Herman Toffel is one of Oskar Schindler's sources in the SS in Cracow. It's from him that Schindler learns of an upcoming Aktion and attempts to warn some of his Jewish friends in the city.

Dieter Reeder – Dieter Reeder is another one of Oskar Schindler's sources in the SS, who gives him information that Schindler later passes on to his Jewish allies.

Martin Plathe – Martin Plathe is one of Oskar Schindler's contacts in the SS. When Schindler goes to jail, Plathe is second on Schindler's **list** of influential people for his secretary Klonowska to contact, right under Scherner.

Marek Biberstein – Marek Biberstein is president of the Judenrat in Cracow and the brother of Alexander Biberstein. For the most part, he is respected by fellow Jews in Cracow for

his efforts to be a buffer between them and the Nazis—but ultimately, this leads to his arrest by the Nazis.

Edith Liebgold – Edith Liebgold is a Polish Jew living in the ghetto who hears rumors about Oskar Schindler's enamelware factory but doesn't believe them. After she meets Schindler in person, however, she begins to feel hope, and she stays with him until the end of World War II.

Juda Dresner – Juda Dresner is Genia's uncle, Mrs. Dresner's husband, and Danka Dresner and Janek Dresner's father. He is the purchasing agent at Franz Bosch's plant. Oskar Schindler saves most of the Dresner family, and Juda is one of the mourners who shows up in person at Schindler's funeral.

Kucharska – Kucharska is a Polish-Jewish woman whom Oskar Schindler kisses on his 34th birthday while he's drunk. Because of Nazi laws, this gets Schindler sent to prison, though he is bailed out when Klonowska reaches out to some of Schindler's connections in the SS.

Philip – Philip is a handsome SS officer who has a breakdown and briefly shares a prison cell with Oskar Schindler. Though Schindler initially suspects Philip of being a plant, the two begin to get along better, particularly after Schindler bribes a guard to get them some vodka.

Szepessi – Szepessi is an Austrian bureaucrat in charge of providing Blauscheins (work permits) to Jews. Given his line of work, he is relatively humane, helping Poldek Pfefferberg doctor his papers to look like a more essential worker—but his efforts ultimately get him sent to Auschwitz.

Tadeus Pankiewicz – Tadeus Pankiewicz owns a pharmacy in Plac Zgody in Cracow, which becomes a place where Nazis round up Jewish people (including Genia).

Bachner – Bachner is a young pharmacist who is shipped off to a concentration camp but who escapes and returns eight days later. He is one of the first in Cracow to report about the pyramids of corpses and mass gassings in Nazi concentration camps.

Sedlacek – Sedlacek is an Austrian dentist involved with a Zionist rescue organization that operates out of Budapest. His role is to recruit Oskar Schindler, get detailed information from him about the concentration camps, and provide Schindler with money to continue his rescue operations.

Franz Von Korab – Franz Von Korab is a member of the *Wehrmacht* who is rumored to have a Jewish grandmother. He is a patient of Sedlacek and becomes an important connection for him.

Springmann and Kastner – Springmann and Kastner are associates of Sedlacek in the Zionist rescue organization. They meet with Oskar Schindler to learn more about the state of Jews in Cracow.

Horst Pilarzik – Horst Pilarzik is a tall young SS officer, known for leading particularly brutal death squads in Cracow.

Dr. Blau – Dr. Blau is a physician with many adolescent patients suffering from scarlet fever. Albert Hujar executes Blau and all the patients.

Dr. B and Dr. H – Dr. B and Dr. H are physicians who decide that rather than leaving their patients to be executed (like Dr. Blau's patients were), they will administer cyanide to them.

Wilek Chilowicz – Wilek Chilowicz becomes head of the Jewish camp police in the concentration camp Płaszów. He is Commandant Amon Goeth's agent on the black market. As with Spira, his loyalty gets him nowhere, and Goeth eventually invents a pretext to execute him.

Grün – Grün is a young SS officer who is the bodyguard of the Płaszów concentration camp leader, Commandant Amon Goeth.

Lamus – Lamus is one of Oskar Schindler's workers at Emalia whom Grün nearly executes. Schindler is able to defuse the situation by offering Grün vodka.

Babar – Babar is a friend of Sedlacek's who comes to the concentration camp Płaszów to meet Oskar Schindler and to take photographic evidence of conditions in the camp.

Dr. Sopp – Dr. Sopp is a physician to the SS prisons in Cracow. He blackmails Oskar Schindler for a lot of money, and Schindler has no choice but to pay up.

Rebecca Tannenbaum – Rebecca Tannenbaum is a Jewish prisoner in the concentration camp Płaszów who falls in love with and marries Josef Bau.

Mrs. Bau – Mrs. Bau Josef Bau's mother. She helps him arrange his secret wedding to Rebecca Tannenbaum.

Frau Kochmann – Frau Kochmann is a young German woman who works as a typist in the office of Płaszów concentration camp leader Commandant Amon Goeth along with Mietek Pemper.

Colonel Erich Lange – Erich Lange is a high-ranking Nazi who is disillusioned with what he sees around him. He advises Oskar Schindler about setting up his Brinnlitz factory and later helps Schindler get out of jail.

Sussmuth – Sussmuth is an engineer whom Colonel Erich Lange recommends to Oskar Schindler. Together, he and Schindler figure out the details of Brinnlitz.

Eckert – Eckert is a senior SS investigator who brings down Amon Goeth on account of his black-market dealings.

Büscher – Büscheris the replacement commandant at the Płaszów concentration camp after Goeth is arrested.

Hans Schreiber – Hans Schreiber is a cruel SS officer who nearly executes Poldek Pfefferberg. Strangely enough, however, the event causes Schreiber to take a liking to Pfefferberg, and Schreiber helps persuade Marcel Goldberg to include Pfefferberg on Oskar Schindler's **list**.

Dr. Idek Schindel – Dr. Idek Schindel is a Holocaust survivor who is left off of Oskar Schindler's **list** due to Marcel Goldberg's manipulation.

Count Folke Bernadotte – Count Folke Bernadotte is a Swedish diplomat who makes secret deals with Heinrich Himmler about what will happen after the end of World War II. This leads to a change in policy at concentration camps to make them seem more outwardly humane.

Rudolf Höss – Rudolf Höss is the brutal commandant of Auschwitz, where many of Oskar Schindler's Jewish women will be held on their way between the Płaszów concentration camp and Brinnlitz.

General Pohl – General Pohl is a Nazi official in Oranienburg, where many decisions are made about Jewish prisoners' lives in concentration camps.

Adolf Eichmann – Adolf Eichmann is a major architect of the Holocaust who is the subject of a high-profile trial in Israel at around the same time that Oskar Schindler visits.

Josef Mengele – Josef Mengele is a Nazi doctor at Auschwitz known for his cruel and inhumane medical experiments on prisoners. Some of the Jewish children at Schindler's camp are rounded up for his experiments, but they ultimately survive.

Huth – Huth is a civilian engineer at the Płaszów concentration camp who eventually works with Klonowska to get Oskar Schindler get out of jail a third time.

Clara Sternberg and Mrs. Krumholz – Clara Sternberg and Mrs. Krumholz are two of Oskar Schindler's Jewish prisoners who are separated from the other women at Auschwitz, but who make an arduous journey under a fence to be reunited with them.

Otto Rasch – Otto Rasch is the SS police chief of Moravia. Though he has the potential to cause trouble for Oskar Schindler's plant in Brinnlitz, Schindler secures his support through charm and a bribe to Rasch's wife. Rasch eventually helps Schindler get Commandant Liepold reassigned to active combat.

Moshe Henigman – Moshe Henigman is one of 30 metalworkers who survive a grueling march from Auschwitz before being recruited to Oskar Schindler's factory at Brinnlitz. He isn't on Schindler's original **list** but is part of a later deal.

Benjamin Wrozlawski – Benjamin Wrozlawski is an inmate at Auschwitz who escapes by jumping off a train with his friend Roman Wilner but is captured by the Gestapo. Oskar Schindler makes arrangements to take in him and some other escapees to Brinnlitz.

Roman Wilner – Roman Wilner is a friend of Benjamin Wrozlawski who escapes the Nazis with him. He's caught by the Gestapo and then freed by a deal that Oskar Schindler makes.

Dr. Steinberg – Steinberg is a doctor at a Sudeten work camp. After the war, Steinberg tells the story about how at Brinnlitz, Oskar Schindler looked the other way while Steinberg took food back to the camp where he worked. The food may have saved up to 50 lives, according to Steinberg.

General Glücks – General Glücks is a Nazi official in Oranienburg, where many decisions are made about Jewish prisoners' lives in concentration camps. Oskar Schindler writes a letter to him as part of his plan to get Commandant Liepold transferred to combat duty.

Winston Churchill – When Germany surrenders World War II, Oskar Schindler blasts of voice of Winston Churchill, Britain's prime minister, throughout his Brinnlitz camp.

The Russian Officer – A lone Russian officer comes to Brinnlitz to tell the Jewish prisoners there that they are free to go. After reciting a canned speech, he becomes more personable and answers their questions.

Edek Reubinski – Edek Reubinski is a Jewish man and one of the eight in Oskar Schindler's party when Schindler flees to find the American front (because, as a German, he is in danger of being executed by Russians).

TERMS

Abwehr – The *Abwehr* was a German intelligence agency that operated from 1920 to 1945. **Oskar Schindler** became a member, in part because he found he preferred them to the SS (who were disdained by some *Abwehr* members and sometimes treated as rivals).

Aktion – An *Aktion* (literally "action" in German) was a euphemism for events in Poland where thousands of Jewish people and other Polish citizens were killed or rounded up to be sent to concentration camps.

Aryan – The "Aryan race" was a term **Adolf Hitler** used to designate a supposedly superior race of Nordic-looking people with blond hair and blue eyes. This became the basis for the Nazis' elimination of groups that they believed were inferior, like Jewish and Slavic people. Hitler did not invent the concept of an Aryan race himself, but since World War II, the term has been linked to his interpretation of it.

Auschwitz – Auschwitz, overseen by **Commandant Rudolf Höss**, was the largest of the Nazi concentration and extermination camps. Aside from a brief period when some of **Oskar Schindler**'s prisoners are transferred to Auschwitz, the camp is not the main focus of *Schindler's List*. It has been well-documented in other accounts by survivors and historians, however, and the threat of being sent to Auschwitz always hung over the Jewish people in Poland, including in Cracow. The camp had three major subdivisions: Auschwitz I, Auschwitz II (a.k.a. Auschwitz-Birkenau), and Auschwitz III.

Blauschein – A *Blauschein* ("blue card") was a card issued in Nazi-occupied territories that signified that a Jewish person was a skilled worker and should therefore be spared (at least temporarily) from being shipped out of the ghetto to a concentration camp.

Brinnlitz – Brinnlitz (or Brünnlitz) was a Nazi forced labor camp that housed **Oskar Schindler**'s armaments factory after Płaszów was disbanded. Brinnlitz was front that Schindler used to save his 1,200 Jewish prisoners from being sent to Auschwitz.

Einsatzgruppen – The *Einsatzgruppen* were death squads that were part of the SS in Nazi Germany and its occupied territories. They carried out mass executions, primarily by shooting.

Emalia – Emalia was **Oskar Schindler**'s enamelware factory where he employed Jewish workers as a means of protecting them. Emalia became a part of the Płaszów concentration camp after the Jewish ghetto in Cracow was liquidated. Schindler continued to protect the Jewish prisoners and treat them humanely, eventually evacuating them to Brinnlitz.

Gestapo – The Gestapo was a secret police force that operated in Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe. They were major contributors to the Holocaust and became infamous for their ruthless suppression of dissent, using tactics like constant surveillance and torture.

Judenrats – *Judenrats* were Jewish councils instituted by Nazi Germany to oversee Jewish communities in occupied territories. Some accuse the *Judenrats* of collaborating with Nazis to impose their will, but at least in Cracow, the *Judenrat* often acted as a buffer between local Jews and the Nazis.

Luftwaffe – The *Luftwaffe* was the German air force during World War II. Many of their supplies were produced through labor from concentration camps.

OD – The OD were Jewish policemen tasked by Nazis with overseeing local Jewish ghetto communities. Though some acted as buffers between the Jews and the Nazis, particularly as World War II went on, they became stricter.

Płaszów – Płaszów was a concentration camp run by Nazis (under the leadership of **Commandant Amon Goeth**) in a suburb of Cracow, Poland. **Oskar Schindler**'s enamelware factory Emalia was part of it, though he tried to spare his prisoners from the worst aspects of the camp, which included hard labor, beatings, executions, disease, and malnutrition.

Pogrom – A pogrom is a targeted massacre of an ethnic group, particularly Jews. The term primarily refers to events in late 19th- and early 20th-century Russia as well as to Nazi Germany.

Schutzpolizei – The Schutzpolizei was a branch of German police that handled matters such as traffic law and criminal investigations. In Nazi Germany, membership was limited to "Aryan" Nazi Party members who met specific qualifications.

Shabbat – Shabbat is a Jewish holy day and a day of rest. It occurs every Saturday.

Sudeten – Sudeten is a term used to describe ethnic Germans from a politically contested region that belonged to Czechoslovakia in the time leading up to World War II. **Oskar Schindler** and his wife, **Emilie**, were both Sudeten Germans.

SS – The SS (short for *Schutzstaffel*) was a leading paramilitary arm of the Nazi Party. More so than any other organization, they are considered responsible for the deaths of six million Jews and millions of other victims during the Holocaust, following the commands of leaders like **Adolf Hitler** and **Heinrich Himmler**.

Zyklon B – Zyklon B is a German pesticide, initially developed for industrial applications. Beginning in 1942, the Nazis used it to mass-murder Jewish people in the gas chambers of concentration camps.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

VIRTUE AND SELFLESSNESS

Thomas Keneally's nonfiction novel *Schindler's List* is based on the true story of Oskar Schindler, a man known for astonishing acts of generosity. At great personal risk to his own life, Schindler helps over a thousand Jewish people survive the Holocaust during World War II (and helps slow down the German war effort in other ways too). Many of these survivors can't explain why Schindler would act so selflessly when, before the war, he seemed to be a regular German industrialist with few particularly virtuous qualities. In fact, not all of Schindler's generosity is selfless: in his dealings with Germans, Schindler uses generosity quite tactically, offering "gratitude" as a bribe to get what he wants. Even Schindler's dealings with the Jewish people he helps arguably have a selfish element to them: later in life, he ends up relying on his former prisoners, both financially and emotionally. Keneally's retelling of Schindler's story thus demonstrates that virtue isn't black and white—people tend to be complicated, a mixture of both selfishness and selfless, and people with selfish qualities can still be capable of generosity and self-sacrifice. Moreover, it suggests that even small-scale acts of selflessness are worthwhile and impactful.

Oskar Schindler isn't an outwardly saintly man, particularly in his earlier life, and this makes his eventual selflessness all the

more surprising and complicated. One of Schindler's noteworthy flaws is how he treats his wife, Emilie. Despite his reputation for kindness, Schindler is, at best, indifferent toward his wife, having multiple affairs and making little attempt to hide them. Schindler is also a heavy drinker and smoker, which clashes with certain stereotypes of how virtuous people should act. Perhaps the biggest gray area in Schindler's life is his involvement with the Nazi Party as a younger man. Though he was clearly never a hardliner, it is difficult to determine to what extent young Schindler agreed with the Party's goals and to what extent he was just playing the system. Though Keneally and almost all the Jewish people saved by Schindler's actions agree that his good deeds far outweigh the bad ones, this doesn't mean Schindler is innocent of all wrongdoing. He, like all people, is complicated and imperfect.

Though Schindler remains a morally complicated figure, throughout the war he continuously puts himself at risk to save other people, suggesting that selfishness and selflessness aren't clear-cut or mutually exclusive categories. One of the complicated elements of Schindler's character at the beginning of the war is his desire to seek a profit. When he first meets Itzhak Stern, he has Stern look over the books of a Jewish business he is thinking of taking over to make sure it is a solid venture. Schindler doesn't have any plan to rescue Jewish people yet; despite his disagreements with the Nazi Party, he is just another German industrialist trying to make a profit in occupied Poland. It's only after talking with Stern that Schindler's plan (to save Jewish prisoners by keeping them alive as workers in his factory) begins to take shape. As the war goes on, however, and Schindler finds his own life in danger multiple times, and he ends up in prison three times. Schindler doesn't know who reports him to the Nazis—anyone who happens to witness what Schindler is doing to help the Jewish prisoners could report him. This means Schindler's life is constantly in danger, yet he makes the selfless decision to accept this risk. By the end of the book, Schindler has given away most of his fortune, with a large chunk of it spent on creating the Brinnlitz camp, where his prisoners go after the dissolution of Płaszów. The factory at Brinnlitz does not make any materials for the war effort and therefore does not make any money for Schindler—its only purpose is to help his Jewish prisoners try to survive until the end of the war. Schindler, then, has finally given up his role as an industrialist and put aside any selfish stake he could have had in the factory. Though he remains a flawed person and never gives up his womanizing ways, his decision to sideline his business interests and put himself at risk to save his prisoners shows that even people who are selfish in some respects can be selfless in other respects.

Given the small scale yet powerful impact of Schindler's actions throughout the book, his story also suggests that acting virtuously doesn't necessarily require grand gestures. At one point in the book, Schindler's Jewish accountant (and trusted confidante) Itzhak Stern quotes a Talmudic verse to Schindler that has a profound impact on his way of thinking: "He who saves a single life saves the world entire." This verse suggests that acts of selflessness don't have to be huge and profound to be impactful, because helping even one person is worthwhile. And indeed, although Schindler's helps a relatively small number of people compared to the millions who died in the Holocaust, his actions still matter to those he saved (and to the millions of people his story has gone on to inspire). When Abraham Bankier and some other Jewish workers are rounded up to be shipped away because they lack Blauscheins, Schindler personally comes to the station to save his men. An SS guard there is dismissive of Schindler's efforts, saying that any men he saves will just be replaced by others on the **list**. Schindler recognizes that this might be true—that his efforts might be futile, and that perhaps it is selfish to favor his friends when so many others are suffering. Still, he lives according to the Talmudic verse: while he isn't a perfect person and knows that he can't save every victim of the Holocaust, he also knows that even saving one life is tremendously valuable.

ANTI-SEMITISM AND DEHUMANIZATION

Most of the conflict in Thomas Keneally's *Schindler's List*, which takes place during the Holocaust, is spurred by anti-Semitism. The Nazi Party made its "Final Solution"—the elimination of Jewish people—a part of its political platform and succeeded in killing millions of Jewish people (and people who belonged to other marginalized groups) through concentration camps, executions, and other brutal methods. In fact, the Holocausts' atrocities helped define the entire concept of genocide (mass extermination of a particular group of people). One of the key strategies used in the so-called Final Solution was the dehumanization of Jewish people, so that killing them could be portrayed not as a moral problem, but as a practical or even scientific one that would require the latest technologies to solve. But Keneally also depicts how, particularly at the individual level, the process of dehumanizing people can be conflicted and inconsistent. Amon Goeth, for example, is a cruel man who relentlessly beats his Jewish maid, Helen Hirsch, essentially treating her as an object rather than a person. But when he catches the Jewish man Poldek Pfefferberg trespassing in the ghetto and has the chance to shoot him, he offers mercy, simply because Pfefferberg does something to make him laugh. Throughout *Schindler's List*, then, Keneally depicts dehumanization as a complicated and flawed yet extremely powerful tactic for targeting a group of people, while also suggesting that one of the most powerful ways to resist discrimination and genocide is to help people reclaim their humanity (as Oskar Schindler does with the Jewish people he saves).

The Nazis' anti-Semitic policies and practices were designed

specifically to strip Jewish people of their humanity. The dehumanization of Cracow's Jewish residents is a gradual process: first their businesses are seized, then they're confined to ghettos, then they're rounded up in concentration camps, and from there many prisoners are sent off to extermination camps. This multi-step process helps both Jewish people and their Nazi rulers acclimate to the new system, slowly brainwashing society as a whole to view Jewish people as subhuman. Cracow's Jewish population is also frequently moved to different locations. This has the effect of breaking up families and communities, and it also makes it hard for Jewish people to own anything that isn't portable. As such, the Nazis rob Jewish people of deeply important aspects of the human experience—love, camaraderie, and personal property. Transportation to a new location can also be deadly, given that the Jewish prisoners are crammed into cattle cars and deprived of food, water, or sanitation. And once the Jewish prisoners reach concentration camps like Płaszów, they're starved and forced to do manual labor—essentially, they're treated worse than livestock. These conditions, combined with the constant threat of executions by men like Amon Goeth, helps reinforce the idea that prisoners' lives are disposable.

Yet even the cruelest concentration camp guards in the novel sometimes recognize the humanity of their prisoners in surprising ways—though this does not meaningfully hinder the Nazis' overall efforts. Albert Hujar, for example, is an SS officer who leads a death squad that guns down a hospital full of children. Still, even a man as ruthless as him sometimes hesitates to kill: when Goeth overhears an argument between Hujar and a Jewish prisoner, he orders Hujar to execute her. Hujar does so, but only reluctantly. Later, Hujar even falls in love with a Jewish prisoner. Again, this is not enough to stop him from carrying out orders to kill her, but it does seem to make Hujar regretful. This suggests that dehumanizing a group of people isn't straightforward or easy, since even Nazis' emotions and moral beliefs can be complex. Even Goeth, the camp commandant who oversees all this cruelty and frequently encourages it, seems to have a sentimental side. For example, he appreciates the music of the Rosner brothers (who are Jewish) so much that he always invites them over when he has guests. And his relationship with his Jewish maid Helen Hirsch, though abusive and dehumanizing, also has a sentimental component to it. He regrets losing Hirsch to Schindler in blackjack, suggesting that he doesn't see Hirsch as completely interchangeable with any other Jewish maid. These brief moments of Nazis recognizing the humanity of Jewish prisoners may show the limit of dehumanization techniques, but they also show the effectiveness of the techniques—after all, despite moments of hesitation, most Nazis continue to carry out orders.

Men like Oskar Schindler and Julius Madritsch recognize that one of the best things they can do to help their Jewish prisoners is to help them regain their humanity, as a sense of identity can empower them and give them the strength to carry on. Although Schindler and Madritsch are technically overseers of concentration camps, they are sympathetic toward their Jewish prisoners and want to help them survive. One of the most basic things that Schindler and Madritsch do for their prisoners is make sure they get proper nutrition, as this helps the Jewish workers think about matters beyond just day-to-day survival and thus allows them to feel like people rather than animals. Schindler also tries to give his prisoners autonomy. He does this in part by asserting his own autonomy over his factories, in order to keep the SS from interfering with his prisoners' daily lives. He also does this by helping prisoners form a new community and maintain their religious practices, such as when he allows Rabbi Menasha Levartov to observe the Shabbat. So, although dehumanization is an incredibly powerful tool in controlling and exterminating a group of people, the novel shows that humanization can be just as powerful in helping people endure their suffering and come out the other side of it with their dignity intact. Indeed, the effects of these techniques are felt long after the war, when men like Schindler and Madritsch are honored with plaques and ceremonies to commemorate their good deeds.

POWER

A central idea in *Schindler's List* is power: how it works, who has it, and what its limits are. Viewed from one angle, the power dynamics in the book might seem straightforward: the Nazis have power, and they use it to oppress the Jewish populations of the territories they occupy. But Keneally shows that power is never quite that simple. Supposed hierarchies of command like the Nazis institute do not always reflect the way power works in the real world, and this is something that men like Oskar Schindler frequently use to their advantage. Though *Schindler's List* demonstrates the short-term effectiveness of the kind of violent power favored by Nazis like Commandant Amon Goeth, the book seems to suggest that true, lasting power isn't gained through violent force, but through strength of character.

For much of the novel, Amon Goeth (leader of the concentration camp Płaszów in Cracow, Poland) seems to be the person who holds the most power. But his reign is short-lived, suggesting that Goeth's tyrannical form of leadership doesn't equate to real, long-term power. Goeth establishes his style of leadership early on, by executing prisoners over minor offenses. He is both cruel and arbitrary, and at first, this demoralizes prisoners and helps Goeth rule based on fear. As more time passes, however, the negative effects of Goeth's undisciplined leadership style begin to catch up with him. People who rank above him in the Nazi Party favor more methodical strategies of killing Jewish prisoners and understand that Goeth's scattershot methods of discipline

have limited effectiveness. Ultimately, Goeth finds out that he isn't the absolute dictator he thought he was, as he gets arrested by his own party for doing black-market deals. Goeth gets so preoccupied with exercising his dominance over those below him that he doesn't consider how he's making himself vulnerable to action from his superiors. Goeth is executed in 1946 after the American soldiers who capture him hand him over to the Polish government, which solidifies how flimsy his power really was. His fate proves that, despite his short-term success, his methods of maintaining power are not effective over the long term.

By contrast, men like Oskar Schindler and his Jewish confidant Itzhak Stern may seem disempowered compared to Commandant Goeth for much of the book, but in fact, they understand that real power comes more from inner strength than from external shows of dominance. Despite not having a high official rank, Schindler becomes a powerful leader of sorts by treating other people well and earning their trust and respect. Schindler is primarily a leader of his Jewish prisoners, but he is also sometimes able to exert influence over Nazi officials. He uses nonviolent bribery and trickery, which helps him wield influence even in situations where he may seem powerless—such as when he's arrested and thrown in prison but appeals to powerful officials he knows in order to get bailed out. As a Jewish man in Nazi-occupied Poland, Stern would seem to be in an even less powerful position than Schindler. But in fact, Stern ends up wielding a great deal of power, as he encourages those around him—especially Oskar Schindler—to be resilient and influences them to take risks. Most importantly, he is the one who inspires Schindler to offer a safe place for Jews at Emalia and later at Brinnlitz. Stern's tremendous influence on Schindler is proven after the war, when Schindler struggles to run a successful business without guidance from Stern and his other allies. History has revealed how powerful and cunning men like Schindler and Stern really were because of how many people they were able to save and because Schindler is now venerated as a hero, whereas Goeth was executed and is remembered as a villain. Had Schindler chased power in a traditional way, like Goeth, he might have met the same fate after Germany's surrender.

The story of power in *Schindler's List* mirrors the overall trajectory of power in World War II. Adolf Hitler's swift victories at the beginning of the war shocked the world and seemed to project an unprecedented level of new power. But while this power was impactful, it was also fragile: within only a few years, Nazi Germany would lose the war, and all of its territory gains would be quickly reversed. Keneally looks at this phenomenon at the personal level, showing how men like Schindler and Stern were able to form a more resilient kind of power that allowed them to build a community around them, survive the war, and help others in the process.

DUTY

In *Schindler's List*, Thomas Keneally writes, "Duty, as so many of their superiors would claim in court, was the SS genius." As a leading paramilitary arm of the Nazi Party, the SS was brilliant at enforcing compliance in their ranks by appealing to a sense of duty, even when this meant committing atrocities. All of the antagonists in the book, which takes place in Poland during the Holocaust, are on some level motivated by a sense of duty. The Nazi Party is arranged according to a strict hierarchy, and even impulsive men like Commandant Amon Goeth restrain themselves when duty requires it. Duty overrides other moral questions, too, at one point turning the SS officer Albert Hujar into a reluctant executioner (since refusing to kill people would be to disobey a direct order, which he won't do). But even righteous characters wrestle with questions of duty. Emilie Schindler, for example, considers it her duty as a Catholic wife to be faithful to Oskar, even though he has a much laxer interpretation of Catholic marital duty. This may be what ultimately leads to her save the lives of several prisoners as a nurse at Brinnlitz (a camp Oskar establishes near his home in Moravia to rescue the Jewish prisoners who worked for him in Cracow). *Schindler's List* thus explores how duty motivated a wide variety of historical figures during this time, showing that duty can serve as an excuse for monstrous acts, but also that it can motivate positive change.

Duty, in *Schindler's List*, is frequently the motivation behind atrocities, and characters manipulate the language of duty to make violent actions seem reasonable. The Einsatzgruppen, known even within the SS for their brutal execution methods, were specifically organized around the concept of duty. A loose translation of their name is "special-duty groups." In German, the name also recalls the language of medieval knights. The brutal extermination campaigns that the *Einsatzgruppen* carried out were therefore reframed as "Special Chivalrous Duty" in order to make them more palatable. Julian Scherner, the SS police chief in Cracow, provides another interesting example of duty in action. Keneally writes that Scherner "had reached that happy point in his career at which duty and financial opportunity coincided," meaning that his orders from above to take wealth away from Jewish people—including money, land, jewelry, and other personal property—also personally benefit Scherner himself. Duty becomes a way for Scherner to justify his actions, both externally and to himself. Schindler himself notes the role that duty played in motivating German soldiers during a famous speech on his factory floor in Brinnlitz near the end of the war. He argues that "the little man who has done his duty everywhere" is not ultimately responsible for the worst war crimes of Nazi Germany. Others take up similar arguments to Schindler, suggesting that it was duty, more than malice, that led to the worst actions of the Holocaust. Keneally seems to treat Schindler's statement with skepticism (particularly since a garrison of SS members is in the audience when Schindler gives

the speech), but the book does acknowledge that duty leads to complicated moral situations.

Not all duty in *Schindler's List* is negative, however—the morally ambiguous nature of duty means that it can also motivate positive change. One of the most dutiful people in the book is Oskar's wife, Emilie Schindler. Despite her husband's long absences and many affairs, she remains committed to him because she believes this is her duty as a wife. Perhaps even more so, she remains committed to her Catholic faith. In Brinnlitz, she hangs a picture in her apartment of Jesus with an open, flaming heart—Keneally writes of how this symbolizes her own "ideological commitment" to opening her heart to Jewish victims of the war, which she does as a nurse while working at Brinnlitz. Oskar Schindler himself refers to duty during his famous speech at the end of the war. He says that he and his former Jewish prisoners have a duty to remain humane, rather than going out to plunder or seek vengeance. Schindler's concept of duty is different from the Nazis' concept, because it isn't based on any sort of military hierarchy. Instead, he appeals to a basic human moral duty that transcends government and religion. This shared sense of duty helps all the residents of Brinnlitz unite around a positive goal, and ultimately, it helps them make it through the perilous final days of the occupation.

Keneally, then, shows in *Schindler's List* how duty is not a virtue on its own but how it can be made to serve virtuous causes. By doing so, he seems to argue that duty should not be allowed to act as an excuse for committing atrocities. Not all duties are equal, and Keneally places a higher value on the sort of altruistic duties favored by Schindler and his allies.

BUREAUCRACY

One of Oskar Schindler's greatest talents is understanding how to manipulate bureaucracy. Thomas Keneally describes him as "a great discoverer of unprocurables," and this is partly because Schindler doesn't always interact with bureaucrats the way the system intends. Schindler knows, for example, that some useful connections, a little bit of charm, and a well-placed bribe can get him just about anything he desires from the Nazis he interacts with—although not without some risk. Throughout *Schindler's List*, Thomas Keneally suggests that the German bureaucracy during WWII was both savagely efficient and bizarrely inefficient, using both humor and horror to demonstrate how the Nazis used a vast empire of paperwork to carry out their brutal extermination campaign.

The Nazi Party was organized as an enormous bureaucracy, and though at times this was inefficient, ultimately its bureaucratic organization was an asset to its brutal ideology. Keneally writes at one point about how the Nazi system hides its ruthlessness behind a "veil of bureaucratic decency." This veil is important for several reasons: not only does it make the Nazis' extermination of Jewish people and other minority groups more palatable to other nations (who then have less incentive to interfere)—it also works internally to help Germans in the SS and elsewhere maintain the belief that they were on the side of justice. Keeping this veil in place is one of the Nazi bureaucracy's most important aims. Seemingly self-defeating policies, like the limit on summary executions (which might seem slow down the killing of Jewish prisoners by limiting the authority of men like the cruel camp commandant Amon Goeth) are actually essential to keeping their atrocities hidden and maintaining their power. Later on, near the end of the war, one of the main functions of the Nazi bureaucracy is to destroy evidence. Nazi Party leaders know that when the truth about concentration camps comes out, it will damage the war effort—as well as make many Nazi leaders vulnerable to retaliation or punishment after the war in the event of a surrender. Therefore, the Nazi bureaucracy helps coordinate the destruction of evidence—although paradoxically, it also leaves a paperwork trail that can be used to reconstruct events of the Holocaust. All in all, then, while the bureaucracy is at times comically inefficient and self-defeating, it's also an important tool that the Nazis use to get away with their extermination campaign.

Schindler, however, understands that a bureaucracy is ultimately made up of individual people, and that by appealing personally to the right bureaucrats, he can manipulate the system to his own ends. Schindler's multiple trips to prison (and his subsequent releases) are perhaps the greatest example of his command of bureaucratic processes. Despite strict policies about how prisoners are to be treated, Schindler is able to skirt regulations and get out of jail by appealing to people in positions of authority. Schindler realizes that the regulations put in place by bureaucracy only have power if people in authority choose to enforce the regulations—a major flaw of the system. At another point, Schindler's prisoner Janek Dresner is accused of sabotage, facing a likely death sentence. Schindler, however, avoids a potential tragedy by expertly manipulating the bureaucracy. He insists on taking control of the trial himself, puts on just enough of a show for those in the audience like Commandant Liepold, and then breaks up the trial (seemingly on a whim) before Dresner can be sentenced. Schindler understands that, from a bureaucratic standpoint, the show of putting on a trial is much more important than the trial itself. Ultimately, then, bureaucracy plays a villainous role in *Schindler's List*, but the issue isn't black-and-white. As Schindler knows (and as Keneally depicts), a bureaucracy is made up of people—and despite the seeming power of bureaucratic regulations, at the end of the day, these people still have autonomy.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and

Analysis sections of this LitChart.

LISTS

In the novel, lists—both those that the Nazis make and Schindler's titular list—represent the fragility of Jewish people's fate under the Nazi regime. As the Holocaust gets underway in Nazi-occupied Poland, lists are what doom people to suffering and death. At one point, Schindler goes looking for Bankier, his Jewish manager, at a train station and finds that he's been loaded onto a cattle car bound for a concentration camp. An SS officer informs him that Bankier's name is one of many on a list of people to be sent to the camp, and Schindler observes that the officer regards the list as "hol[y]": "for this man it was the secure, rational, and sole basis for all this milling of Jews and movement of rail cars." In other words, lists are how the Nazi bureaucracy makes the extermination of Jewish people into a "secure, rational" problem to solve and turns human lives into pieces of data. Who does or doesn't make these lists is largely arbitrary, and evading the lists is often a matter of luck or oversight—reflecting how trivial, interchangeable, and disposable Jewish people's lives are to the Nazis. A superior SS officer at the station lets Bankier and several others go at Schindler's request, but he acknowledges the random nature of the list when he tells Schindler, "it makes no difference to us, you understand. We don't care whether it's this dozen or that […] It's the inconvenience to the list, that's all."

Indeed, even Schindler's famous list of Jewish prisoners—whom he will transfer from Emalia to Brinnlitz factory to save them from dying in concentration camps like Auschwitz—is arbitrary. The initial list is chosen by nature of the people's proximity to Schindler and Julius Madritsch (both of whom run factories in Płaszów): only prisoners from their factories are included, since Schindler is, of course, limited in the number of people he can help. Some people are also included if they're able to bribe a prisoner named Marcel Goldberg. In this way, even those who make it on Schindler's list are only included because of luck and happenstance: they happen to be sent to Płaszów and not one of the many other concentration camps throughout Europe, or they happen to have enough money to be able to bribe Goldberg. Thus, the lists in the novel—both good and bad—highlight the fact that survival in Nazi-occupied Europe was tenuous at best and often relied on a combination of personal connections and random chance.

THE COLOR RED

The color red symbolizes the Nazis' unfeeling brutality and remorselessness. Red is associated in particular with the young Jewish girl Genia, who wears red from head to toe. For her, the color has no deeper meaning—like many three-year-olds, she just "passionately prefer[s]" one color. In this sense, it is initially associated with her innocence. Eventually, though, Schindler and Ingrid witness an Aktion where the SS round up Jewish people in the ghetto to send them to concentration camps, separating families and even openly executing people in the street. Among the crowd, they notice a little girl dressed in all red (who the reader knows is Genia). Though Genia's love of red is a marker of her youthful innocence, it is, of course, also associated with blood and therefore with violence and death. So, the contrast between the little girl in red and the bloody horrors happening around her highlights the Nazis' ruthlessness and cruelty—they don't care whose innocence they corrupt or whose lives they take.

Notably, the Nazis don't notice Genia at all, even though she immediately stands out to Schindler and Ingrid because of her bright red clothing. This deeply disturbs Schindler, who can hardly believe that such brutality is going on so close to someone as young and innocent as the girl in red. Watching this scene unfold is a turning point for him, as it makes him realize the true extent of the Nazis' savagery and arrogance—they don't care who witnesses events like this because they plan to kill the witnesses as well. The color red in this scene thus serves to highlight the unapologetic nature of the Nazi regime: just as the girl in red stands out to Schindler, the Nazis' atrocities are hiding in plain sight and will soon be widely publicized. Yet just as the SS in this passage don't notice or care about Genia, the Nazi Party more broadly doesn't care who knows about their crimes, because they aspire to absolute power. And indeed, Schindler recognizes that although the girl in red is seemingly able to walk away from the Aktion unscathed, she will eventually be rounded up and killed like millions of other Holocaust victims.

SCHINDLER'S BIRTHDAY

Schindler's birthday represents his personal transformation during and after World War II. The novel makes note of several of his birthdays over the years. His 34th birthday celebration in 1942, relatively early on in the war, is perhaps his most raucous—he's even briefly jailed for kissing a Jewish woman at his party. This first birthday thus highlights Schindler's carefree attitude and partial naivete to the horrors of the Holocaust that were already underway in Poland. His 36th birthday celebration in 1944, approaching the end of the war, is much more subdued, with Schindler looking in the mirror and seeing how much weight he's put on. Having realized the full extent of the Nazis' atrocities and risked his own safety to help the Jewish prisoners working at his factory, this birthday represents Schindler's shift from an ordinary, self-interested businessman to a more selfless version of himself.

For his 37th birthday in 1945, Schindler makes perhaps his most famous speech, boldly promising the prisoners in his camp

that they will get to live out full lives. Years later, on his 53rd birthday in 1961, the first plaque to commemorate Schindler's good deeds is unveiled. Finally, Schindler testifies confidential information about the personnel in Płaszów near 59th his birthday in 1967. Altogether, then, his birthdays provide a benchmark as to how he changes over a 25-year period: in 1942, he is young and boisterous, but the stress of the war seems make him more sedate and mature. Eventually, though, he regains that spirit from his younger days, becoming less a man, more a legend. Birthdays are also a celebration of life—perhaps Schindler's greatest achievement is that he helped over a thousand Jewish people celebrate many more birthdays, which makes the emphasis on his own birthday fitting.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Simon & Schuster edition of *Schindler's List* published in 2013.

Prologue Quotes

In Poland's deepest autumn, a tall young man in an expensive overcoat, double-breasted dinner jacket beneath it and—in the lapel of the dinner jacket—a large ornamental gold-on-black-enamel *Hakenkreuz* (swastika) emerged from a fashionable apartment building in Straszewskiego Street, on the edge of the ancient center of Cracow, and saw his chauffeur waiting with fuming breath by the open door of an enormous and, even in this blackened world, lustrous Adler limousine.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 13

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, the first sentence of the book, is the reader's introduction to Oskar Schindler. It deliberately avoids mentioning Schindler by name in order to show how he would have looked to someone observing him from the outside. From that perspective, the first thing a person observing Schindler would noticed is his lavish lifestyle. He's wearing fancy clothes and has a limo coming to pick him up. Given that he's living in Cracow during World War II, a time when many were desperate and starving, there is already ample reason to be suspicious of the well-dressed man. The fact that he's wearing a swastika on his jacket is even more damning and seems to suggest that he's devoted to the Nazi Party.

The book gives this outsider's view of Schindler in part because Schindler often took great care to present himself this way. Though Schindler's efforts to save Jewish people from the Holocaust are well-known today, even among people who haven't read *Schindler's List*, one of Schindler's great talents was to hide his real feelings from the wealthy Nazi officials that he regularly interacted with. At the end of the war, Schindler's extraordinary ability to make himself likeable to Nazis would even turn into a liability, making him vulnerable to capture by Allied troops. Thus, the introduction to the book shows that, particularly in the tumultuous times of World War II, outward appearances could be deceiving.

Not to stretch belief so early, the story begins with a quotidian act of kindness—a kiss, a soft voice, a bar of chocolate. Helen Hirsch would never see her 4,000 złoty again-not in a form in which they could be counted and held in the hand. But to this day she considers it a matter of small importance that Oskar was so inexact with sums of money.

Related Characters: Helen Hirsch/Lena, Oskar Schindler, Amon Goeth, Itzhak Stern

Related Themes:

Page Number: 30

Explanation and Analysis

Although this quote comes from the prologue, the events described chronologically fall somewhere closer to the middle of the book than the beginning. Amon Goeth is holding a large party at his villa in the concentration camp he oversees, and while the other guests are distracted, Schindler has a chance to talk with Goeth's Jewish maid, Helen Hirsch (whom Goeth physically abuses).

Keneally directly states why he chose to start the book with such a scene: it depicts Oskar Schindler doing a small act of kindness. He notes that a small simple act of kindness is easier to believe than a huge one (though he foreshadows that he will get to Schindler's larger acts of kindness later). Though *Schindler's List* has is technically a historical fiction novel and employs many of the storytelling techniques of fiction, it is a book about real people and events. Keneally takes great care not only to present the events in a way that is accurate but also in a way that is plausible. Starting with a small act of generosity before ramping up is one way for the book to present Schindler's selflessness in a way that will make sense to audiences who approach the book like a traditional fiction narrative.

This gesture also echoes Schindler's associate Itzhak Stern's quotation of the Talmudic verse "he who saves the life of one man saves the world entire." In other words, even relatively minor acts of generosity like this can have a profound impact. This will become a guiding principle of sorts for Schindler as he goes about helping over 1,000 Jewish people survive the Holocaust.

Chapter 1 Quotes

It is not immediately easy to find in Oskar's family's history the origins of his impulse toward rescue. He was born on April 28, 1908, into the Austrian Empire of Franz Josef, into the hilly Moravian province of that ancient Austrian realm. His hometown was the industrial city of Zwittau, to which some commercial opening had brought the Schindler ancestors from Vienna at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 31

Explanation and Analysis

This quote occurs near the beginning of the first chapter, when the timeline of the book jumps from the middle of Schindler's story to the very beginning—Schindler's origins. Much of this chapter investigates the circumstances that Schindler came from in order to draw connections to what Schindler eventually becomes. Partly, the book examines geographical and political history: Schindler comes from a region that has historically been contested. (At different points in history, Moravia was part of the Roman Empire, Bohemia, Austria-Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.) It's perhaps unsurprising, then, that Schindler feels less of an affinity for Nazi policies than someone who came from a region with a more nationalistic German identity might.

The industrial nature of Zwittau is also significant. Perhaps the one word that describes Schindler best is *industrious*. Whether working for himself or working for the benefit of others, Schindler always seems to be full of energy and always has a plan to win people over and get what he wants. The novel partially explains this, and makes a compelling narrative, by tying these qualities back to the area where Schindler was born. Though the author, Keneally, does not invent the events of Schindler's story from imagination, he does look for and emphasize patterns, the way a fiction writer might.

Chapter 2 Quotes

Aue liked Stern's dry, effective style with the legal evidence. He began to laugh, seeing in the accountant's lean features the complexities of Cracow itself, the parochial canniness of a small city. Only a local knew the ropes. In the inner office Herr Schindler sat in need of local information.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler, Sepp Aue, Itzhak Stern

Related Themes:

Page Number: 44

Explanation and Analysis

This quote introduces Itzhak Stern, the Jewish accountant who will become one of Oskar Schindler's most trusted allies in his plan to rescue Jewish people from the Holocaust. Stern's "dry, effective" style when presenting legal evidence to Aue is also a reflection of his personality. He is businesslike and pragmatic above all, and these qualities eventually help him keep Schindler's whole operation running smoothly, even when Schindler himself is distracted or indisposed.

Stern's lean physical appearance resembles the complexities of Cracow itself: it may be small compared to other major cities, but it is also full of secrets that only an experienced local who has lived there for a while can really take advantage of. For all of Schindler's gregariousness and charm, the one thing he lacks is specific knowledge of Cracow. This is what makes Stern such an effective partner for Schindler—he helps fill the gaps in Schindler's knowledge while also balancing him out on a personal level.

Chapter 3 Quotes

Within two minutes the men were chatting like friends. The pistol in Pfefferberg's belt had now been relegated to the status of armament for some future, remote emergency. There was no doubt that Mrs. Pfefferberg was going to do the Schindler apartment, no expense spared, and when that was settled, Schindler mentioned that Leopold Pfefferberg might like to come around to the apartment to discuss other business. "There is the possibility that you can advise me on acquiring local merchandise," Herr Schindler said. "For example, your very elegant blue shirt . . . I don't know where to begin to look for that kind of thing myself." His ingenuousness was a ploy, but Pfefferberg appreciated it. "The stores, as you know, are empty," murmured Oskar like a hint.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler (speaker), Leopold (Poldek) Pfefferberg, Itzhak Stern, Mina Pfefferberg

Related Themes:

Page Number: 54

Explanation and Analysis

This quote occurs when Schindler goes to see Mrs. Pfefferberg with a question about interior design, but her son Poldek thinks that he is there to arrest her because she's Jewish. Poldek almost shoots Schindler, but because his mother is having a hard time communicating with Schindler, Poldek finally decides to step into view and talk to Schindler himself. The two find out that they have more in common than they thought and that, in fact, they can be useful to each other. Though by now Schindler has Stern on his side, he still needs local allies, particularly when it comes to navigating the black market.

Though Schindler is in a position of power over the Pfefferbergs, he very generously pays Poldek more than is necessary for Poldek to acquire some blue shirts for him. This is partly just Schindler's personality, but it also reflects his understanding of how power works in a city like Cracow. Though Poldek is a Jewish man living in Nazi-occupied Poland, he could potentially report Schindler's black-market activities and get him in trouble. Schindler always tries to establish mutually beneficial relationships so that even people with less power than him still see him as trustworthy.

Chapter 4 Quotes

Six *Einsatzgruppen* had come to Poland with the invading army. Their name had subtle meanings. "Special-duty groups" is a close translation. But the amorphous word *Einsatz* was also rich with a nuance-of challenge, of picking up a gauntlet, of knightliness. These squads were recruited from Heydrich's *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD; Security Service). They already knew their mandate was broad. Their supreme leader had six weeks ago told General Wilhelm Keitel that "in the Government General of Poland there will have to be a tough struggle for national existence which will permit of no legal restraints." In the high rhetoric of their leaders, the *Einsatz* soldiers knew, a struggle for national existence meant race warfare, just as *Einsatz* itself, Special Chivalrous Duty, meant the hot barrel of a gun.

Related Themes:

Page Number: 58

Explanation and Analysis

The paragraph describes the *Einsatzgruppen*, the deadly killing squads that committed atrocities throughout the Holocaust, including in Cracow. Though the *Einsatzgruppen* earned a brutal reputation, the language around them gave the false impression of something more noble. As Keneally notes, in German, the word *Einsatzgruppen* recalls knightly duty. The language used to describe these death squads is yet another example of the Nazi bureaucracy attempting to obscure what was really going on. It appealed to duty, patriotism, and virtue rather than describing the violence that would be the main part of the job. Nazi leadership also presented the job as being part of a war of survival. Instead of being a dominant group oppressing a disenfranchised group, they saw themselves as locked in a battle. This helped reframe the *Einsatzgruppen*'s violence from murders to inevitable casualties during a war. This euphemistic language helped build obedience and loyalty among the *Einsatzgruppen*'s ranks.

Chapter 5 Quotes

Victoria Klonowska, a Polish secretary, was the beauty of Oskar's front office, and he immediately began a long affair with her. Ingrid, his German mistress, must have known, as surely as Emilie Schindler knew about Ingrid. For Oskar would never be a surreptitious lover. He had a childlike sexual frankness.

Related Characters: Victoria Klonowska, Ingrid, Oskar Schindler, Emilie Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 62

Explanation and Analysis

This quote comes from a passage that describes Oskar Schindler's unusual sex life. The novel describes Schindler's many relationships in part because they play a large role in his life, but also because they add complexity to his character, contrasting with the behavior that one might expect from someone who is so selfless in other areas of his life. Schindler frequently cheats on his wife, Emilie, from the beginning of their marriage, and it seems to drive a major wedge between them—though she tolerates his behavior and remains devoted to him.

Ironically, however, Schindler's inability to hide his many affairs may be something that endears him to the women in his life. They all seem to understand, from the moment they

meet him, that they will never have all of him, and that there will always be other women coming in and out of his life. In some ways, Schindler's sexual relations resemble his business relations: he forms attachments freely without ever depending too much on a single person.

Chapter 6 Quotes

By November 1, 1940, Frank had managed to move 23,000 Jewish volunteers out of Cracow. Some of them went to the new ghettos in Warsaw and Łódź. The gaps at table, the grieving at railway stations can be imagined, but people took it meekly, thinking, *We'll do this, and that will be the brunt of what they ask*. Oskar knew it was happening, but, like the Jews themselves, hoped it was a temporary excess.

Related Characters: Hans Frank, Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 73

Explanation and Analysis

This quote describes an early moment after the invasion of Cracow, when the Nazi governor Hans Frank is only beginning to roll out more oppressive measures. At the time, the Jewish residents of Cracow don't realize the full extent of what the Holocaust will become. Even men like Schindler, who have direct connections with people in the know, don't realize all that's about to happen—or perhaps just don't want to acknowledge the truth of it.

The deportation of Jewish people from Cracow is just the first of many steps taken to dehumanize Poland's Jewish population. The "gaps at table" show how families and communities are beginning to be torn apart, disrupting a fundamental aspect of the human experience. Still, these actions do not seem to spark widespread resistance because they're still viewed as bearable and hopefully temporary. For the occupying Nazis, however, these restrictive measures aren't the end goal but just a stepping stone for even more repressive actions to come.

Chapter 8 Quotes

Before the Hilos had even been properly calibrated, Oskar began to get hints from his SS contacts at Pomorska Street that there was to be a ghetto for Jews. He mentioned the rumor to Stern, not wanting to arouse alarm. Oh, yes, said Stern, the word was out. Some people were even looking forward to it. We'll be inside, the enemy will be outside. We can run our own affairs. No one will envy us, no one stone us in the streets. The walls of the ghetto will be fixed. The walls would be the final, fixed form of the catastrophe.

Related Characters: Itzhak Stern, Oskar Schindler, Hans Frank

Related Themes:

Page Number: 84

Explanation and Analysis

This quote occurs early on in the occupation of Cracow, when rumors first begin to surface that Jewish people will be sent to live in a ghetto. Stern's somewhat nonchalant reaction to this news shows both how ignorant and how optimistic some Jewish residents of Cracow are at this time—or at least how desperate they are to find a way to cope with the new situation. The reason that Stern and some other Jews look forward to the ghettos is that they offer the promise of autonomy. For them, the crowding and the worse living conditions are a worthwhile tradeoff if the end result is freedom to be ignored by the Nazis.

In fact, however, the ghettos is only a stepping stone on the way to the eventual creation of concentration and extermination camps. Historians debate when precisely the extermination of Jewish people became Nazi policy—whether it was always the end goal or a policy that gradually evolved over the course of World War II. *Schindler's List* portrays a more gradual transition, with even devoted anti-Semites like Hans Frank believing at first that the best solution is to ship Jewish people to Madagascar. The Nazi bureaucracy, which begins destroying documents near the end of the war, only further obscures the issue.

Chapter 10 Quotes

The councilmen of Artur Rosenzweig's *Judenrat*, who still saw themselves as guardians of the breath and health and bread ration of the internees of the ghetto, impressed upon the Jewish ghetto police that they were also public servants. They tended to sign up young men of compassion and some education. Though at SS headquarters the OD was regarded as just another auxiliary police force which would take orders like any police force, that was not the picture most OD men lived by in the summer of '41.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 96

Explanation and Analysis

The passage describes how during the early in the occupation of Cracow, there are some Jewish people who work with the Nazis, typically hoping to act as a barrier between them and the rest of the city's Jewish citizens. In the summer of 1941, the councilmen of the *Judenrat* and the officers of the OD seem to have been at least partly successful in these efforts to be a buffer. Though they report to the Nazis, in Cracow at least, their fellow Jewish citizens still respect them. Like Oskar Schindler, these groups are in the difficult position of having to follow orders from Nazis but also having sympathy for the Jews.

Perhaps for the Nazis, one of the functions of the *Judenrat* and the OD is to give Jewish people a greater sense of control over their own communities—though, of course, this sense of control is false and used strategically to pacify the Jewish population. This is more important in the early phases of the war, when the Nazis are gradually rolling out restrictions on Jewish life, but it's for this exact same reason that the *Judenrat* and OD will be disbanded later on in the war, when measures become more repressive and dehumanizing.

Chapter 11 Quotes

Then, in the butt end of 1941, Oskar found himself under arrest. Someone—one of the Polish shipping clerks, one of the German technicians in the munitions section, you couldn't tell—had denounced him, had gone to Pomorska Street and given information. Two plainclothes Gestapo men drove up Lipowa Street one morning and blocked the entrance with their Mercedes as if they intended to bring all commerce at Emalia to an end.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 103

Explanation and Analysis

This quote describes the first (and not the last) time that Oskar Schindler is arrested. Though arrests in Nazi-occupied Poland could have disastrous consequences, for Schindler, his first arrest ends up being a fairly relaxed affair. Though Schindler is somewhat new to Cracow, he has already made the right connections with the local police to ensure that his stay in jail will be brief.

Still, Schindler's arrest is also a reminder of how precarious his position is in Cracow. Despite his reputation as a successful businessman, he's always vulnerable to being reported by someone he works with—and he won't even know who reports him. The Nazi bureaucracy deliberately cultivates this sense of paranoia, in the hopes that it will keep men like Oskar Schindler obedient. The way the Gestapo men block the factory entrance with their Mercedes symbolizes how swiftly and effectively they can stop what Schindler is attempting to do.

Chapter 15 Quotes

His eyes slewed up Krakusa to the scarlet child. They were doing it within half a block of her; they hadn't waited for her column to turn out of sight into Józefińska. Schindler could not have explained at first how that compounded the murders on the sidewalk. Yet somehow it proved, in a way no one could ignore, their serious intent. While the scarlet child stopped in her column and turned to watch, they shot the woman in the neck, and one of them, when the boy slid down the wall whimpering, jammed a boot down on his head as if to hold it still and put the barrel against the back of the neck—the recommended SS stance—and fired.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler, Ingrid, Genia

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 133

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, the SS is liquidating the Jewish ghetto in Cracow. Schindler and his German mistress, Ingrid, are looking down from a hill, and amid the destruction, they see

a little Jewish child (presumably a girl) who is wearing all red. The Nazis are committing executions in plain sight on the streets. Keneally provides gruesome details to convey what Schindler must have been seeing and why it horrified him so much. The Nazis aren't sparing women and children—in fact, they seem to have perfected the methods they use.

The girl in red provides a contrast to the gruesome surroundings. Her youth and the vibrancy of her clothes seem out of place in such a deadly scene. Though Schindler was aware in the abstract of what the Nazis were doing or planning to do to the Jewish inhabitants of Cracow, this scene is a turning point in his growth as a character because it is perhaps the first time, he feels viscerally the injustice of what the Nazis are doing.

Chapter 17 Quotes

He did not mention the money he had brought, nor the likelihood that in the future trusted contacts in Poland would be handed small fortunes in Jewish Joint Distribution Committee cash. What the dentist wanted to know, without any financial coloring, was what Herr Schindler knew and thought about the war against Jewry in Poland.

Once Sedlacek had the question out, Schindler hesitated. In that second, Sedlacek expected a refusal. Schindler's expanding workshop employed 550 Jews at the SS rental rate. The Armaments Inspectorate guaranteed a man like Schindler a continuity of rich contracts; the SS promised him, for no more than 7.50 Reichsmarks a day per person, a continuity of slaves. It should not be a surprise if he sat back in his padded leather chair and claimed ignorance.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler, Sedlacek

Related Themes:

Page Number: 148

Explanation and Analysis

This quote describes an early period in the meeting between Oskar Schindler and Sedlacek, the dentist who is secretly working with a Zionist rescue organization based in Budapest. As he does in other parts of the book, Keneally steps back to consider what Oskar Schindler must look like to someone with an outside perspective. Here, Sedlacek looks at Schindler and sees what a profitable operation Schindler must be running in Cracow. Schindler's Jewish workers are providing him something close to slave labor, given how cheap it is to keep them on. Sedlacek wonders if perhaps Schindler changed his mind about saving his Jewish prisoners after he saw how profitable they were, or if perhaps Sedlacek got false information, and Schindler was never a sympathizer to begin with.

The novel considers how Schindler looks on the outside—like a successful, self-interested industrialist—in part because it highlights how extraordinary Schindler's later deeds are. Schindler has many options available to him and could choose to profit off a more selfish way of running his factory, but he makes the deliberate choice to resist Nazi rule in Poland.

Chapter 22 Quotes

The first morning Commandant Goeth stepped out his front door and murdered a prisoner at random, there was a tendency to see *this* also, like the first execution on Chujowa Górka, as a unique event, discrete from what would become the customary life of the camp. In fact, of course, the killings on the hill would soon prove to be habitual, and so would Amon's morning routine.

Related Characters: Amon Goeth, Oskar Schindler, Helen Hirsch/Lena

Related Themes:

Page Number: 192

Explanation and Analysis

This quote comes from a passage about Amon Goeth's early days as the commandant at the Płaszów concentration camp, near Cracow, Poland. The prologue has already established Goeth as an extremely cruel man, but this passage shows that, in addition to being cruel, Goeth is also an arbitrary ruler. His routine of shooting prisoners at random helps establish early that no prisoner, no matter how secure their position might seem, is safe from his arbitrary wrath.

As with before, many Jewish people want to believe that the atrocities they are witnessing are only temporary. While it might seem naïve to expect mercy from Nazis, this hope for a better future is also important for survival. Schindler knows this, which is why he eventually tells prisoners like Helen Hirsch to just hold onto their health. In fact, Schindler does not have the power to protect prisoners like Hirsch from Goeth's wild moods, but the prisoners need the hope of something better in order to survive the camp.

Chapter 23 Quotes

❝ When Levartov and his wife came to the Emalia factory subcamp in the summer of '43, he had to suffer what at first he believed to be Schindler's little religious witticisms. On Friday afternoons, in the munitions hall of DEF where Levartov operated a lathe, Schindler would say, "You shouldn't be here, Rabbi. You should be preparing for *Shabbat*." But when Oskar slipped him a bottle of wine for use in the ceremonies, Levartov knew that the *Herr Direktor* was not joking. Before dusk on Fridays, the rabbi would be dismissed from his workbench and would go to his barracks behind the wire in the backyard of DEF. There, under the strings of sourly drying laundry, he would recite *Kiddush* over a cup of wine among the roof-high tiers of bunks. Under, of course, the shadow of an SS watchtower.

Related Characters: Menasha Levartov , Oskar Schindler, Amon Goeth

Related Themes:

Page Number: 211

Explanation and Analysis

This quote comes after Oskar Schindler has had the prisoner Menasha Levartov transferred to his Emalia factory. Levartov is a rabbi who catches Amon Goeth's attention and is nearly executed. But Levartov also earns some of his fellow prisoners' admiration, and they rally to have him sent to the comparative safety of Schindler's factory.

Schindler, who is sometimes hard to read, even for his friends, seems to be joking at first when he tells Rabbi Levartov that he should be preparing for the *Shabbat*, the Jewish holy day of rest. But as it turns out, Schindler isn't joking, and in fact, he even has wine that he will contribute to help Levartov hold a ceremony. This kind, courageous gesture is particularly striking when it is contrasted against the image of the SS watchtower that is located right near where the ceremony will take place. Schindler's respect for the Jewish religion, despite his lack of commitment even to his own Catholicism, shows that he understands the role it plays in the lives of the prisoners and how it can help to combat the effects of dehumanization that many prisoners feel in the camp.

Chapter 26 Quotes

❝ Josef married Rebecca on a Sunday night of fierce cold in February. There was no rabbi. Mrs. Bau, Josef's mother, officiated. They were Reformed Jews, so that they could do without a *ketubbah* written in Aramaic. In the workshop of Wulkan the jeweler someone had made up two rings out of a silver spoon Mrs. Bau had had hidden in the rafters. On the barracks floor, Rebecca circled Josef seven times and Josef crushed glass—a spent light bulb from the Construction Office—beneath his heel.

Related Characters: Josef Bau , Rebecca Tannenbaum , Mrs. Bau , Mordecai Wulkan

Related Themes:

Page Number: 247

Explanation and Analysis

This quote comes near the end of the concentration camp courtship of Josef Bau and Rebecca Tannenbaum. Such relationships are extremely rare in camps because male and female prisoners are separated, and the way they're overworked means they have little time to rest or socialize. Perhaps because such situations are so rare, the prisoners decide to make the marriage of Josef and Rebecca a special occasion. Though it is difficult—and in fact risky—to hold a celebration within the concentration camp, the makeshift wedding ceremony is important because it helps the prisoners stay in touch with their humanity. This is particularly true since one of the Nazis' main tactics for dehumanizing and demoralizing Jewish populations is separating spouses and family members from one another.

The wedding ceremony they hold is full of symbols (the silver spoon rings, the crushing of light bulb glass) that are elements of traditional Jewish wedding ceremonies. The fact that everyone goes to so much effort to recreate these symbols shows just how important symbols are to helping maintain a sense of self and community identity.

Chapter 27 Quotes

❝ On April 28, 1944, Oskar—by looking sideways at himself in a mirror—was able to tell that his waist had thickened for his thirty-sixth birthday. But at least today, when he embraced the girls, no one bothered to denounce him. Any informer among the German technicians must have been demoralized, since the SS had let Oskar out of Pomorska and Montelupich, both of them centers supposed impregnable to influence.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 250

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, which appears close to the end of World War II in the book, is the second time Schindler's birthday has been mentioned. The first time was Schindler's 34th birthday in 1942, and it was a much more raucous occasion, which Schindler even getting sent to jail after a crowd witnessed him kiss a Jewish woman. Perhaps for this reason, his birthday in 1944 is a more subdued affair. Schindler has put on weight, suggesting that time, the war, and perhaps his lavish lifestyle have taken a toll on him. (Notably, though, the toll on Schindler is very different from the toll taken on Jewish prisoners, particularly the ones outside of Schindler's camp who are brutalized and undernourished).

Schindler's birthday becomes a frequently noted date in the book because it provides an easy benchmark to see how he grows and changes during and after the war. It's also significant because birthdays are a celebration of life. Though there was little time for celebration during the Holocaust, Schindler was, for his many Jewish prisoners, a symbol of life himself.

Chapter 30 Quotes

The orders, labeled OKH (Army High Command), already sat on Oskar's desk. Because of the war situation, the Director of Armaments told Oskar, KL Płaszów and therefore the Emalia camp were to be disbanded. Prisoners from Emalia would be sent to Płaszów, awaiting relocation. Oskar himself was to fold his Zablocie operation as quickly as possible, retaining on the premises only those technicians necessary for dismantling the plant. For further instructions, he should apply to the Evacuation Board, OKH, Berlin.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 275

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, though it describes a moment near the end of the war, comes from a passage where Oscar Schindler experiences a significant setback in his plan to protect his Jewish prisoners. As the Nazis in high command begin to fear the incoming Russian Army, they start the process of dismantling camps like Płaszów. Many Jewish prisoners at these camps will be shipped off to other camps (with the transfer process itself being a perilous and potentially deadly journey). Many of these camps are extermination camps (where prisoners are unceremoniously executed rather than forced to work), and without Schindler's oversight, his Jewish allies will soon be just as vulnerable as any other prisoners.

Significantly, however, Schindler is not someone who blindly follows orders. Though the orders he receives say that he should simply wait for his camp to be disbanded and apply to the Evacuation Board, this isn't what he does at all. By this point, Schindler is fully committed to rescuing as many Jewish prisoners as he can from the war, so these orders only further motivate him, ultimately inspiring him to form his own new camp, Brinnlitz. Disobeying orders like this is, of course, a great personal risk for Schindler—but he doesn't hesitate to make this decision, emphasizing how the war has changed him from a self-interested and business-minded to generous and self-sacrificing.

Chapter 31 Quotes

Oskar later estimated that he spent 100,000 RM.—nearly $40,000—to grease the transfer to Brinnlitz. Few of his survivors would ever find the figure unlikely, though there were those who shook their heads and said, "No, more! It would have to have been more than that."

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler, Sussmuth , Colonel Erich Lange

Related Themes:

Page Number: 289

Explanation and Analysis

This passage comes after Schindler has already begun to set up his new Brinnlitz camp, in order to save Jewish prisoners who would have otherwise been shipped out to other concentration and extermination camps. It emphasizes how Schindler had to spend enormous amounts of his own money in order to get his new camp set up. Though Schindler was well regarded by his prisoners at Emalia, the shift to the camp at Brinnlitz will also mark a shift in Schindler's character. Whereas before, Schindler didn't have to choose between making a profit and helping his Jewish prisoners, at Brinnlitz it becomes clear that he can't do both. By this point in the book, Schindler has grown to the point

that this is an easy decision, and he spends large amounts of the money he amassed during earlier parts of the war in order to ensure the safety of his prisoners (at least to the extent that he's capable of ensuring anyone's safety). His prisoners appreciate the gesture so much that they estimate he spent even more money that Schindler himself estimates.

Chapter 32 Quotes

Three or four miles out into the hills, following a rail siding, they came to the industrial hamlet of Brinnlitz, and saw ahead in thin morning light the solid bulk of the Hoffman annex transformed into Arbeitslager (Labor Camp) Brinnlitz, with watchtowers, a wire fence encircling it, a guard barracks inside the wire, and beyond that the gate to the factory and the prisoners' dormitories.

As they marched in through the outer gate, Oskar appeared from the factory courtyard, wearing a Tyrolean hat.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 302

Explanation and Analysis

The passage describes the moment when Oskar Schindler's male prisoners finally make it from Płaszów to his new camp, Brinnlitz. Their first impression of the camp is a menacing one: they see the wired fences, the watchtowers, and the guard barracks, all of which could suggest that their time at Brinnlitz will place them under greater surveillance than Emalia. After their delay on the train ride, they are already primed to expect the worst.

When they see Schindler there in his Tyrolean hat (a traditional hat worn in the Alps), however, many of their fears are put to rest. Schindler has become a symbol of hope for them, and despite the desperate circumstances, they have faith in the promises that he has made to them. Schindler's Tyrolean hat hearkens back to an earlier period of German history, one that was perhaps a lot brighter than the current one that he and the prisoners are living through.

Chapter 33 Quotes

"I'm getting them out," Schindler rumbled. He did not go into explanations. He did not publicly surmise that the SS in Auschwitz might need to be bribed. He did not say that he had sent the list of women to Colonel Erich Lange, or that he and Lange both intended to get them to Brinnlitz according to the list. Nothing of that. Simply "I'm getting them out."

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler, Colonel Erich Lange

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 311

Explanation and Analysis

This quote comes just after Schindler and the male Jewish prisoners have learned that the female prisoners ended up in the concentration camp Auschwitz instead of being sent directly to Brinnlitz. This is a scary time for everyone because Auschwitz was infamous for being a deadly place that very few Jewish prisoners would survive. With all of the disease and malnutrition, to say nothing of the gas chambers, even a short stay in Auschwitz could have disastrous consequences.

When Schindler says, "I'm getting them out," he is making a promise that he may not be able to keep. Still, he knows that it's important to be confident and to keep a hopeful attitude, both to keep up morale among his male prisoners and to help in his dealings with the Nazis, where confidence and charm are still important traits. Though the reality of saving the female prisoners will likely be complicated, Schindler does not allow himself to get discouraged—he simply affirms that he'll do what it takes.

Chapter 34 Quotes

This deft subversion may not have satisfied Liepold and Schoenbrun. For the sitting had not reached a formal conclusion; it had not ended in a judgment. But they could not complain that Oskar had avoided a hearing, or treated it with levity.

Dresner's account, given later in his life, raises the supposition that Brinnlitz maintained its prisoners' lives by a series of stunts so rapid that they were nearly magical. To tell the strict truth though, Brinnlitz, both as a prison and as a manufacturing enterprise, was itself, of its nature and in a literal sense, the one sustained, dazzling, integral confidence trick.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler, Janek Dresner , Commandant Josef Liepold

Related Themes:

Page Number: 340

Explanation and Analysis

This quote comes from the end of the hearing for Janek Dresner, who is caught making a mistake at the factory at Brinnlitz and accused of deliberately sabotaging the machine. Commandant Liepold pounces on this opportunity because he's been looking for a pretext to get inside Schindler's camp and exercise greater authority. Schindler, however, is used to playing these power games and insists on maintaining autonomy over his own camp, which Liepold grudgingly respects.

Schindler's solution is to effectively stage a mock trial for Janek that he abruptly cuts off before delivering a sentence. In this way, Schindler is using the Nazis' own bureaucratic and legal proceedings to undermine them. Liepold isn't pleased with the outcome, but more importantly, Schindler has done just enough to stop Liepold from actually acting on his displeasure. Janek's account at the end, in which he mentions that Brinnlitz was like a "confidence trick," highlights just how much the success of the camp depends on Schindler and his allies' quick thinking and confident attitudes.

Chapter 35 Quotes

❝ For the factory produced nothing. "Not a shell," Brinnlitz prisoners will still say, shaking their heads. Not one 45mm shell manufactured there could be used, not one rocket casing.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 341

Explanation and Analysis

This quote describes Schindler's prisoners collectively looking back at their time near the end of the war at Schindler's factory at Brinnlitz. According to them, Schindler's factory managed to accomplish the amazing feat of existing until the end of the war, theoretically as an essential industry, but without in fact actually contributing anything to the Nazi war effort.

The case of Brinnlitz is contrasted with Emalia, which, despite its enormous success as a haven for Jewish prisoners, nevertheless did contribute resources to the Nazi war effort. The case of Brinnlitz shows how, near the end of the war, bolder action becomes possible and perhaps even necessary. If there was any question earlier about whether Schindler was hedging his bets with the connections that he maintained with Nazis, it is now clear by the end of the war that Schindler has gone all-in on resistance and is wholly dedicated to the cause of his prisoners. Schindler's story is thus one of a man who starts out self-interested and profit-driven but becomes selfless when the circumstances demand it.

Chapter 37 Quotes

❝ To call either of them a speech, however, is to demean their effect. what Oskar was instinctively attempting was to adjust reality, to alter the self-image of both the prisoners and the SS. Long before, with pertinacious certainty, he'd told a group of shift workers, Edith Liebgold among them, that they would last the war. He'd flourished the same gift for prophecy when he faced the women from Auschwitz, on their morning of arrival the previous November, and told them, "you're safe now; you're with me." It can't be ignored that in another age and condition, the *Herr Direktor* could have become a demagogue of the style of Huey Long of Louisiana or John Lang of Australia, whose gift was to convince the listeners that they and he were bonded together to avert by a whisker all the evil devised by other men.

Oskar's birthday speech was delivered in German at night on the workshop floor to the assembled prisoners. An SS detachment had to be brought in to guard a gathering of that size, and the German civilian personnel were present as well. As Oskar began to speak, Poldek Pfefferberg felt the hairs on his lice stand to attention. He looked around at the mute faces of Schoenbrun and Fuchs, and of the SS men with their automatics. *They will kill this man*, he thought. *And then everything will fall apart.*

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler, Leopold (Poldek) Pfefferberg, Edith Liebgold

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 364

Explanation and Analysis

This passage describes perhaps the two most famous speeches Oskar Schindler ever gave, one near the end of

the war and one after the German surrender was announced. Schindler speaks in somewhat grandiose terms, and Keneally is quick to point out that at times, Schindler may have resembled popular demagogue speakers who promised salvation but who were arguably little more than grifters. Keneally distinguishes Schindler from these men, however, by showing how Schindler had a way of making his grand "prophecies" come true.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of these speeches is that Schindler gives them to his prisoners while prominent SS guards and officials are watching. Some, like Pfefferberg, see this as an act of recklessness, and it's certainly true that such reckless actions wouldn't necessarily be out of character for Schindler. Still, one could also argue that the Nazis in attendance are just as much a part of Schindler's intended audience as the Jewish prisoners. Schindler knows that getting his prisoners safely to the end of the war will depend not so much on the decrees of Nazi high command but more on what the individual SS members in his camp decide to do. By speaking to the SS members as if they are also part of the group, Schindler is trying to make them feel included and therefore (hopefully) less likely to carry out any drastic actions in the last days of the war.

Epilogue Quotes

He was mourned on every continent.

Related Characters: Oskar Schindler

Related Themes:

Page Number: 397

Explanation and Analysis

This quote is the very last line of the book and describes the aftermath of the death of Oskar Schindler. Up until this point, the book describes Schindler in his full complexity. Though many of Schindler's Jewish prisoners express great admiration for what Schindler accomplished during the war, the book is also diligent about noting the ways in which Schindler either fell short of being a traditional hero or at the very least didn't fit the standard mold. The last line, however, removes any of this ambiguity and celebrates Schindler's life in a straightforward way. With his death, Schindler becomes a larger-than-life figure who inspires near-universal mourning. By contrasting the pure heroism of Schindler in death with the more nuanced picture of Schindler in life, the novel captures how he was a flawed human being but how ultimately, his impact on the people around him was a heroic one—and this is what his real legacy is.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

PROLOGUE

It's the fall of 1943. Oskar Schindler, wearing an expensive suit with a swastika on it, emerges from his apartment in Cracow, where his chauffeur is waiting for him with a limo. Schindler is an industrialist, and he's not "virtuous" in the conventional definition of the word: he lives with a German mistress and is having an affair with his Polish secretary, while his wife Emilie lives back in Moravia. Schindler is also a heavy drinker and a chain smoker.

The book begins by showing how Oskar Schindler would look to an outside observer. The book is set in 1943 in Cracow, Poland during World War II, and given Schindler's Nazi insignia, it seems that he has some sort of affiliation with the Nazi Party. Indeed, with his lavish lifestyle and his swastika-adorned jacket, as well as with his womanizing tendencies, he seems an unlikely candidate to be a hero.

Schindler is headed to a dinner at the villa of Commandant Amon Goeth, who runs a local concentration camp. Schindler, however, isn't looking forward to the dinner. A prisoner at the camp named Poldek Pfefferberg is also headed to the villa that evening. Goeth frequently abuses his Jewish maid, Helen Hirsch, who used to be a student under Pfefferberg.

The dinner party shows the dynamics of the Płaszów concentration camp, with camp leaders and wealthy German industrialists living a decadent lifestyle, while Jewish prisoners are forced into subservient positions.

At the villa, Schindler sees the Jewish brothers Henry and Leo Rosner playing music, Henry on the violin and Leo on accordion. Seated at Goeth's table are some Nazis, including Julian Scherner (head of the SS for Cracow) and Rolf Czurda (chief of a security branch in Cracow). The oldest at the table is Franz Bosch, a WWI veteran who acts as an "economic adviser" for Scherner and who is involved in various legal and illegal business activities in the Płaszów concentration camp.

Anti-Semitism is not as simple as pure hatred; even though Amon Goeth hates Jewish people, he appreciates Henry and Leo Rosner's music. Additionally, Nazis like Scherner, Czurda, and Bosch may follow the party line on some issues, but they also won't hesitate to do something against protocol if they think they can benefit from it.

Schindler doesn't like Bosch, Scherner, or Czurda, but he needs their cooperation to keep his plant in Zablocie running, so he sends them gifts. Schindler does have some affection for two other guests, however: Julius Madritsch and Raimund Titsch. Madritsch owns a uniform factory inside the Płaszów camp, and Titsch is his manager. The factory is one of the more humane ones in the camp, with Titsch smuggling in food from outside for the prisoners. Four Cracow women who appear to be expensive prostitutes are at the dinner because Goeth's German mistress, Majola, is staying in the city at her apartment.

The Germans at the party are not all the same: in fact, there are other humane men like Schindler who are not as famous in history, such as Madritsch and Titsch. These men are caught in a moral gray area, unwilling to act as cruelly as men like Amon Goeth but also unable to avoid dealing with Nazis, both for their own protection and for the protection of their Jewish prisoners.

Goeth and the police chiefs (Czurda and Scherner) like Schindler, although they find him unusual. They blame it on him being from a more rural part of Germany. They welcome him and introduce him to the women. Before dinner, they make small talk about business and the war.

Schindler demonstrates his remarkable ability to make himself likable, even to men that he himself finds disagreeable.

As they're heading to the dinner table, Bosch pulls Schindler aside and remarks, "Business good, I see." He asks if Schindler might be able to make a generous gesture. He claims his aunt has been bombed out and lost all of her possessions and asks if it would be possible to get some kitchenware for her. Schindler owes a debt because the Scherner's office has already gotten him out of jail twice. He asks if the goods should go directly to Bosch's aunt or if he should send them to Bosch first, and Bosch says to send them to him. He asks for so much that Schindler jokes that his aunt must run an orphanage. Schindler says his Polish secretary will take care of it.

Neither Bosch nor Schindler have any illusions about what Bosch's request really means: he is clearly asking for a bribe. Such clandestine deals were common in Nazi-occupied Poland, where the black market thrived—although those who got caught could face severe consequences.

Bosch remarks that Schindler's wife must be a saint to let him keep such an attractive secretary. Schindler brushes him off, saying he doesn't discuss private matters.

Schindler's reluctance to talk about his wife may be a symptom of guilt. Though he makes no effort to hide his affairs, he does seem to realize that he doesn't act like the husband his wife wishes he was.

At dinner, Goeth introduces his maid, Lena, to the crowd. She has visible bruises on her and is Jewish (although Goeth doesn't have her wear a star). He beats her in particular whenever he is reminded of her Jewishness.

Goeth's relationship with Helen Hirsch (a.k.a. Lena) shows again that anti-Semitism isn't as simple as pure hatred. Though he is a cruel, abusive man, he also seems to depend on Hirsch in a way—and perhaps that is what makes him angry enough to beat her.

One of the Cracow women asks if Schindler is a soldier says that he'd look good in a uniform. Bosch and Goeth recall that they heard of an industrialist even more successful than Schindler who was forced to serve on the front lines.

Many characters comment on Schindler's handsomeness throughout the novel. Bosch and Goeth warn him, however, that even a handsome, successful man is capable of being taken down if he doesn't pay proper respect to those above him.

Pfefferberg and an orderly named Lisiek are upstairs cleaning Goeth's bathroom. Madritsch and Titsch drink coffee quickly and leave, with Schindler ready to follow soon after. Though he sometimes has affairs, Schindler doesn't want to have sex at Goeth's place (which the other guests will do once they take the Cracow women upstairs).

The fact that Madritsch and Titsch leave the party early suggests that they don't buy into Nazi ideology as much as the other guests in attendance. And given that Schindler plans to do the same, the reader can infer that he is similarly critical of the Nazis.

Schindler heads out, and in the bathroom, Pfefferberg and Lisiek overhear Goeth bringing a girl to his bedroom earlier than expected. They try to get out unnoticed, but Goeth spots them and shouts at them. A few days later, Amon Goeth shoots Lisiek dead, although it ends up being for something else: Lisiek harnesses a horse and buggy for Bosch without checking with Goeth first.

Lisiek's fate illustrates not only how cruel Goeth is as a camp commandant but also how arbitrary his punishments can be. Whereas he treats some Jewish people (like the Rosner brothers) with a modicum of respect, he treats Lisiek as subhuman and ultimately expendable.

Lena's real name is Helen Hirsch. When she sees Schindler in the kitchen, she is frightened and greets him deferentially. Schindler says she doesn't have to report to him. He kisses her on the forehead, the way Polish people say goodbye at train stations. He gives her a candy bar and says if she doesn't want to eat it, she can trade it. He says he heard about her from a man named Itzhak Stern.

When Schindler left alone with Hirsch, he reveals his true character. He is much kinder and more thoughtful when he doesn't have to watch out for the scrutiny of men like Goeth. The candy bar is one of many small acts of generosity Schindler makes that have outsize impacts on the gifts' recipients.

Helen tells Schindler about all the ways Goeth beats her, and Schindler tells her to just try to keep her health. He wants to get her out. He tells her about his enamelware factory, which Helen has heard of—it's referred to as "Schindler's Emalia." She mentions her sister in a camp kitchen and offers Schindler some money that she's hid in the kitchen in case he ever has the opportunity to buy her sister back.

Despite her desperate situation, Hirsch thinks of her sister before thinking of herself, which demonstrates her selflessness. Schindler accepts her money not because he needs it, but because he knows it'll just get confiscated if Goeth finds it, and he figures the money is better off with him.

Because of his close business relationships with Nazis, Schindler knows earlier than most about the gassing of Jews in concentration camps. He knows the worst is yet to come, but he believes that the camps will always keep some Jews for labor. This is why he advises people like Helen Hirsch to keep their health—because he believes the Nazis are most likely to kill people who can't work. Hirsch never does get paid back for the money she gave to Schindler, but she doesn't consider this a big deal, given everything else that Schindler will do.

Schindler likes to make big promises, but it isn't always clear if he'll be able to fulfill them. At the time, it doesn't seem like he can really promise salvation to Hirsch, even if she does manage to keep her health. Still, this passage implies that Schindler will find a way to make most of his promises come true—likely through a combination of both cunning and sheer luck.

CHAPTER 1

Back in September 1939, soon after Germany invaded Poland, Schindler comes to Cracow. Although within a month, he shows signs of being discontent with Nazism, he can see that Cracow is a good location and that he can make a lot of money there.

The story jumps back in time to show when Schindler first came to Poland. When he first arrives, he has some disillusionment with the Nazis, but he seems more interested in how he himself can profit off the current political situation than how he can undermine the regime.

Schindler's family is from Moravia, once a part of Austria, which became part of Czechoslovakia in 1918. Young Hitler would eventually become obsessed with reuniting German-speaking people in areas like where Schindler grew up. Schindler's mother was a devout Catholic, while his father was a heavy drinker and smoker and more dismissive of religion (as his son, too, would eventually be). Schindler had a couple Jewish school friends growing up, and his next-door neighbor was a rabbi.

The book focuses on Schindler's parents because their lives follow a surprisingly similar pattern to Schindler's own life, with Schindler mirroring his father and Schindler's eventual wife, Emilie, being similar to Schindler's mother. In addition, Schindler's disinterest in religion and his personal relationships with Jewish people may partially explain why doesn't fully buy into the Nazis' worldview later in life.

Young Schindler didn't care about race or nationality; he was most interested in motorcycles. In 1928, he competed in a series of races. He even came close to winning a major race against some of the best in Europe, but he failed after losing track of the laps and stopping too soon.

Schindler's interest in motorcycles shows that he was a bit of a daredevil when he was younger. Though he matures, he will keep some of this daredevil spirit when he's older.

The summer after all his motorcycle races, Schindler met his future wife, Emilie, and married her after just six weeks. She was a farmer's daughter who was devout but looking to escape her quiet life. Neither set of parents approved of the marriage, and Emilie's father refused to pay her full dowry.

The fact that Schindler still marries Emilie in spite of all the opposition shows that Schindler has no problem defying authority. Ironically, although marrying Emilie begins as a rebellious act, she ends up being a more conservative influence on him.

Schindler and Emilie got an apartment in Zwittau. During the 1930s, Schindler began staying out late in cafes and talking to girls. His father's business went bankrupt in 1935—the same year that his father left his mother. Though it was the Great Depression, Schindler had enough contacts and charm to get a job as a sales manager at a company called Moravian Electrotechnic.

Nothing in Schindler's early married life is particularly noteworthy, which will make his amazing actions during the war (which Helen alluded to in the Prologue) all the more surprising.

The death of Schindler's mother caused a rift between him and his father. By that point, Schindler was wearing the symbol of the German Party (something his late mother mildly disapproved of). Schindler wasn't especially political, but because the people in Czechoslovakia who didn't wear the emblem were usually Communists or Social Democrats, Schindler wore the emblem to distinguish himself from them (and because it was good for business with German companies).

Schindler's disinterest in politics as a young man is interesting, given that the Prologue described him wearing a Nazi insignia and socializing with Nazi Party officials. One of the novel's enduring questions is what, exactly, motivates him to help people during World War II. But the book avoids providing easy answers, and in fact, sometimes includes details like this that make it even harder to draw a clear conclusion.

When Moravia is invaded in 1939, however, Schindler finds himself less enthralled with the Nazis and begins to feel that the new regime is tyrannical. Schindler's father and Emilie believe Hitler is destined to fail.

Schindler's disillusionment with the Nazis begins more on a personal level than a moral level: he dislikes them because they interfere with his life.

Schindler meets a German named Eberhard Gebauer who is with a German intelligence agency called the Abwehr. He knows Schindler is an outgoing man who has contacts across the Polish border and asks Schindler if he'd be willing to provide military and industrial intelligence about Poland, as well as look for German Poles to recruit. Schindler agrees, perhaps because he knows being an *Abwehr* agent will make him exempt from army service, although Schindler doesn't necessarily disapprove of Germany's invasion of Poland. His real problem is with Himmler and the SS, and he seems to believe that Gebauer and his *Abwehr* colleagues are preferable.

Because the author, Keneally, doesn't have access to Schindler's thoughts, the best he can do is reconstruct events based on the testimony of people who were there. When there isn't enough information to make a clear conclusion, he lays the facts out so that the reader can decide on their own. Here, Keneally leaves it ambiguous as to whether Schindler joined a Nazi intelligence force simply to play the system, or whether he may still have had some loyalty (or at least indifference) toward the Nazi Party at the beginning of World War II.

CHAPTER 2

In late October 1939, two low-ranking German soldiers enter a shop called J. C. Buchheister & Company in Cracow and try to buy some expensive cloth from the Jewish clerk. They pay with a Bavarian banknote from 1858 and a piece of German Army Occupation scrip from 1914, which the shopkeeper must accept.

The German soldiers are mocking the Jewish clerk by gloating about how they've conquered his country. Because they are the ones in control, they can do whatever they want without having to face any consequences.

Later that day, German officials come to take over the business, as they're doing to all Jewish businesses in Poland. One of them is Sepp Aue, a middle-aged supervisor, and with him is an ambitious-looking younger man. The young man looks through the books and asks about the strange currency that the Germans left earlier. The Jewish bookkeeper tells the story, but the young man will report to Sepp Aue that they should call the Schutzpolizei, suspecting fraud.

One of the recurring motifs in the book is the young go-getter versus the more complacent middle-aged functionary. Though Keneally celebrates Schindler's own comparative youth and vigor, many of the most vicious Nazis are also youthful. While the older Nazis are generally more likely to let people do as they please, their complacency is also arguably what allows many of the worst atrocities of the Holocaust to occur.

Aue is concerned because he knows reporting the bookkeeper to the Schutzpolizei will get him sent to the SS jail. Aue is himself vulnerable because his grandmother was Jewish. He sends a message to the company accountant, a Polish Jew named Itzhak Stern, asking him to come in and help resolve the issue. Just after sending the message, Aue's secretary tells him that a man named Oskar Schindler is outside and has an appointment with him.

Many Nazis like Aue were insecure about their own position in the party—and often for good reason. The fact that Aue is both part-Jewish and a Nazi shows how arbitrary these categories are, yet how thoroughly they're weaponized against people and how deadly they can be. Though Aue is a minor character, he plays a crucial role by introducing Schindler to Stern.

Schindler (along with his German mistress Ingrid) met Aue at a party the previous night. At the party, Schindler told Aue he was looking for a career in Cracow, and Aue said he was welcome to look over the textile business Buchheister's. Schindler takes this offer seriously, and this is why he shows up for an appointment the next day. Aue gives Schindler a tour of the warehouse.

Aue is one of many men throughout the book who will make Schindler a promise in the middle of a drunken night of carousing. While Schindler's own love for alcohol seems to be genuine, then, his drinking is also deceptively strategic.

On the way back from the warehouse, Schindler and Aue meet Itzhak Stern. When Stern informs Schindler that he is Jewish, Schindler doesn't seem phased and replies that he is German. Aue leaves so Schindler can interview Stern. Stern explains, with a dry sense of humor, that he writes off exchanges like the one with the two German soldiers that morning as "free samples," and that there have been a lot of free samples lately. Schindler can tell Stern is a local who really knows how things work in the city. (By November 8, the registration of all Jews in Cracow will have begun. Stern knows this is just the first of many edicts to come and isn't optimistic.)

Stern and Schindler hit it off at once because they are both pragmatic and blunt. Though each recognizes the need for caution, Schindler helps break the tension by implying that he doesn't really care that Stern is Jewish. Because Schindler is an outsider, he will rely heavily on locals like Stern in order to get his operations—both official and secret—running in Cracow.

Aue tells Schindler that Stern has good business connections in Cracow. After Aue leaves the room. Schindler tells Stern he'd like to learn more about local businesses. He asks questions, eventually asking about a company called Rekord that used to make enamelware but recently went bankrupt. Schindler shows him a balance sheet to look over. Stern sees a potential ally in Schindler and tells him that the business seems solid and that it has a possibility for military contracts.

Particularly at this point in his life, Schindler is still a businessman. He isn't just asking about Rekord as a pretense—he is still genuinely interested in trying to make money. Stern recognizes this, but he also recognizes that open-minded men like Schindler can be convinced to do good, even as they are looking out for themselves and their own financial interests.

Schindler figures that with a little credit, he can turn the Rekord enamelware factory into a very profitable enterprise. Stern tells him that he should remember he'll be restricted in who he can employ—the Germans are trying to get rid of Jews in skilled or management positions.

Stern's warning to Schindler about how Germans are trying to get rid of skilled Jewish workers is intended as a hint, to try to get Schindler to employ Jewish workers. Stern doesn't say so directly, however, because he still has to be cautious around a German like Schindler.

As Schindler and Stern finish their discussion, they talk about the relationship between Christianity and Judaism, a topic that has always interested Schindler. Schindler says it must be hard, in such a violent time, for priests to earnestly tell congregations about how God cares about the death of even a single sparrow. In response, Stern brings up a Talmudic verse about how "he who saves the life of one man saves the world entire."

The Talmudic verse about the importance of saving one life is one of the most important concepts in the book. Although it's impossible to know how this conversation actually affected Schindler, what Stern says here becomes Schindler's guiding principle during the Holocaust (whether consciously or unconsciously).

CHAPTER 3

Leopold (Poldek) Pfefferberg is another Jew from Cracow who meets with Schindler that fall. He is a wounded former Polish Army officer. After being captured, he used false documents to escape back to his home in Cracow. He lives uneasily in friends' apartments while the German crackdown becomes more oppressive. Eventually, he starts making plans to escape Poland on skis, perhaps for Hungary or Romania.

In the Author's Note to Schindler's List, *Thomas Keneally notes that the real-life Pfefferberg is one of the main sources who encouraged Keneally to tell Schindler's story in the first place. For this reason, it isn't surprising that Pfefferberg shows up as a major character in the story—he would have had a lot of firsthand knowledge to pass on to Keneally.*

One cold night in November, Pfefferberg comes close to killing Schindler. He sees Schindler in his suit with a Nazi Party badge on it, calling on Pfefferberg's mother while he's there, so he goes to hide in the kitchen (believing that Schindler is with the Gestapo). Schindler surprises them, however, with his quiet demeanor. He says that Mrs. Pfefferberg was recommended to him by a Jewish family called the Nussbaums, and that he is looking to have his new apartment redecorated.

Poland during the Nazi occupation was a chaotic place, and it was often unclear who could be trusted and who couldn't. Though in hindsight it seems amazing that any Jewish person could want to kill Oskar Schindler, Keneally tries to show how, from an outsiders perspective, Schindler looks the same as any other invading German.

Pfefferberg can see that Pfefferberg's mother doesn't know what to do, so he enters the room to introduce himself to Schindler and get his name. Schindler explains that he'd like his apartment redone in a style to please his Czechoslovakian wife, who will be coming up soon. Despite Mrs. Pfefferberg's initial hesitance to take a German client, Leopold Pfefferberg and Schindler begin to talk like friends.

Schindler's charm isn't just something he deploys to make business connections—he also uses it to make genuine friends. The contrast between this scene and the previous one shows how people's perceptions of one another can change after even a brief conversation.

Schindler asks if Pfefferberg might be able to help him procure some local goods, suggesting Pfefferberg's blue shirt as an example. Pfefferberg quotes him a rate that's five times what the shirt cost. Schindler pays Pfefferberg an amount that's well beyond the price Pfefferberg quotes. Eventually, he brings Schindler twelve blue shirts. He sees Schindler out with a blond Polish woman but does not see Schindler's wife, not even after Mrs. Pfefferberg redecorates Schindler's apartment.

Schindler shows tremendous generosity toward Pfefferberg by overpaying him. Partly this is just Schindler's personality: he genuinely is generous, sometimes to the point of carelessness. There is also a tactical element to Schindler's generosity, however: he is trying to ensure that Pfefferberg will be a trusted ally. Pfefferberg is only too happy to accept this offer.

CHAPTER 4

Stern meets Schindler again in early December. Schindler makes an announcement: "Tomorrow, it's going to start. Jozefa and Izaaka Streets are going to know all about it." Stern doesn't know what this means and wonders with disappointment if Schindler is celebrating about an upcoming pogrom. It's unclear if by "tomorrow" Schindler means the exact day or just a general future time.

Schindler still isn't comfortable enough with his new-Jewish associates to tell them directly what will happen, so he speaks obliquely. Perhaps he has not fully developed his own plan to resist Nazi authority and is only making his first tentative attempts at resistance.

In fact, however, Schindler is deliberately trying to pass on information and feels he is doing so at great risk to himself. He knows from two inside sources that something big is coming: that a detachment of Einsatzgruppen (known for their ruthless extermination tactics) is headed to the Jewish area of Kazimierz.

Though some Nazi brutality is clouded in secrecy and bureaucracy, the Einsatzgruppen*'s role is to be a very public show of force that instills fear in Jewish citizens.*

Hans Frank, the governor of Poland under the Nazis, lives at the end of the same street as Schindler. Though he rules over Cracow, he doesn't have any control over the special Einsatzgruppe squads moving into Kazimierz. Though Frank hates Jewish people, he resents the way these special squads act independently—he would prefer to have all Jewish people sent to a large concentration camp, perhaps in Lublin or even Madagascar. At the time, however, even Schindler and many in the SS didn't know that Madagascar would eventually be replaced by a much deadlier solution: the pesticide Zyklon B.

This passage once again portrays the complicated nature of anti-Semitism. Hans Frank openly hates Jewish people, but even he does not necessarily advocate for some for some of the most extreme measures (like torture and summary executions) that other Nazis will champion. Motivations among Nazis were not uniform, and atrocities were often committed by people who had very different individual rationales for participating.

As Schindler warned, the SS go through the streets of the Jewish neighborhoods and begin smashing and stealing things. The Einsatzgruppen go to a synagogue and force the Jews inside to spit on a Torah. All but one do so, but in the end, the Nazis shoot all of them and burn the place down.

This episode starkly depicts the Einsatzgruppen*'s ruthlessness, showing that their brutal tactics left no room for mercy.*

CHAPTER 5

Victoria Klonowska is Oskar Schindler's attractive Polish secretary, and Schindler begins an affair with her shortly after they meet. His German mistress, Ingrid, seems to know about the affair, just as Schindler's wife, Emilie, knows about Ingrid. Schindler makes little effort to hide what he's doing.

Though Schindler is a notorious playboy, his behavior is made somewhat more sympathetic by the fact that the women involved don't seem to mind what he's doing—at least not outwardly.

Schindler asks Klonowska if she knows any good clubs in town where he could make friends. She introduces him to a jazz club, where Schindler throws a party around 1939. Among those at the party are two policemen (Herman Toffel and Dieter Reeder) and two Abwehr men (Eberhard Gebauer, who recruited Schindler, and a lieutenant named Martin Plathe).

Schindler's distinction between business connections and real friends shows that he isn't as shallow as he might seem during his drinking sessions where he fraternizes with Nazis—he knows the difference between those sessions and real relationships.

Toffel tells Schindler about how the SS have reserved the entire rail system for the transport of Jews. He is annoyed because he believes the army should get first use. He explains that the Jews are being sent to concentration camps.

As always, Schindler uses drinking sessions as a way to ingratiate himself with people and extract information that will be useful to him later.

Gebauer talks about the Judenrats, Jewish councils that have been set up in each community by Governor Frank. They supply labor to the camps, perhaps because they believe it will stop random press-ganging, where Jewish people are forced into labor, sometimes violently. Plathe agrees that they're cooperating to avoid a worse outcome.

The Judenrats *occupy an interesting position in occupied Poland. Though they may seem to be traitors, collaborating with their Nazi oppressors, many Jewish residents will hold them in high regard because of their role in acting as a buffer between the Nazis and the Jews.*

Gebauer suggests that the Jews will never actually see Madagascar, as many have promised. Though he is a Nazi, he dislikes how the SS do things. Schindler once saw Gebauer hand over forged papers to help a Jewish businessman flee to Hungary, perhaps for a fee. Schindler realizes that none of the men in the room with him are as against Jews as some of the other Nazis, and that he might be able to put this to good use later.

Gebauer is a morally ambiguous figure who lacks the conviction to resist Nazi oppression like Schindler does, but who is also far from a willing collaborator. Men like this will be important allies to Schindler.

CHAPTER 6

When the Einsatzgruppe starts an Aktion on December 4th, Stern realizes that Schindler was trying to warn him, and that he can be trusted.

Schindler solidifies his relationship with Stern by providing sound intelligence. This is the turning point when Stern realizes that Schindler is a trustworthy ally to the Jewish population in Cracow, and that he will work to subtly undermine the Nazis.

Abraham Bankier, the office manager at Rekord, helps Schindler find capital for his new enterprise. Some of the richer Jewish residents of Cracow knew that Germans would seize their property, so they kept some of their money in "portable wealth," like diamonds, gold, and trade goods. Bankier knows that these Jews may be willing to invest in Rekord because enamelware is safer than keeping money in złoty. They make informal deals without contracts, which Schindler repays (in part because he makes so much money that it's negligible to repay them).

Though Schindler is the face of his operations, men like Bankier are critical to helping it run behind the scenes. Schindler knows well that running a successful business in Nazi-occupied Poland isn't just about operating in the official channels—it also involves informal deals and trades on the black market. The złoty was the official currency of Poland during World War II and still is today.

Emilie finally does come to visit Schindler in Cracow in the new year. She is still embarrassed that her father hasn't paid her dowry, but Schindler doesn't mind. One day, Pfefferberg comes in with a black-market rug and asks if Emilie if he can see "Frau Schindler." She responds that she is Frau Schindler, causing Pfefferberg to embarrassedly try to cover up his mistake.

Pfefferberg's mistake demonstrates how careless Schindler is about hiding his extramarital affairs. It's noteworthy that Emilie doesn't make a bigger deal out the whole situation, suggesting that she's already familiar with Schindler's habits and remains committed to him regardless.

Schindler leases a factory across the river Zablocie. He renames it to Rekord Deutsche Emailwaren Fabrik, and soon after receives some army contracts. Due to the contracts, he is allowed to expand. As he's starting his factory and growing it, at various points in the year, Stern comes by with Jews seeking employment. Within a few months, Schindler has 150 Jewish workers.

The army contracts are a key part of Schindler's early success—they're what allow him and his workers to get classified as essential. Though this production is ultimately what helps Schindler save people's lives, it does add a slight moral gray area, since he and his prisoners do contribute resources to the Nazi war effort at first.

Governor Frank announces in April that all Jews, with the exception of a couple thousand skilled workers, will have to either voluntarily leave Cracow or be forced to leave. His plan isn't carried out as quickly as he intended, but it causes several Jews to try to become qualified as skilled workers. Men like Stern look for Germans like Schindler and Madritsch who seem like they can be trusted to provide jobs.

Frank's harsh actions foreshadow even worse events to come for the Jewish residents of Cracow. Schindler and Madritsch, meanwhile, use the exception to Frank's rule to their advantage, both to expand their workforce and to help Jewish workers stay in Cracow.

Schindler begins to become frustrated by the way SS squads detain his Jewish workers, saying it affects his factory's productivity. He complains about this to Toffel, who says that the SS men on top care more about getting rid of Jews than they do about productivity. Schindler begins to advocate for the right of a factory owner to have a say over how his workers are treated, to stop them from being harassed on the way to work.

Schindler makes the argument that his Jewish prisoners shouldn't be bothered because they're necessary for the war effort. Though later this is frequently a lie, in this case, Schindler may genuinely be thinking about productivity. He knows that a productive factory will help provide cover to his Jewish workers—as well as profits for himself.

CHAPTER 7

Some Jews, like the musicians the Rosner brothers, move to a Polish village called Tyniec. They continue to play music, and at one point they play for a rich party that includes Nazis. Afterwards, a middle-aged SS officer approaches them and says, "I hope you have a nice harvest holiday." They realize this is a threat. They decide the best option is to return to Cracow.

The Rosner brothers' situation show how Poland was a precarious place for its Jewish residents, even outside the major urban areas like Cracow. Although the Nazis favor them and treat them better than they treat other Jewish people, they could turn on the Rosners at any moment. Keeping Jewish people on-edge and uncertain of their futures is one way in which the Nazis establish a position of superiority.

Meanwhile, Emilie goes back home, and the next time Stern visits Schindler, Ingrid is back. Stern tells Schindler that stories are going around about him being a "German gangster." Schindler assures them that this is just a business rivalry and argues that he's the one who's being taken advantage of.

Schindler will constantly face the threat of being denounced by people around him, which is part of why he forms connections with so many people—so he has friends to call on if any of these denunciations ever get him into legal trouble.

Later in the evening, Stern tells Schindler about the imprisonment of Marek Biberstein, who had been president of the Judenrat until his arrest. Biberstein had tried to be a buffer between the Germans and the local Jews. Eventually, the *Judenrat* started letting the wealthy buy their way off forced-labor **lists**, but even still, they were better regarded than the *Judenrat* in many other cities.

The Judenrat *occupy a unique position in Cracow, where they have more authority than the average Jewish citizen but are still under the Nazis' control. Many try to use their authority for good, but this turns out to be difficult.*

Initially, the Judenrat is made up of 24 men, primarily intellectuals. As the leader, Biberstein believes that Jews expelled from Cracow will be worse off, so he uses bribery to try to prevent this as much as possible. In particular he bribes a man named Reichert, who has contacts in the SS. Eventually, the scheme is found out, and both Biberstein and Reichert are jailed. Schindler says Reichert is a crook, but Stern replies that at sometimes, the only option left is to do business with crooks, which amuses Schindler.

Stern's observation that sometimes the only option is to do business with crooks will be proven right time and again throughout the novel. Schindler learns that his own survival will often depend heavily on the cooperation of men with dubious morals.

CHAPTER 8

Somehow Schindler is able to keep up his multiple affairs with seemingly few consequences. At Christmas, though he isn't devout, he goes to church in memory of Schindler's late mother. Business is still good, and Schindler's factory begins to start a munitions department. Schindler doesn't like shells as much as pots and pans, but he can tell it is good politics—it will help him be useful in the future, or at least *appear* useful.

Schindler is very careful about how he cultivates his outward appearance. He knows that the safety of his Jewish prisoners—as well as his own safety—depends on maintaining the outward appearance of usefulness to other Germans in positions of power.

Soon, Schindler receives word that there's going to be a new ghetto for Jews—the edict is posted on March 3. The edict claims that it's for Jewish people's own good, to protect them from Germans. Even before the arrival of the Germans, there was conflict between the Poles and Jews. Soon afterward, many Poles were eager to point out Jewish families, so the edict does at least sound credible to some. Some Cracow Jews are even used to the idea of a ghetto, which has historical roots since their grandparents may often had to live in one. They hope that it might lead to less oppression. The new ghetto becomes a minor inconvenience to Schindler, since it blocks his usual route to work.

Communications from Germans to Poland's Jewish population frequently use euphemisms and provide false information. This is not only to mislead Jewish people—it also helps those in the Nazi Party justify their actions to themselves. Sometimes the lies in these communications are well-constructed, but other times they serve as just the barest pretense.

Starting March 20, Schindler's Jewish workers can no longer earn wages and have to sustain themselves entirely on rations. Instead, the factory owners will have to pay a daily fee to the SS economic office. Schindler and Madritsch are both uncomfortable about this because if Germany loses the war, they don't want to be seen as slaveholders. For two weeks, Jews move their belongings into the ghetto, and by March 20, the movement is complete.

Schindler and Madritsch may be revered as heroic men today, but without the benefit of hindsight, it was very difficult for the Allies to tell which Germans were committed Nazis and which were secretly resisting the regime.

A 23-year-old Jewish woman named Edith Liebgold is assigned a first-floor room in the ghetto with her mother and her baby. Her husband wandered away several months ago after the fall of Cracow and never returned. She tries to find work and ends up finding out about Deutsche Email Fabrik. After being assured that the people running the factory are trustworthy, Edith ends up in a meeting with Schindler. He promises her she'll be safe if she stays working with him throughout the war.

Liebgold's experience is intended to be representative of what many of Schindler's Jewish prisoners experience, including the ones who don't appear in the book. His offers of hope seem far-fetched, but she can't help being convinced by him.

Edith thinks the offer is too good to be true, but she finds Schindler convincing. She starts working in the enamelware factory and finds herself actually believing Schindler's promises.

The hope that Schindler offers is a powerful motivator, and it is one of the key ways that he gets people to buy into his cause.

CHAPTER 9

In spring, Schindler leaves his Cracow factory and goes back to Zwittau to visit Emilie and the rest of his family. They go to dinner, and the whole time they avoid the question of whether Emilie should come to Cracow. Schindler excuses himself and goes off drinking with some of his old friends from his biker days.

Schindler's relationship with his wife remains precarious, although she is seemingly too devoted of a Catholic to bring up a subject like divorce. In this way, her religious duty as a wife keeps her loyal to Schindler, for better or worse.

One of Schindler's friends tells him that Schindler's father is having dinner alone, and that he's been reduced to a shadow of his former self. Moreover, he knows Schindler is in town. Reluctantly, Schindler and his father meet up. Schindler is moved by his father's poor health and realizes that he is human too. He hugs his father, and the old motorcyclists around them all applaud.

Schindler's reunion with his father is one of the earliest examples of how Schindler can change for the better, putting aside his own pride in order to sympathize with his father and forgive him in spite of his flaws.

CHAPTER 10

In the summer of 1941, the Judenrat enlist men into the OD, the Jewish ghetto police, by trying to portray the role as one of public service. The SS, meanwhile, see the OD as just another arm of the police force that will take orders. As time passes, more and more Jews begin to view the OD with suspicion, suspecting them of collaborating with the Nazis.

Like the Judenrat, *the OD occupies a unique position in the ghetto: they have some authority, but this power is ultimately insignificant in the face of the Nazis. They are, in this sense, just another tool the Nazis use to manipulate the Jewish population.*

Early on, however, these suspicions are not as prevalent. Leopold Pfefferberg is one member, enlisting in part because he hopes that bringing order to the ghetto will encourage the Germans to go away faster. Even as a member of the OD, however, Pfefferberg continues to be involved in the smuggling of black-market goods. He is helped in part because he has an "Aryan" appearance.

Pfefferberg wants to do what's right, but morality is often hard to figure out in chaotic occupied Poland. He has more leeway than other Jewish men in the ghetto because he doesn't look stereotypically Jewish in the Nazis' view, though this alone won't be enough to save him.

Schindler visits the ghetto in April, partly to see a jeweler he's commissioned. The jeweler tells him things are changing and becoming more repressive in the ghetto. Control of the ghetto has been handed down from Governor Frank to Julian Scherner, a middle-aged SS officer who looks like a standard bureaucrat (and whom Schindler has met at cocktail parties). Schindler suspects Scherner will be more in favor of putting Jewish people to work than exterminating them.

Schindler is an outsider to the ghetto, but he feels it's his duty to find out what conditions inside are really like. Schindler was smart to begin building a relationship with Scherner early on, because suddenly Scherner has a lot more influence in the city. Generally, Schindler can't predict transfers of power like this—he just knows as a basic principle that it's always a good idea to make connections in case they ever turn out to be useful.

As the OD becomes increasingly controlled by the SS (and therefore more repressive), Pfefferberg starts looking for a way out. He finds a doctor named Alexander Biberstein and asks for a medical certificate to leave the OD. Biberstein says it'll be difficult but tells him to fake a bad back. Despite some initial resistance—Pfefferberg is required to see a Gestapo doctor too—Pfefferberg is eventually discharged from the OD. The next day, Germany invades Russia. Schindler knows that if the Madagascar plan ever was real, it's finished now.

Pfefferberg's defection from the OD shows that the situation in the ghetto is getting worse. The OD is partially made up of Judenrat, *which means that some Jewish people are even turning on their fellow Jewish citizens in the hope that it will earn them protection from the Nazis. This is yet another way in which life in Nazi-occupied Poland is morally ambiguous, as sometimes people's only option to save themselves is to sacrifice others.*

CHAPTER 11

Next to Schindler's enamelware plant is the German Box Factory. Originally, it had been Jereth's Box Factory and belonged to Ernst Jereth, who still works as the unofficial manager. Schindler sometimes comes by and speaks to him, learning of the increasingly desperate situation in the ghetto. Jereth doesn't see any end to Germany's domination.

Again, Schindler doesn't know specifically how or if Jereth will be able to help him in the future, but he tries to make as many connections as he can. Because Schindler isn't Jewish and is an outsider to the Cracow ghetto—and because the Nazis keep their inner workings and plans under wraps—he relies on people like Jereth to feed him crucial information.

After his reconciliation with his father, Schindler starts receiving letters from him. His father doesn't believe Hitler will last. Schindler enjoys these letters and sends money home to his father.

Schindler's reconciliation with his father provides a hopeful counterpoint to some of the darker events in the book, showing that some disputes really can be solved simply through open communication.

Near the end of 1941, Schindler suddenly finds himself under arrest. Some unknown person denounced him, so two Gestapo officers show up at his house and present warrants. They ask for his business files but don't seem to know exactly which files they need. Schindler makes a **list** for his secretary of people he claims he was going to have appointments with that day, but it's really a list of people he wants to see so that they can help bail him out.

Schindler's arrest shows how suddenly a person's fortune can change in wartime Cracow—even for a successful German like Schindler. The Nazis not only oppress and brutalize Jewish people, but they also maintain their power by suppressing anyone suspected of standing in the way of their agenda. Nevertheless, Schindler remains cool under pressure and knows that his best chance of getting out is to tap his local contacts.

The first name on Schindler's **list** is Julian Scherner, and the second is Martin Plathe of the Abwehr. Third is Franz Bosch (whom Schindler had given kitchenware to earlier). Schindler suspects that his arrest must have something to do with the black market.

None of the men on Schindler's list are good friends of his, but he has built working relationships with all of them, in part because he knows how to offer something useful to them.

Schindler charms the Gestapo man who interviews him. He reminds the man that his factory meets its quotas. The Gestapo man asks who the plant manager is, and Schindler admits that it's the Jewish man Abraham Bankier. The Gestapo man admits that Schindler's paperwork may be in order, but they'll need more from Bankier to confirm. Schindler is detained. He is kept in a nice bedroom while awaiting a decision.

At this comparatively early stage in the war, the Gestapo are less likely to persecute a useful industrialist like Schindler, who contributes to the war effort. Schindler is even kept in a comfortable room rather than a cell while he waits for a verdict on his paperwork, demonstrating the vast difference between how Jewish and non-Jewish people are treated in Nazi-occupied Poland.

The next morning, the auditor tells Schindler that after a quick look at Schindler's records, it was determined that he stood high in the opinion of some influential people and that he was needed for the war effort. Schindler is free, but he believes it may only be temporary.

Even though Schindler's personal and business connections are able to get him out of trouble, he knows that his position remains precarious. Even at this early stage, then, Schindler knows that helping Jewish people (by employing skilled Jewish workers in his factory) means putting himself at risk.

CHAPTER 12

A young girl arrives at the house of the Dresners, who live in the east part of the ghetto. The child is no longer safe in the countryside since the SS are offering rewards to people who betray their Jewish neighbors. Mrs. Dresner tells the girl that her real parents are hiding and will eventually come to Cracow. In fact, they have been rounded up by the SS but managed to escape before being put on a train, disappearing into a crowd of Polish people. The girl, Genia, is nicknamed "**Redcap**" because she likes to wear red. When one of the Dresner children questions her about her family, she begins to make up a fake story about how her relatives are Polish.

Genia represents the Nazis' destruction of Jewish children's innocence—although despite the desperate circumstances, she is still able to hold on to some of that innocence. Her love of the color red shows demonstrates the way that children can take joy in simple things. Yet even at her extremely young age, Genia grasps that she will have to use trickery in order to survive in the cutthroat world of occupied Poland.

On April 28, 1942, Schindler's 34th **birthday**, he has a boisterous celebration, which starts at Emalia. He brings cakes and cigarettes into the factory for workers. He is so spirited that he kisses a girl named Kucharska and is then seen being friendly with Jewish women and Stern. Someone reports him, and he is arrested again on the morning of the 29th by two Gestapo men (more confident than the two Gestapo from the last time).

Schindler's birthday will coincide with important events for several of the years chronicled in the story. This year is Schindler's most boisterous celebration, which reflects that fact that his attitude at this stage of the war is still relatively upbeat and carefree. Yet the fact that he is punished for something as innocent as fraternizing with Jewish people shows that life under the Nazi regime is becoming stricter and harder to navigate—even for non-Jewish people like Schindler.

Schindler asks if the two men have a warrant and implies that they might regret taking him away without one. One of the men says they will just have to risk the regret. As he is driven away, he notices he is being taken toward Montelupich prison (where he knows a local medical institute gets its cadavers from). Schindler hopes Klonowska is making the necessary calls for him.

Schindler's second arrest is more serious than the first, as it's implied that the Montelupich prison often executes people. He plans to use the same strategy to get out as before, but he seems to be more nervous this time as the Gestapo men take him away. The arrest emphasizes that he often doesn't know who around him he can trust.

A handsome SS officer is the only other man in the cell with Schindler, who suspects the man may be a plant. He gives his name as Philip. After more talking, where the man talks at great lengths, Schindler decides that after all he isn't a plant and is maybe someone who suffered a breakdown. Philip is amused when he hears that Schindler is locked up for kissing a Jewish girl.

Even in a prison cell, Schindler knows to be careful, in case his cellmate is secretly a Nazi sympathizer. This makes it clear that it is becoming harder for people like Schindler to find allies, since people are quick to turn on one another to save themselves.

Schindler tries to bribe a low-ranking SS officer guard to get five bottles of vodka. The guard is surprised, but Schindler assures him that three of the bottles are for the man and his colleagues. Schindler then tells him that he'd like the officer to call his secretary and gives him a **list** of phone numbers. The SS officer notes that the people on the list are influential and leaves.

Even after his arrest, Schindler holds on to a little of his daredevil spirit (which the novel hinted at earlier through his youthful love of motorcycles), taking an unnecessary risk just to get vodka. These seemingly unnecessary risks do, however, help establish him as a confident man, which is essential to maintaining his image, winning people over, and surviving tricky situations like this.

Philip worries that Schindler will get himself shot for attempted bribery, but when the SS officer comes back, he has two bottles for them, as well as various other amenities that Ingrid packed for Schindler. Schindler and Philip have a pleasant evening.

Schindler shows that even in prison he knows how to have a good time and make connections. In this way, his gregarious, personable nature is something of a survival tactic.

On the fifth morning, another low-ranking SS officer and two guards come for Schindler. They take him to an office where he meets Rolf Czurda again. Schindler explains to Czurda that he only kissed a Jewish girl because he was drunk on his **birthday**. Czurda says he has gotten some calls from big-timers about Schindler; Schindler is too essential to the war effort to keep locked up. Schindler asks if there's anything he can do in return, and Czurda says he has an old aunt who had her apartment bombed out and could use some kitchenware.

Once again, Schindler finds himself in the debt of a man he doesn't particularly like. Here, though, personal feelings aren't important; what's important is what Czurda can do for Schindler and vice versa. Schindler is generous with bribes because he knows they're a strategy to protect himself and form alliances—even with people whose values don't align with his, which echoes Stern's comment that it's sometimes necessary to work with crooks.

As Schindler leaves, Czurda gives him a warning: "You'd be a fool if you got a real taste for some little Jewish skirt. They don't have a future, Schindler. That's not just old-fashioned Jew-hate talking, I assure you. It's policy."

Czurda gives Schindler a strong hint of what's to come: his comment that Jewish people "don't have a future" implies that Jewish people won't simply be rounded up into ghettos or shipped to work camps—rather, the Nazis' ultimate plan is to get rid of them entirely. In addition, the idea that this reality is "policy" rather than "old-fashioned Jew-hate" highlights the extent to which the Nazis' agenda is bound up with bureaucracy and duty. Men like Czurda write off the extermination of Jewish people as just a part of their job—a practical problem rather than a moral or existential one.

CHAPTER 13

As late as that summer, people in the ghetto are hoping it will remain a small but safe place for Jews to congregate. But by later that year, it becomes clear that the Nazis only intend for the ghettos to be a temporary residence, a "walled bus stop" on the way to something else.

Though anyone who knows World War II history will know what's coming next: the next "stop" on the figurative bus route is the Nazis' "Final Solution," or the genocide of Jewish people. But at this time, the residents of the ghettos have no way of knowing that their situation isn't permanent. By making the Final Solution a gradual process like this, the Nazis are slowly but effectively brainwashing society into believing that Jewish people are subhuman, and that they deserve to be subjected to increasingly extreme treatment.

Henry Rosner the violinist gets a job in a Luftwaffe mess hall, where he meets a German chef named Richard. They get along so well that Richard even trusts Henry to pick up the payroll across town.

Once again, Henry Rosner makes an important connection with a German, showing that relationships between Jewish people and Nazis aren't always as straightforward as they seem.

Richard eventually offers for Henry's son, Olek, to stay with his girlfriend. Henry asks if he's heard about an upcoming Aktion. Richard answers by asking if Henry and his wife, Manci, have their Blauschein, a permit that shows they are necessary for the war effort. They do, but Olek doesn't. Henry agrees to the plan on Olek's behalf.

At this stage of the war, the Blauschein *were vitally important documents for Cracow's Jewish residents. Jewish people without one would be rounded up and shipped away.*

Between running errands for Schindler, Pfefferberg works as a tutor to the children of Symche Spira, chief of one of the police forces. He expects this work will get him a Blauschein, but he is denied when he goes to get it at a bank. As he leaves the bank, there are German soldiers rounding up Jews without a *Blauschein*. Pfefferberg is caught and joins the lineup. He gets out with help from a friend who lies and says Pfefferberg is part of the Judenrat.

Pfefferberg is denied his Blauschein *the first time because he lacks knowledge of how to game the system—which nearly gets him sent to a concentration camp. This makes it clear that the ability to manipulate the Nazi bureaucracy (as Schindler has been able to do) is a crucial survival tactic.*

Pfefferberg rushes back to the labor office and charms the receptionists, promising that he has plenty of useful work skills. They call Herr Szepessi, who allows Pfefferberg to get a Blauschein after he claims he isn't a teacher but in fact a metal polisher. Later that year, Szepessi will be sent to Auschwitz because of his leniency in matters like this.

Szepessi takes pity on Pfefferberg and gives him advice about how to work the system. Unfortunately, the Szepessi will get caught doing things like this, which is how he ends up being sent to Auschwitz. This sort of outcome doesn't bode well for Schindler, as his efforts to help his Jewish workers could similarly put him at risk.

CHAPTER 14

Schindler begins to hear rumors of intensifying "procedures in the ghetto" from some of his sources, like Toffel and Bosch. On June 3, Abraham Bankier, Schindler's Jewish manager, doesn't show up at the office. Schindler later hears that he and several other Emalia workers were marched down to a depot in Prokocim.

It becomes clear again why Schindler maintains so many connections with men he disagrees with: they can provide useful information. The fact that some of Schindler's Jewish workers have been taken to a train station doesn't bode well, since Jewish prisoners during the Holocaust were often transported to concentration camps on cattle cars.

Schindler goes down toward Prokocim to investigate. He sees people being loaded into cattle cars and finds out that Bankier is already on one of the cars, which are headed to a labor camp near Lublin. Schindler goes around yelling Bankier's name. A young SS man informs him that everyone in the depot is on a **list**, and that there's no arguing with lists. Schindler agrees but asks to speak to a superior officer.

The SS officer's rigid view of the list highlights how Jewish people were seen as hard data (merely items on a list) rather than human beings with rights. Schindler, however, is smart enough to realize that there are ways to manipulate a bureaucracy, especially if one can speak to the right person.

Schindler speaks to a superior SS officer. He asks for the officers name, because he wants to take the issue of the **list** up with Scherner and with General Schindler. At last, the officer relents, and Schindler is able to free Bankier and a dozen of his other workers from the train car. The SS officer remains smug, as if to suggest that those 13 will simply be replaced with another 13. Bankier admits that he and the other 12 have yet to pick up their Blauscheins, and Schindler asks him to take care of it at once.

Schindler has genuine connections in the higher reaches of the Nazi Party, but he also frequently bluffs or uses his charm to get out of bad situations. The smug SS officer seems to suggest that Schindler's efforts are futile—but at least for these specific 13 men, Schindler is a hero. This recalls the Talmudic verse that Stern quoted to Schindler earlier ("he who saves a single life saves the world entire").

CHAPTER 15

Schindler becomes increasingly aware of how his workers are suffering in the ghetto. Nazis are directing men like Spira (in the OD) to put together longer and longer **lists**, getting rid of children and the elderly in particular. Families are being turned out of their apartments. People with Blauscheins are forcibly separated from their family members. Executions are happening in the streets.

The occupying Nazis in Poland show that they won't keep any of the promises they make to the Jewish residents in the long run. Even documents that supposedly protect Jewish workers, like the Blauschein, are ultimately irrelevant if the Nazis decide otherwise.

As Schindler and Ingrid are riding horses down an avenue, they see a line of women and children being led by a guard. At the back of the line is a toddler with a **red** hat and coat (Genia). Ingrid says it must be a girl. The guards continue to lead the line of women and children while SS teams with dogs work both sides of the street. Schindler can't believe the brutality that's going on so close to the small girl in red. Schindler realizes that the Nazis allow witnesses to their brutality because they plan on getting rid of the witnesses eventually too.

This scene is a turning point where Schindler witnesses the Nazis' brutality firsthand. The childlike nature of Genia in red makes the brutality around her stand out even more, as the color represents both her innocence (since she's wearing red simply because she loves the color) and the bloody violence happening around her. Though Schindler has been dissatisfied with the Nazis for a long time, seeing them commit such atrocities in front of young children makes him realize that the Nazis aspire to absolute power and will kill anyone who gets in the way of their Final Solution (mass extermination of Jewish people).

A pharmacy run by Tadeus Pankiewicz is in a part of town called Plac Zgody (Peace Square). The square become a place where Nazis round up Jewish people. At one point, children are lined up there on Krakusa Street, with Genia among them. By moving confidently and not attracting attention, however, the three-year-old girl manages to get away to safety.

The fact that a three-year-old child escapes the Nazis (temporarily) while others couldn't show the important role luck and circumstance play in who survives the Holocaust.

After seeing the city on his horse, Schindler realizes the full extent of the Nazi's brutality. He resolves to do everything he can to defeat their system.

The horrors Schindler witnessed in the ghetto solidify his resolve to save as many Jewish people as he can. Although he has been characterized as an ordinary and largely self-interested man thus far in the novel, from this point forward he will devote himself to others.

CHAPTER 16

At his factory, Schindler feels certain that the girl in **red** he saw (Genia) didn't survive the Aktion. He begins paying attention to who the perpetrators of these atrocities are, in hopes that such information will one day be useful.

Schindler's thoughts about what will happen after the war characterize him as strategic and also somewhat optimistic. Though he isn't naïve (he accepts the reality that Genia was almost certainly killed), he believes that he can make a difference by making sure the Nazis he comes in contact with are eventually punished.

The Judenrat don't inform ghetto dwellers about the horrors of the camps, feeling that it would only cause more panic. Schindler and many others in the ghetto first learn about the camps from a pharmacist named Bachner, who returns from a camp eight days after being shipped off from the Prokocim depot. No one knows how Bachner escaped, but he tells of the showers where people are gassed en masse and of pyramids of corpses. (Though Bachner's information about the camps is commonplace knowledge today, in 1942, it was shocking.)

The Judenrat's actions are morally ambiguous: they are in a difficult position themselves, and though they withhold information, they believe that it is what their constituents would want. Bachner was presumably in a concentration camp before he escaped, and his experiences make it clear for Schindler and others that the Nazis aren't just using Jewish people for labor—they've also begun to execute Jewish people en masse.

That summer of 1942, Schindler solidifies his ownership of the Rekord estate. Jereth from the box factory helps him build a refuge on his property (which Schindler lies to bureaucrats about, saying it is a rest area for night-shift workers). Schindler knows that he must be cautious, because more and more influential men are getting put into Auschwitz.

Schindler knows that if he can keep his Jewish workers on his property, there will be less chance of outsiders interfering with his affairs. Yet given that Schindler has to lie in order to do this, and that people are being sent to Auschwitz, Schindler knows he's protecting his workers at great personal risk.

Danka Dresner, cousin of "**Redcap**" Genia, is 14. She works as a cleaning woman at a Luftwaffe base, but she is still vulnerable to being taken away to a camp. When SS soldiers come to her neighborhood, Mrs. Dresner takes Danka next door to a neighbor with a false wall. The neighbor's elderly parents are already hiding in the false wall because rumor has it an Aktion is coming, and they are vulnerable too. When Mrs. Dresner and Danka arrive, the neighbor says Danka can fit but not Mrs. Dresner, even though there is plenty of space.

The story of Mrs. Dresner not being able to stay in the wall with her daughter is darkly comic and shows how the desperate situation in Poland made people like the Dresner's neighbor act in irrational ways. Though the war sometimes prompted acts of selflessness, it could also prompt otherwise normal people to become more selfish and look out for their own interests and the interests of their family first.

Mrs. Dresner tells Danka to hide with the neighbor's parents behind the fake wall. Since she has nowhere to hide, she figures she may as well go outside. She is stopped by an OD boy whom her son knows. He tells her to hide under some stairs and that the searchers will be gone in 10 minutes. The OD boy goes outside and says that no one is home at the house. Eventually, the SS men take his word and move on. Mrs. Dresner seems to be safe, but she knows there will be more sweeps in the future.

Mrs. Dresner's experience with the OD boy shows once again how luck and circumstance contributed to who was able to survive the Holocaust. She only runs into this particular OD boy by chance, and she knows that her luck will probably run out eventually.

A Jewish resistance group uses stolen SS uniforms to plant a bomb in a restaurant, killing seven SS men and wounding 40 more. Schindler is uneasy, because he knows he could've been there. The resisters also arrange for two of OD chief Spira's lieutenants to be killed by Gestapo. Others, however, take on different forms of resistance, like one Jewish man who has to make a **list** for deportations and puts himself and his family at the top. Schindler considers his own plans for resistance.

Schindler recognizes again that even though his own Jewish prisoners respect him, to an outsider he might appear to be just another cruel German. He has to perform a balancing act to not get caught by his German peers, and also to avoid becoming a target for Jewish resistance efforts.

CHAPTER 17

In the fall of 1942, an Austrian dentist named Sedlacek comes to Cracow asking about Schindler. Pretending to be on a business trip, he is actually part of a Zionist rescue organization in Budapest and has heard about what Schindler is doing.

The fact that Sedlacek is part of a Zionist organization and heard about Schindler (despite being hundreds of miles away in Hungary) suggests that Jewish rescue efforts are becoming become more organized as the war ramps up.

Dr. Sedlacek has a friend named Franz Von Korab in the *Wehrmacht*, who is rumored to have a Jewish grandmother. Von Korab takes Sedlacek to Schindler, then leaves them alone. Sedlacek asks Schindler what he really thinks about what the Nazis are doing to Jews. Schindler says that what is happening is beyond belief.

The Wehrmacht *were the German armed forces during World War II. As always, Schindler must be cautious about trusting new people, and those who meet him are equally cautious about what they discuss.*

Schindler tells Sedlacek about the recent events in Poland, and even Sedlacek can't believe the extent of it. Sedlacek asks him to come to his organization's headquarters in Hungary to give a direct report. Later, at another meeting, Sedlacek gives Schindler money from his organization for his efforts, which Schindler passes on to his Jewish contacts.

Sedlacek's surprised response shows how good the Nazis were at hiding what they were doing from the rest of the world, at least during the early phases of the war.

Mordecai Wulkan is a jeweler who is visited one night by one of Spira's OD. He's told that the SS urgently need four jewelers. Wulkan is taken to the SS Economic and Administrative Office, where he's brought down to the basement and shown suitcases full of valuable jewels. He begins to sort the jewelry, knowing where it came from and fearing that the Germans might eventually want his own gold teeth. After his work there is through, he gets a job in a metal factory, getting to know a comparatively moderate SS man who offers him work as a maintenance man at a barracks. Wulkan remains pessimistic, however, that anyone like the SS man can truly save him.

Wulkan's work with the jewelry shows the brutal outcome of the ghetto liquidation. Though the extermination of Jewish residents is ostensibly an ideological issue for the Nazis, it also becomes an economic one, because it offers many opportunities for people to plunder Jewish people's money and possessions. Wulkan is worldly enough to know that even seemingly friendly SS officers can't offer real protection.

CHAPTER 18

Schindler makes the uncomfortable journey to Hungary in a freight train. Even though he has proper travel documents if needed, he doesn't want people to know that he's been to Hungary. He stays near the university, and two men from Sedlacek's organization—Springmann and Kastner—come to meet Schindler in his room. They hope Schindler will know more than the Jewish refugees they've met, who often don't have the full picture of what's going on.

Schindler's secret voyage is a risk to himself and his factory, but he knows that Sedlacek's organization can help him with his ultimate goal of helping Jewish people survive the war.

Schindler spares no details about the horrors he's seen in Cracow, noting that the population the ghetto has been reduced by four-fifths and in the whole city by half. Some of these missing people are in work camps, but a large proportion of them were sent to *Vernichtungslagers*, or extermination camps. Springmann and Kastner asks if the SS men are as corruptible as other police forces, and Schindler replies that in his experience, every single one of them is.

Schindler's observation that SS men are as corruptible as other police forces will be proven true time and again in his life. Arguably, some of Schindler's greatest abilities are charming other people, figuring out how to corrupt useful authority figures, and manipulating the Nazi bureaucracy to his advantage.

When Schindler finishes his account, even Springmann and Kastner, who are familiar with past atrocities, are shocked by what they've heard. They make plans for Schindler to continue seeing Dr. Sedlacek in Cracow on a regular basis.

Once again, the magnitude of the Nazis' atrocities is emphasized. The news of people being sent to concentration camps and extermination camps en masse is shocking even to people who have witnessed things like Aktions.

CHAPTER 19

Schindler heads back to Cracow by freight train, already anticipating what will happen the ghetto will soon be closed. An SS *Untersturmführer* named Amon Goeth is going to bring about the closure and take command of a Forced Labor Camp at Płaszów.

The SS had an elaborate system of rankings, which is one example of how enormous and complex the Nazi bureaucracy was. An Untersturmführer *was relatively high but still reported to some superior ranks.*

Goeth is a Viennese man who joined the National Socialist Party near its beginning. He is the same age as Schindler and also shares the same religion, the same large physique, and the same penchant for alcohol. He is also sexually insatiable and frequently abusive after the initial honeymoon period fades, and one rumor has it that he sometimes sexually abuses inferiors in the SS.

Goeth actually resembles Schindler in many ways. He is perhaps meant to appear as a foil to Schindler: he became ideologically committed to the Nazi Party early on in the war, whereas Schindler only joined the Nazis for business interests and quickly came to resent the Party.

The 10,000 Jews still in the ghetto will become the labor force for the factories at the new Płaszów camp that Goeth is overseeing. The expectation is that German industrialists like Bosch, Madritsch, and Schindler will want to move their factories into the camp. The camp is still in the construction process and looks unfinished to Goeth, but a low-ranking SS officer named Horst Pilarzik (who has a reputation for clearing 7,000 people out of the ghetto) assures him that the camp is closer to completion than it looks. Pilarzik is afraid Goeth is demoralized by the camp-in-progress, but in fact, Goeth is exhilarated by the possibilities.

Goeth's excitement about the half-finished camp is an early example of his megalomania. At this point in the war, the suffering of Jewish people was often directly related to German industry and the war effort. Though many Jewish people died in concentration camps, they were also essential to the Germans because of how their labor contributed to producing munitions and other essential items.

All the local factory owners are called to a meeting in Julian Scherner's office, where Goeth is present. Goeth hopes to charm Bosch, Madritsch and Schindler into moving their operations into his new camp. Scherner opens the meeting by going over the benefits of such a move to the industrialists. He then formally introduces Goeth as the new camp commandant.

Goeth's attempt to charm his potential adversaries is another way in which he resembles Schindler, though (unbeknownst to Goeth) the two men have opposite ideologies.

Goeth points on a map to the spaces in the camp set aside for factories. He seems particularly interested in winning over Madritsch and Schindler, who are both skeptical. Though Schindler is able to hide his disagreement better with a smile, ultimately, he is the one who refuses while Madritsch grudgingly agrees. Though the builders of the camp went to great lengths to make it appear as if labor is its real goal, Schindler is well aware of the more brutal true purposes.

Though Schindler and Madritsch have similar goals, they also have very different methods. Schindler is bolder—arguably sometimes to the point of recklessness—but it's an effective strategy to get what he wants. Madritsch, by contrast, is more cautious.

In fact, Goeth had ordered an execution in front of his men that very morning. The lower-ranking SS officer Hujar had been in a disagreement with a Jewish woman about a flaw in the camp construction that she noticed. Goeth accused the Jewish woman of being a liar and ordered Hujar to execute her. Hujar was reluctant, but he did it. This incident taught Hujar and the others that these sorts of executions were permitted and perhaps even expected when working under Goeth.

Goeth establishes early on that his style of ruling will be arbitrary and brutal, and that his inferiors have no choice but to follow his orders. The seeming randomness of this execution is meant to instill fear in all of Goeth's prisoners that they, too, could be killed at any moment.

CHAPTER 20

Two days after the meeting of the industrialists in Płaszów, Schindler goes to meet Goeth in his temporary office in the city. They each recognize that the other is out to make a profit, and so they understand each other on that level. Goeth even comes to believe that Schindler is a friend. Still, Stern and others later provide evidence that shows Schindler disapproved of Goeth from the moment they met.

Schindler knows that he can find common ground with men he disagrees with by offering them something that benefits them. He is so good at this that he even convinces someone like Goeth, whom Schindler dislikes, that he is a friend.

Over a bottle of brandy, Schindler makes the case to Goeth that it's not possible for him to move his operation to Płaszów. He allows that Madritsch is able to make the move, but he argues that Madritsch's equipment is more portable, and that moving his own heavy machinery would cause a major disruption and reduce productivity. Moreover, his Jewish workers have become skilled in the very specific quirks of his machines, and replacing them with Polish workers would also cause a production delay.

As per usual, Schindler knows that alcohol will help his case. In addition being a gesture of generosity meant to win Goeth over, alcohol also temporarily impairs judgment. When Schindler is reasonable and friendly, his request is even more difficult for his adversary to turn down.

Goeth secretly suspects that Schindler is reluctant because moving the factory might disrupt any "sweetly running little deals" he has going on. He reassures Schindler that no one will interfere with the management of the factory. Schindler maintains that he is only thinking about what's best for industry. He says he'd be very grateful if Goeth lets him stay where he is, and Goeth knows exactly what this means.

In the language of occupied Poland, gratitude essentially means bribery. Similar to how the Nazi bureaucracy uses euphemisms to hide their brutality, the black market in Cracow also uses euphemisms (like "sweetly running little deals") because people never know if they can fully trust one another.

Schindler tells Stern about his meeting with Goeth. The factory workers are all worried about what will happen when the ghetto closes. Schindler despairs that even keeping his night shift workers on the premises won't be enough. Stern tries to cheer him up, because he fears what will happen if Schindler gives up.

Stern is put in the unusual position of having more to lose than Schindler but having to appear hopeful. Stern knows his and the other prisoners' survival depends on Schindler's ability to stay motivated.

The ghetto is liquidated on March 13, which happens to be Shabbat. Seven centuries of Jews living in Cracow is about to come to an end. Goeth is ready and confident that no one can touch him. Hujar goes to shut down a hospital full of young patients with scarlet fever, executing a doctor referred to as Dr. Blau and all the patients. At another hospital directed by a man named Dr. B, a man referred to as Dr. H administers cyanide to all the patients to prevent a similar fate.

It's ironic and tragic that the ghetto is liquidated on Shabbat, which in Judaism is supposed to be a day of rest and celebration. In addition, the stories about patients being executed in the hospitals underscores how dehumanizing and brutal life in Cracow is—not even the weakest members of society are spared.

CHAPTER 21

Pfefferberg and his wife, Mila, are in their home waiting to be caught by the SS and ordered into the street. They keep waiting, but nothing comes for them. Eventually the light is poor enough that Pfefferberg ventures out through the sewers to consult with Dr. H. When he gets there, he finds that the SS have already been by, and that Dr. H and his wife left through the sewers.

Schindler values Pfefferberg for his street smarts, and here he demonstrates his literal knowledge of the streets by navigating his way through the sewer system. The fact that he must resort to this another example of how the Nazis brutalize and dehumanize the Jewish population, as Pfefferberg is forced to navigate the city in the same way a rat might.

Pfefferberg returns to his home and finds that Mila is gone and the whole place is empty. He stumbles around in a daze, eventually running into some of his neighbors. He asks what happened to Mila, and they say she is on her way to Płaszów. He begins looking for a good, reliable hiding place. He finds one in a lumberyard, where he has a view out on the street. There, he witnesses atrocities, like the SS men with dogs who murder a two- or three-year-old child by throwing her against a wall. Pfefferberg realizes his own hiding place won't protect him from dogs.

Pfefferberg and Mila's missed connection is just one of the many tragic separations that occurred in the ghetto at this time. Breaking apart families was a deliberate tactic Nazis used to decrease moral and to dehumanize their victims.

Pfefferberg approaches some SS men confidently as if he's a soldier, saying he received an order to clear the roads. He greets one as "Herr Commandant," not knowing anything about SS ranks, but in fact he's correct: the man is Commandant Amon Goeth. Goeth is so amused by this that he actually laughs. He tells Pfefferberg to get lost, and Pfefferberg wastes no time running away. Pfefferberg may have been the last one left alive in the ghetto.

Like Schindler, Pfefferberg knows that sometimes the best way to get out of a vulnerable position is to feign confidence. Goeth's decision to spare Pfefferberg again highlights Goeth's arbitrary style of leadership, and how the Nazis' dehumanization of Jewish people was a complicated and inconsistent process.

Another possible candidate for last alive in the ghetto is Wulkan, the jeweler. He tries to bribe an OD officer with a diamond he's been concealing, saying he'll go anywhere, but he'd prefer if his wife and son can be protected, perhaps transferred safely to Płaszów. Their OD contact tells them that aside from some of Spira's highest-ranking men, all OD have to be out of the ghetto by that evening and headed to Płaszów—perhaps Wulkan's wife and son can be transported to Płaszów in an OD vehicle.

Wulkan is more concerned about his family's safety than his own, and which is true for many of the other Jewish people in Cracow at this time. Unfortunately for them, it's hard to guarantee anyone's safety, since separating families and withholding information are key techniques the Nazis use to dehumanize their victims.

Some OD men help the Wulkans hide under paperwork and bundles of clothing. From their hiding place, they can hear the violent sounds of Goeth, Hujar, Pilarzik, and others executing people on the streets.

That the Wulkans come across OD men who are willing to help them once again emphasizes that survival in Nazi-occupied Poland is largely a matter of luck. Indeed, outside of their hiding place they can hear people who aren't so lucky.

CHAPTER 22

By the time Schindler's workers are returned to him (now under guard from Płaszów), he is once again determined to collect useful information for Dr. Sedlacek's next visit. He learns that Goeth is running the place according to his own cruel whims—that despite ostensibly being a work camp, it is a place of execution as well. The SS make no effort to hide these executions, suggesting that all in the camp are planned to meet the same fate.

The more cruelty Schindler witnesses, the more determined he becomes to contribute to the resistance effort. One of the most important resources he can provide is information, because of his close contact with men like Goeth.

One morning, Goeth goes out and murders a prisoner at random, establishing his style of ruling. He also breaks his promise not to interfere with the factories, detaining workers so that they don't make their shifts. Madritsch consults Schindler about this, hoping they can both bring the matter up together.

Given Goeth's volatile behavior thus far, it's no surprise that he doesn't keep his promises. His random style of murdering prisoners emphasizes how disposable and interchangeable Jewish prisoners are to the Nazis.

Schindler gets the idea of building his own camp to keep his workers. He complains to an engineer and asks if the engineer would support his idea if he can find the space. Goeth enthusiastically approves the idea, on the condition that the SS generals also approve. The next day, a meeting is arranged with Scherner. Goeth and Scherner make Schindler pay the expenses for the new camp construction. They don't buy his arguments that his move is best for business, and they suspect he sympathizes with the Jews. But they also see an opportunity to make a lot of money off of him, so they agree to his proposal.

Schindler always knows his audience. He is able to get away with character quirks, such as being considered a Jewish sympathizer, because ultimately, he helps the people around him make a lot of money and improve their reputations. In this way, he is Goeth's foil: rather than gaining power through domination and senseless violence the way Goeth does, Schindler is able to influence other people just by earning their respect.

Goeth is stingy with camp food rations, selling some of them on the black market through a Jew named Wilek Chilowicz. Meanwhile, Schindler goes and talks to the neighbors to his factory (since he needs space to build), ultimately convincing them that there will be benefits to them having their own Jewish workers kept so close. He spends a lot of money on the camp, but he can afford to because profits are so high.

Although the gas chambers in extermination camps killed thousands of Jewish people, many other deaths were caused more indirectly. In many places, lack of proper nutrition was a major cause of mortality, although it isn't clear whether Goeth is holding back food out of hatred or greed (or both).

Schindler requests help from a young engineer named Adam Garde. He tells Garde of his plan for six barracks to house up to 1,200 people. One morning on his way to Emalia, he is stopped by Goeth in a limousine, who asks why Garde is being escorted by a single guard. The Ukrainian guard mentions Schindler's name, hoping it will be effective, and it seems to work. Later, Goeth approaches Chilowicz, who has established himself as the head of the Jewish camp police. He says they may as well just send Garde to Schindler full time, since they have engineers to spare—Garde just has to finish Goeth's conservatory first.

Garde's story shows just how much scrutiny the Jewish prisoners outside of Emalia had to endure. The fact that Goeth lets Garde be transferred to Emalia shows how much respect Goeth has for Schindler—he doesn't actually care about Jewish people's autonomy, but he's careful not to step on Schindler's toes. This is probably because Goeth knows Schindler will do him favors—yet another example of how Schindler gains power and influence through by earning people's trust and using nonviolent manipulation rather than violence.

Goeth is cruel to Garde as he works on the conservatory, at one point shattering his hand. For the rest of the job, Garde tries to hide his deformed hand until, at last, he is transferred to Emalia for good.

Once again, Goeth is cruel in a way that seems senseless and almost careless. But though he arbitrarily brutalizes Jewish prisoners, he is often surprisingly faithful in keeping his word to men like Schindler.

CHAPTER 23

Prisoners begin competing to get their own space in Emalia. Dolek Horowitz is a purchasing officer in the camp who believes he has no chance himself but who hopes his wife and two children can be kept safe. He does, however, have the favor of Bosch, who is a drinking buddy of Goeth. Dolek's son Richard goes out asking questions and finds out that Płaszów won't be safe even for a privileged child like Richard. So, Dolek takes his case to Bosch, begging him to talk to Schindler. Somewhat to his surprise (since his wife and children have no experience working in enamelware), his request is fulfilled.

Though Schindler's enamelware factory was indeed a productive business at one point, here Schindler is increasingly using the business as a cover to protect Jewish prisoners. In this way, Schindler is sacrificing his own self-interest (and putting himself at risk of severe punishment) in order to help others.

Compared to Płaszów, the Emalia camp is peaceful, with no permanent guards. The rotating groups of SS and Ukrainians on guard like the assignment because they get better food there than anywhere else. They aren't allowed inside the camp itself, because Schindler makes angry calls to Scherner if that happens—but this suits the guards fine, because they don't mind having an easy assignment.

One of the Nazi's most effective tools of repression is surveillance, and Schindler wisely avoids oversight by the guards by preventing guards from coming into the camp itself.

Though Schindler's workers put in long shifts, often 12 hours (in order to fulfill his war contracts), they are much better fed than the other camp prisoners, and none die of hunger, beatings, or overwork. Long after the war, Emalia's residents will remember it as a paradise.

Even the comparative safety of Schindler's Emalia involves hard work, showing just how limited the options are for Jewish people in WWII Poland. In addition, the fact that the prisoners view Emalia as paradise simply because they weren't starved, beaten, or overworked emphasizes how brutal other concentration camps were by comparison.

A dark-complexioned Jewish girl named Regina Perlman is living in Cracow with forged papers that say she is South American. Her parents, however, are in Płaszów, and she sneaks food and supplies in to them when she can. She hears about Schindler and decides she must get her parents into Emalia.

The fact that Regina is able to hide in plain sight with forged papers highlights just how arbitrary the Nazis' ideas about race are. They stereotype Jewish people as looking a certain way, which ends up hurting their cause, as it allows people like Regina to slip through the cracks.

Regina Perlman goes to the camp disguised and meets Schindler. She is very beautiful, which Schindler and his secretary Klonowska (with whom Schindler is still having an affair) both notice, although Klonowska is used Schindler's habits and doesn't expect him to be loyal to her. Anxiously, Regina admits to Schindler that her Aryan papers are fake and that her parents are in the camp. Schindler, however, disappoints her by saying there's nothing he can do—he only takes skilled workers. It's only later that she realizes Schindler may have suspected her of being an agent trying to entrap him. Surprisingly, however, within a month her parents are part of a new group of 30 workers sent to Emalia.

Schindler's behavior is unusually cold, which suggests that perhaps Regina is right about Schindler suspecting that she's a plant. Because Schindler was dead long before Keneally wrote the Schindler's List, *however, Schindler's thoughts are sometimes a mystery.*

A campaign starts in Płaszów to get Rabbi Menasha Levartov (who is posing as a metalworker) sent over to Emalia. Stern in particular had been one of his admirers. He tells Schindler about how, because of Levartov's presence on camp, he had become a target of an attempted murder by Goeth.

Though the Jewish people in concentration camps are oppressed and silenced, they still have some power to come together around specific issues—in this case, the fate of Rabbi Levartov.

With more than 30,000 people in his camp, Goeth makes it a priority to get rid of the early prisoners to make way for new ones, often rounding up people into two lines and marching one line away to the firing squads. At one point, Goeth asks Stern for 25 skilled metalworkers. Stern includes Levartov in the **list** of the skilled, which Goeth takes notice of. Still, Goeth is distracted when a boy in the unskilled line claims he is in fact a skilled worker—for speaking out, Goeth shoots him in the head.

Goeth once again demonstrates that he has no patience for anything less than total obedience (and sometimes even that isn't enough). This scene builds tension, because Levartov is clearly lying about his skill and is in danger of being caught.

A few days later, Goeth goes up to Levartov in the metalworks and asks for Levartov to demonstrate the process of making hinges. Levartov makes one in under a minute, then another. Goeth points out that at this rate, Levartov should have a much larger pile. He walks Levartov outside, taking out the same pistol he used to kill the boy earlier. But as he tries to shoot, Goeth's pistol jams. Goeth curses, then pulls out a different pistol.

The jamming of Goeth's pistol is one of many improbable events that ends up saving lives during the Holocaust. This one again emphasizes how fragile Jewish prisoners' fates are, as their survival is largely determined by random chance.

As Goeth is preparing to shoot, Levartov pleads that he was only behind on making hinges because his machine was being recalibrated and he was shoveling coal instead. Goeth hits him and simply abandons him, but both know that the matter isn't resolved. Stern tells the whole matter to Schindler, who teases him: "Why the long story? There's always room at Emalia for someone who can turn out a hinge in less than a minute." Levartov and his wife arrive at Emalia in the summer of 1943. Schindler permits the rabbi to hold religious ceremonies, slipping him wine to use for them.

Even Goeth seems to see something significant in the jamming of his pistol. Despite all his vile qualities, Goeth often maintains a sense of sportsmanship, and in this case, he seems to recognize that he lost a sort of game. Schindler's decision to let Levartov hold religious ceremonies may seem small, but it plays an important role in helping the Jewish prisoners to resist the Nazis' dehumanizing treatment.

CHAPTER 24

Schindler's enterprise begins to rack up some unusually high bills, particularly for all the food (since what Goeth provides is so meager). He doesn't realize that the visible good health of his prisoners is a potential liability.

Even for someone as resourceful as Schindler, unexpected problems can arise and threaten to sink the whole enterprise. In this case, Schindler's generosity toward his prisoners is, ironically, a liability to his overall goal of helping them survive.

Senior officers from the main camp visited every subcamp at some point, and Emalia is no exception. No one agrees which particular officers visited Schindler, but some former prisoners, as well as Schindler himself, claim that Goeth was among them. While visiting, a young SS officer named Grün (a bodyguard to Goeth) sees a prisoner named Lamus pushing a barrow too slowly and orders for him to be executed.

Schindler is always struggling to maintain autonomy over his factories. He knows that his cover will be blown if anyone gets too close of a look, which again emphasizes the fact that Schindler is helping his prisoners at great personal risk to himself.

Schindler is notified of Lamus's arrest and comes rushing down, just as Grün is lining Lamus up against the wall. Schindler is indignant, saying he won't be able to get his workers to work with a shooting and his factory has high-priority contracts. Grün knows Schindler could make trouble with his superior officers, but he also knows that it's unlikely there'd be any investigation if Lamus is killed. He asks what's in it for him, and Schindler offers vodka. He accepts.

Schindler finds success by being indignant and confident rather than trying to appease the Nazis. He knows that they will respect his will more if they see him as a powerful man, as they prize individualism and duty.

Schindler takes similar actions, such as one time when the Gestapo discover a forger who has made false documents for a family working at Schindler's camp. Once again, Schindler plies them with alcohol (and perhaps some additional form of payoff). He knows his successes are only partial—in one case, an engineer who stayed in Schindler's barracks but who worked just outside Emalia in a radiator factory is publicly hanged to set an example.

Schindler's earlier theory that just about anyone can be paid off is turning out increasingly to be true. Once again, alcohol plays a key role in convincing others to agree with him. The public hanging, meanwhile, is another example of how the Nazis use violence and fear to intimidate Jewish prisoners into obedience.

On Dr. Sedlacek's second visit, he and Schindler come up with the unusual plan of buying nice liquor so that Goeth doesn't have to drink bad liquor (which may be making him even more savage).

This plan is yet another testament to Schindler's resourcefulness and creativity.

Schindler and Goeth meet at Goeth's villa, where his girlfriend, Majola, is also present (though she soon leaves so that they can drink and get to business). While they're drinking, Schindler pitches Goeth the idea of acting with more restraint. Surprisingly, the idea actually begins to appeal to Goeth—he likes being able to picture himself as a benevolent emperor. Though the conversation seems to lead to a temporary respite, for many prisoners, the difference isn't clear.

Schindler knows how to flatter Goeth's ego. He knows that even a man as cruel as Goeth likes to imagine that he is the hero—in some ways, this power fantasy is even more seductive than the idea of being a ruthless tyrant, because it would mean that he's respected.

Sedlacek goes back to Hungary with news from Schindler. One day, he returns with a Jewish man (sporting a Swiss passport) who goes by Babar. Schindler introduces Sedlacek and Babar to Stern. Stern takes Schindler aside and asks if involving those two men isn't a huge risk. Schindler gets angry, before composing himself and explaining that the men are trustworthy. Schindler takes Babar and Sedlacek around, partly so Babar can take photos and see an overview of the camp, so that they will have information to report back.

Schindler bristles at Stern questioning his judgment—Schindler himself has a proud streak, though not quite as prominent as Goeth's. Particularly in the WWII era, collecting photographs was important because they were the best evidence available about what was really *happening in the concentration camps.*

CHAPTER 25

Schindler begins to seem like a gambler, as his situation gets more and more precarious. One official who takes notice of Schindler is a physician named Dr. Sopp. He catches a woman with dubious Aryan papers whose husband has invested in Emalia and blackmails Schindler for 50,000 złotys. As always, Schindler remains inexact with money and doesn't compensate himself with the money he gets from Sedlacek. In fact, when the Zionist organization tries to offer Schindler more money, some, like Bankier, are confused and think it's a trap.

Thought Schindler is cunning, he can also be reckless. Sometimes his brazenness is an asset, particularly when it comes to charming new contacts, but in this case, it gets him in trouble. Schindler will have many more close calls like this before the war is over. Meanwhile, his refusal to keep any of the money Sedlacek gives him is a testament to his selflessness.

CHAPTER 26

Raimund Titsch is an Austrian Catholic and a WWI veteran who manages Madritsch's uniform factory. He also played chess regularly with Goeth. One time when Titsch wins, Goeth gets so furious that he looks like he's going to go out and shoot someone. From then on, Titsch decides to lose intentionally, doing so in long, drawn-out games. Like Babar, Titsch has also been collecting photographs of the camp. Through his involvement in the black market, Titsch will end up supplying the Madritsch people with 30,000 loaves of bread. Because after the war he is viewed as a traitor by former SS men (who secretly organize in a group called ODESSA), he hides his film by burying it, where it remains hidden until 1963. After Titsch's death, the pictures are finally developed.

Titsch learns yet another unconventional strategy for trying to minimize Goeth's volatility. The case of Titsch after the war shows that, despite the surrender of the Nazis, their influence would not simply disappear from the world overnight. Tisch continues to face risks even after victory—or perhaps he is traumatized and just imagines the risk. In either case, the events of WWII continue to reverberate in the coming decades.

The few camp survivors never have anything negative to say about Titsch, but he also never spurred the same sort of reverence that Schindler eventually would. One such story involves when General Schindler himself (unrelated to Oskar Schindler) came to visit Płaszów to see whether it was really necessary for the war effort.

Titsch shows that not all humane men during the Holocaust are as flashy as Schindler. The styles and motivation of resistance vary from individual to individual, in part because it would be risky to openly collaborate with other sympathizers.

Before the inspection, Oskar Schindler invites General Schindler over for a big, boozy dinner. Later, while the general is investigating Madritsch's clothing factory, the most important part of the camp to Germans, the power goes out, the circuit having been broken by allies of Stern. The general is forced to continue his inspection by flashlight. A myth grows that because Oskar's dinner gave the general indigestion, and because the power went out during the inspection, the people of Płaszów were saved from being shipped somewhere worse, like Auschwitz.

The tricks that Schindler and his allies have to pull to stay in business border on farcical. This is perhaps because reality became so unbelievable at this time that in retrospect, it is hard to separate the truth from myth.

Josef Bau, an artist from Cracow begins to fall in love with a girl named Rebecca Tannenbaum. He actually sneaks into Płaszów because he never had the correct ghetto papers. There he becomes a protégé of Stern's and attracts attention for his possible skills as a forger.

Even in a place as bleak as Płaszów, joyful human emotions like love can find a way to break through. Pursuing romantic relationships, the way Josef and Rebecca do, is one way for the Jewish prisoners to reclaim their humanity.

Rebecca Tannenbaum, meanwhile, is an orphan who has recently begun to work in Stern's office. She is also a manicurist who treats Goeth weekly, as well as other prominent Nazis. She is nervous because Goeth is quick to punish people for minor offenses, at one time shooting his shoeshine boy for bad work.

Tannenbaum's situation once again highlights the hypocrisy of anti-Semitism: prominent men like Goeth who are carrying out a genocide against Jewish people nevertheless trust a Jewish woman to do their manicures.

Tannenbaum and Bau meet one day when Bau his holding up a heavy blueprint frame. She offers to help. Romance and sex remain desperate and infrequent between prisoners, although the conditions are a little better at Emalia. Bau and Rebecca begin to see each other.

By making relationships easier to manage, Schindler helps his prisoners reclaim their old lives little by little—though of course there are still limits to what he can achieve.

Other romantic attachments sometimes form in the camp. In one case, the SS officer Hujar falls in love with a Jewish prisoner. When Goeth finds out, he orders Hujar to take her in the woods and shoot her, which he does. Death is a constant factor in many relationships in the camp, particularly ones that involve the SS.

Hujar, who earlier murdered a hospital full of children, shows the complicated and often contradictory nature of Nazi policies. Many Nazis were willing to make personal exceptions for Jewish people they personally knew—at least temporarily.

In January 1944, a change at Płaszów makes all relationships more difficult. The camp is reclassified as a concentration camp, and even subcamps like Schindler's Emalia are placed under the authority of General Oswald Pohl in Oranienburg. Schindler's contacts in local police, like Scherner and Czurda, lose much of their power, so Schindler now must report to the officials in Oranienburg.

By this time, it is becoming increasingly clear to all sides that the Nazis aren't winning the war. The crackdowns on the camps may be the result of higher-ups in the Nazi Party preparing for a possible loss in the war, or they may be an attempt to turn the tide by reorganizing.

Schindler travels to Berlin to meet the people who will be dealing with his files. Richard Glücks is the chief of the department that controls prison life. Glücks puts out memos full of bureaucratic jargon to cover every sort of situation in camp.

The bureaucratic language in the documents about prison life is important, because it helps obscure the truth about concentration camps.

During his meeting with a personnel officer who has the Emalia plans, Schindler puts forward his request that his work force be allowed to remain permanently. He tells the officer that he has just discussed the matter with Colonel Erich Lange, a name that seems to have some influence and whom Schindler met once at a party in Cracow. At that party, Schindler could tell that Lange too had misgivings about the camps' brutal conditions.

Schindler is asking for something very unusual and knows that it could arouse suspicion. He once again makes use of one of his connections. Though Schindler is well-connected, he sometimes has to take risks and hope that his first impression of men like Lange was correct.

The personnel officer is impressed by Schindler's connections and says he's told the truth: there are no plans to dismantle Emalia, but the situation of Jews, even skilled workers, is never safe. Schindler says he understands and ends the meeting by saying, "If there is any way I can express my gratitude…"

Once again, "gratitude" is shorthand for a bribe—Schindler is essentially inviting the officer to ask for a bribe. He knows that the officer might be suspicious, so he wants to make sure that the officer can personally benefit from the transaction.

The new regulations in Płaszów lead to a much more rigid separation of the sexes, with new electric fences erected. Couples make up coded tunes to whistle so that they can meet up during the brief time they have in the morning before they are lined up. Rebecca Tannenbaum makes up her own whistle. Josef Bau gets a dress from a dead woman and uses it to sneak into the women's barracks.

The electric fences (combined with the cattle cars used to ship prisoners) suggest that the Nazis are treating their Jewish prisoners like livestock. Despite this dehumanizing treatment, however, the prisoners make the best of an awful situation, as their unique whistles show.

One cold Sunday night in February, Bau marries Rebecca at a ceremony with no rabbi. Mrs. Bau officiates, and someone from Wulkan's workshop makes two rings out of silver spoons. They are given a curtained-off top bunk for their wedding night, but after only 10 minutes, the barracks lights come on, and one of the most fearsome SS officers comes through. Bau fears that the officer knows he's missing and is looking for him.

The wedding ceremony is one of the best examples of the lengths Jewish prisoners will go to in order to try to maintain some semblance of normalcy in the camps. Such gestures are often symbolic (they can't, for example, get real wedding rings), but they help make camp life just a little bit more bearable.

The officer leaves and the lights go back out. But a few minutes later, a siren goes off. Everyone in the barracks fears the worst. Bau grabs his clothes and rushes back toward the men camp. As hurries over the electric fence, he's surprised to find the voltage turned off. He gets back, preparing an excuse about how he had diarrhea, but in fact they were searching for three young Zionists who had just escaped.

One of the scariest aspects of life in concentration camps is that prisoners aren't given much information about what's happening around them. This is yet another way in which Jewish people are dehumanized, as it robs them of any sense of security or control over their own lives. Though Bau is lucky this time, he had no way of knowing if the officer was actually looking for him.

CHAPTER 27

On April 28, 1944, Schindler notices on his **birthday** that he's putting on weight. His celebration is more subdued than in previous years, and he doesn't get arrested this time. At the celebration, Henry Rosner the musician tells Schindler about how they brought their eight-year-old son Olek (who had been hiding with friends in Cracow) into the camp.

Schindler's more subdued birthday this year reflects not just his own weariness as the war drags on but also the general mood in occupied Poland. Even the hope that Emalia brought to the prisoners is beginning to wear thin.

Since Płaszów is classified as a concentration camp, Goeth no longer has leeway to execute anyone whenever he feels like it. If he breaks the rule, killing an essential worker, he might be liable to provide compensation. Still, it is a desperate time, and the Germans are burning bodies at Płaszów, in preparation for a Russian offensive. Though estimates vary of how many died, one source claims that 150,000 prisoners went through Płaszów, and of those, 80,000 died there. Part of the reason why a true count is difficult is because the bodies were not well kept track of—some are still found today when digging for foundations in the suburbs of Cracow.

It may seem like a paradox that the Nazi ideology is to eliminate Jewish people, but that new orders from high command say that Goeth can't murder prisoners indiscriminately. In fact, however, the leaders in the Nazi Party realize that a more bureaucratic approach will be more effective in the long run. They deliberately burn bodies and want to keep track of new deaths because the camps are in danger of being taken over by Russians. If the Russians were to discover all of the Jewish bodies at the camps, it would provide the clearest evidence yet of what the Nazis are really doing.

Among the burning bodies are the Spiras—all ghetto police were executed after the dismantling of the ghetto. Schindler was surprised and took their execution as a sign that no amount of loyalty from a Jew would ever been enough for some Germans.

The death of the Spiras is yet another reminder that no amount of loyalty is enough to appease the Nazis. For Jewish people, any semblance of safety is always precarious.

A letter from Oranienburg to Amon Goeth states that he must be careful about where to keep bodies so that they can be properly disposed of. Schindler is depressed by all he sees, but he makes a promise to Stern: "I'm going to get you *all* out." Stern questions the word "all," to which Schindler replies that at the very least, he will get Stern out.

Schindler's promise to Stern is a direct echo of the Talmudic verse Stern quoted to him earlier: "he who saves the life of one man saves the world entire." Schindler concedes that he may not be able to save everyone, but he knows that even saving Stern is nonetheless worthwhile.

CHAPTER 28

Goeth has two young typists in his office: a German named Frau Kochmann and a prisoner named Mietek Pemper. Pemper will eventually work for Schindler, but in the summer of 1944, he is still very worried about the future. He has a photographic memory, which is what attracts Goeth's attention but will ironically become important later, in leading to the hanging of Goeth.

The Nazi bureaucracy uses paperwork to obscure and legitimize the brutal methods used in concentration camps, but this paperwork also leaves behind a trail that people like Pemper will be able to piece together after the war.

As a typist, Pemper sees a memorandum saying that many Jews and dissidents from recently conquered Hungary will need to be kept in Płaszów. Goeth's response (which Pemper either read or typed) is that they are up to capacity, but that he might be able to accommodate new prisoners if he is allowed to "liquidate the unproductive element inside the camp" and force prisoners to double-bunk. Typhus prevents Goeth from doing the latter, but he is allowed to ship out some "reject" prisoners to Auschwitz-Birkenau. In one day, he gets rid of as many people as Schindler will eventually save, saying that his Aktion is for "health" purposes. Many children, like Olek Rosner, will either be rounded up or forced into hiding.

Goeth's anti-Semitism causes him to underestimate the resourcefulness of prisoners like Pemper. The fact that Goeth allows a Jewish prisoner to type such sensitive documents suggests that Goeth is so secure of his dominant position that even a prisoner with information of classified documents will be powerless to act on them. The concerns about typhus aren't humanitarian—if an outbreak occurs, it's a risk not just to prisoners but also to German guards and Germans in the surrounding town.

CHAPTER 29

Schindler is sitting in Goeth's office with Madritsch and Bosch for what Goeth describes as a security conference. The Russians are advancing, encouraging resistance among Polish partisans and Jews. Goeth says they may even attack Płaszów. Bosch and Schindler joke that if partisans come for Goeth, they aren't there visiting him.

Goeth once again uses bad judgment by trusting Schindler and Madritsch. Perhaps Goeth is hoping to manipulate them. Even Bosch, who is more loyal, seems to recognize that distancing himself from Goeth may be a good idea.

As Schindler drives Goeth back down from the villa, he sees cattle cars full of Jewish people. He notices that they are hot, and that the people inside are thirsty. Pretending to joke, he asks Goeth if it would be okay to bring out a fire brigade. Goeth tolerates Schindler's eccentricity because it amuses him. Schindler proceeds to call a fire brigade that hoses down every car. He even bribes an SS official to open the cattle car doors when the train stops at stations (Two survivors of the trip will confirm this actually happened.) Later, Goeth will comment to Schindler that he should relax and not go running after every trainload that leaves.

What's perhaps most amazing about Goeth's affection for Schindler is that he has fairly clear evidence of Schindler's sympathy for the Jewish prisoners. Schindler's joke about bringing a fire brigade is clearly not a joke, but because he maintains a jovial mood, Goeth goes along with it simply because he doesn't want to spoil the fun. The fact that the SS officials honor their bribe and actually do open the cattle cars at stops (even though Schindler isn't around to verify this) provides yet another example of the strange way that Nazis interpret concepts like duty.

Garde, Schindler's engineer, also notices a change in him. He notices Schindler paying close attention to the radio, particularly about the receding German Fronts. One night, he listens to the German radio station (instead of his usual BBC) because he's heard there's been an attempt on Hitler's life. The official story is that Hitler survived, but Schindler continues to listen with Garde. Just after 1 a.m., however, Schindler and Garde are disappointed to hear Hitler himself on the radio.

Schindler senses—or at least hopes—that the end of the war is coming, and this encourages him to be a little bolder. Though the Nazis control the German radio stations, even they would have a hard time containing the news if Hitler really died.

Rumors come to Cracow that the camps like Płaszów might be disbanded. In fact, Schindler learns that his security meeting with Goeth wasn't really about partisans but about the upcoming closure. In fact, Goeth is only using the partisans as a pretext so that he can once again get permission to take summary action against prisoners as he pleases.

The disbanding of Płaszów may sound like a good thing for prisoners, but in fact, it really means that they'd be sent off on a dangerous train journey, perhaps to a new camp where they'd be treated even worse. In this way, Jewish prisoners can't win, as escaping one bad situation might land them in an even worse situation.

Schindler senses Goeth is also worried about Chilowicz, his Jewish camp police chief who knows the black market well. If Chilowicz is transferred to another camp, he could use his knowledge of Goeth's black market rackets to cause trouble. Goeth gets an aide to approach Chilowicz and pretend to offer an escape deal, which Chilowicz accepts because he's uneasy too. In fact, however, Goeth has arranged it so that Chilowicz will be caught, and now that he has a justification, he executes Chilowicz and several of his companions.

The case of Chilowicz mirrors that of the Spiras. It is the very power that Chilowicz wields in the camp that makes him vulnerable, because his role gives him more knowledge of Goeth's business than most.

Goeth writes reports about how he put down a growing insurgency in Płaszów. As he's drafting the report, he accuses his typist Pemper of being involved with the Chilowicz "escape" plan. Pemper replies that his pants leg is unsewn and that he couldn't possibly pass on the outside with that sort of clothing. This answer seems to satisfy Goeth—for the time being.

Goeth wants to use the supposed threat of an uprising to his own advantage, as an excuse to implement more repressive measures in the camp.

As Pemper is leaving, however, Goeth asks him to leave an extra blank space below the **list** of insurgents. He suspects the space is for his own name. After debating what to do for a long time, he finally completes the letter with the space. As it turns out, however, the space is for an old man who is rumored to have hidden a large cache of diamonds somewhere outside the camp. Goeth asks the old man for the location of the diamonds in exchange for his life, then executes him anyway.

Even someone with close access to Goeth, like Pemper, can't interpret the real meaning behind the commandant's words. Though Goeth has reason to worry about Pemper, he's more interested in chasing diamonds, which would bring him more immediate wealth and glory. Goeth's execution of the old man is yet another example of how the Nazis view Jewish people's lives as trivial and disposable, so much so that even those who cooperate may be killed for no reason.

CHAPTER 30

Schindler receives orders from Army High Command that Płaszów (and therefore the Emalia subcamp) will be disbanded. His prisoners will be sent to Płaszów to await relocation. Schindler is only allowed to keep technicians needed to dismantle the plant. Schindler, like many, knows that *relocation* really means *death*.

Though Schindler had advance notice, the news that Emalia will be disbanded is still demoralizing for him and his prisoners. Perhaps they had hoped for an end to the war before the new policy could be implemented.

The prisoners of Emalia despair. Still, the rumor spreads that Schindler is working on a **list**. Schindler first raises the idea of taking Jews out of Cracow in a meeting with Goeth at his villa (at a time when the Commandant is in poor health because of his heavy drinking). He tells Goeth he'd be "grateful" if he could shift them to a new site in Moravia. Goeth says he'll allow it if Schindler can get the proper approvals.

As with before, gratitude is the code used for bribery. Goeth, despite his delusions, may realize on some level that Schindler wants so many Jewish prisoners because he sympathizes with them. Still, Goeth stands to gain more by letting Schindler do as he pleases (since Schindler will show him "gratitude"), so Goeth has little incentive to try to stop Schindler.

After settling that matter, Schindler plays blackjack with Goeth. Schindler wins some money on the early hands. Helen Hirsch comes in with coffee. Despite Schindler's earlier promise to save her, he hasn't made much progress, and at one point Goeth even orders her execution before calling it off at the last second. After an hour of cards, Goeth has racked up a substantial debt to Schindler.

Though Goeth treats Hirsch horribly, he is also attached to her in a way that makes it difficult for Schindler to ask to take her away. This is yet another example of how the Nazis' anti-Semitism isn't always consistent, as they may trust and rely on Jewish people they know personally while also espousing hatred toward Jewish people more generally. Schindler's plan to win Hirsch through a card game is far from a sure thing, though perhaps Goeth's drinking and poor health increase the odds that he'll be playing with clouded judgment.

Schindler then suggests that he'll need a maid in Moravia and hints that it's hard to find one as skilled as Hirsch. Schindler offers one hand, double or nothing—if he loses, he'll pay double what Goeth owes him. But if he wins, he gets to add Hirsch to his **list**. Goeth considers the offer for a while before agreeing. He goes bust by one point, and Schindler wins. Goeth agrees to sign the paper and take care of Hirsch until it's time for her to leave.

Schindler uses Goeth's macho pride to his advantage. Though Goeth is certainly an anti-Semite, he is even more concerned about looking competent and trustworthy in front of Schindler. This could explain why he honors his debt to Schindler even though Schindler has little power to enforce the terms.

CHAPTER 31

Later, many of the Jews who survived due to Schindler will be united by a common thought: "I don't know why he did it." By fall of 1944, Schindler is making plans to protect his Emalia prisoners with a sense of dogged determination.

The mystery behind Schindler's motivations arguably makes his actions all the more incredible and profound. His efforts show that seemingly ordinary, flawed people can also be capable of immense generosity and self-sacrifice.

Schindler approaches Madritsch about trying to get his 3,000 workers out to Moravia too. Though Madritsch is humane to his prisoners in a way that puts his own life in danger, he is also much more cautious than Schindler, having never been arrested. He says he needs time to think Schindler's offer over.

Based on this scene, Madritsch may seem less sympathetic to the Jewish prisoners than Schindler, but his caution isn't necessarily misplaced. Schindler himself has a number of close calls, and it is easy to imagine a simple mistake dooming his whole rescue operation.

Schindler goes ahead without Madritsch, going to Berlin for dinner with Colonel Erich Lange. He tells Lange that if he goes to Moravia, he can transfer his entire business to manufacturing shells. Lange, who remains disillusioned with the system he's part of, says it should be possible but that it'll require money (not for himself, for others). He begins the process of bribing the necessary officials. As he's negotiating, Goeth is arrested.

A colonel is a high rank, so it's perhaps surprising that Lange would be so sympathetic to Schindler's cause. On the other hand, Lange has little to lose by allowing Schindler to go ahead with the factory. Goeth's arrest helps explain why Goeth's behavior was so erratic, even by his standards, in the months leading up to it.

Senior SS investigator Eckert looks through Goeth's financial dealings, looking for black market deals and embezzlement, as well as investigating claims that Goeth mistreated inferior SS men. At the time of his arrest, Goeth is in Vienna, visiting his father. Other camp Commandants have also been investigated, so there is no guarantee Goeth will get off easy.

It might not be a coincidence that Goeth's investigation comes near the end of the war. As a German loss becomes more likely, many look to point fingers, and an embezzler like Goeth makes a good target.

The investigators question Hirsch several times, believing at first that she must have some involvement with Goeth's black market deals before finally accepting that she doesn't. The also question Pemper, who is smart enough not to say much. But the investigators arrest him anyway, because they know Pemper has seen some secret documents for his work. After two weeks in jail, where it seems like he might be shot any day, he is ultimately released. Goeth's junior officers are careful and make no special effort to defend him.

Though Goeth has seemed more powerful than Schindler up until this point, the fact that everyone abandons him when he goes to jail shows just how fragile his supposed power was. By contrast, Schindler gets out of prison multiple times because the connections he builds are far more durable.

Schindler goes down to the city of Troppau to speak with the engineer Sussmuth (a man Lange recommended to him) about the new camp in Moravia. Sussmuth needs no bribes—he has already tried to make small camps similar to what Schindler is suggesting but without luck. With the support of Schindler and Lange, however, his odds of approval look much better.

Finding allies is difficult for Schindler, since trusting the wrong person could get him sent back to prison or worse. Fortunately, finding one trustworthy person, like Lange, often puts him in contact with a whole network of others.

Sussmuth has a **list** of possible camp sites, and one is a textile plant in Brinnlitz (near Schindler's hometown of Zwittau). Schindler knows he'll meet resistance from the locals but goes down to inspect the area. He's pleased with what he sees and heads back to Cracow, hoping to speak to Madritsch again to help him find a space too.

Schindler chooses an area near his hometown because he knows the area—even though he knows there will be resistance, it's better to work somewhere where he's familiar with the terrain.

When Schindler gets back, he sees the wreckage of an Allied bomber in the camp. He knows the end is coming soon in Cracow, so he goes at once to look into cars to transport his prisoners.

The Allied bomber is a literal sign of how the Allies are beginning to become a presence in Cracow and in German territory in general, signaling the imminent end of World War II.

A week after Schindler talks with Sussmuth, the Berlin Armaments Board gives approval for Schindler's armaments company to be located in Brinnlitz. Local government officials are unhappy, but they can do little to resist. At one point, Schindler finds out that his opponents are accusing him of being involved with the black market, so he preemptively introduces himself to the Moravian police chief, Otto Rasch, who he also bribes with a diamond. Altogether, Schindler pays an enormous sum to get his new camp set up.

By now, Schindler is a professional at securing important contacts, and he knows that police chiefs will always be important allies. He knows that he has to be proactive because he just witnessed how similar accusations of black-market dealings brought down the once-mighty Goeth.

Schindler draws up and delivers his initial **list**, which has over a thousand names, including Helen Hirsch. Schindler talks to Titsch, hoping Titsch will be able to convince Madritsch to do something similar.

With so few people he knows he can trust, Schindler continues to try to persuade Madritsch to join him, since Madritsch is a proven ally.

Some former camp residents remember a "Płaszów graduation party," although accounts differ as to where in the camp it took place. Titsch says it was at this event that Madritsch finally told Schindler he wouldn't be going with him to Moravia. Later, Madritsch would still be honored as a just man—his opposition to Moravia was simply because he believed it wouldn't work.

Though the Jewish prisoners of Płaszów have little to celebrate (given that many will be shipped to worse places, and that there's still no guarantee Schindler's new plan for a factory at Brinnlitz will work), it is still important to keep up morale. The fact that Madritsch refuses to go along with Schindler but is still honored after the war suggests that there are multiple paths to resistance—even something as simple as treating his prisoners humanely is a vitally important act of kindness.

Legend has it that the final draft of Schindler's **list** was due the very same night as the party. To the list, Titsch added the names of almost 70 Madritsch prisoners. At last, Schindler reluctantly stopped him, saying they were already at the limit of what they could do.

While it's hard to verify which legends about Schindler's life are true, it is certainly plausible that Schindler's famous list was turned in at the last minute, given how much was at stake. The fact that Schindler's list is limited to a relatively small number of prisoners emphasizes the precariousness and randomness of people's fates during the Holocaust. Oftentimes, something as trivial as a personal connection or sheer luck would determine whether or not a person made a particular list (either a list like Schindler's or one of the Nazis' lists of people to send to concentration camps).

A Jewish personnel clerk named Marcel Goldberg puts himself in a position where he has great control over who does and doesn't make the **list**. Goeth's replacement Commandant, Büscher, doesn't care, but Goldberg uses it as an opportunity to take bribes, including one from Juda Dresner, the uncle of "**red** Genia" and husband of Mrs. Dresner (who hadn't been allowed to hide in the wall).

Though the book continually emphasizes Schindler's selflessness, it also shows that there was a dark side to who made and who didn't make the list. Goldberg is a complicated figure: as a prisoner, he's in a very precarious position, but as keeper of the list, he also holds tremendous power, which he sometimes exploits.

Pfefferberg hears about the **list** from an SS officer named Hans Schreiber, who has a nasty reputation but who takes a liking to Pfefferberg. At one point, Schreiber seems intent to execute Pfefferberg, but when Pfefferberg asks him to just go ahead and shoot already, Schreiber is amused. Later, Schreiber turns up drunk and regretful of what he's done at Płaszów, saying he hopes to help expiate Pfefferberg, telling him of Schindler's list. Pfefferberg cannot make the list just then, however, because Goldberg is requiring diamonds to be added to it.

Pfefferberg once again uses confidence to impress and amuse a Nazi who is threatening his life. He is so surprisingly effective that Schreiber even volunteers to help get Pfefferberg out. Perhaps with the end of the war looming, some SS officers are reconsidering their commitment to Nazi ideology. Schreiber seems to have knowledge of Schindler's list and can perhaps tell its true purpose, but he apparently doesn't report it or do anything to shut it down.

Many others make it onto the **list**, often through deals with Goldberg, including the musician Rosner brothers. Goldberg naturally finds a place for himself on the list. Bau, the recently married man, is added to the list without knowing it, although he doesn't realize that his wife and the rest of his family are not on it. Stern has been on the list from the beginning.

Finalizing the list is difficult for both sentimental and practical reasons. Especially in an era before computers, it's easy for a name to simply be overlooked, and with over a thousand names, it's difficult for any one person to keep track of them all.

CHAPTER 32

Goldberg crosses some Emalia people off the **list**, and at least one of them will blame Schindler for it. A former prisoner will write a letter in 1963 saying he had been promised a place on the list but instead ended up at an extermination camp.

This passages acknowledges that not all former prisoners share positive opinions of Schindler, even if the overwhelming majority do. By including this, the book acknowledges that Schindler wasn't perfect—yet he was heroic nonetheless.

Schindler, however, isn't able to watch Goldberg at every hour because he is dealing with his own problems at the time. He is afraid after the arrest of Goeth that he may end up being arrested too, or at least heavily interrogated because of his close relationship with Goeth. He must also deal with Commandant Hassebroeck, who supervises the camp Gröss-Rosen (and who will have ultimate authority over Schindler's new camp at Brinnlitz). Fortunately, Hassebroeck sees Schindler's Brinnlitz camp as a chance to expand his own mini-empire.

The book acknowledges that Schindler perhaps could have been more diligent about supervising the list, but it places the majority of the responsibility for any omissions on Goldberg. Hassebroeck may not be as reckless as Goeth, but he has a similar sense of self-importance that Schindler will learn how to manipulate.

Goldberg continues to try to get the best offers for placement on the **list**. One prisoner, Dr. Idek Schindel, won't know that he and his brothers missed the list until the day they're rounded up into cattle cars. They try to go to the Schindler line anyway but are caught and sent with a carload of sick women to Auschwitz. Though left to die there, most of them manage to survive.

Dr. Schindel's case shows how a simple oversight (or perhaps Goldberg's manipulation) could have disastrous consequences for those affected.

Even those on the **list** face difficulties. Henry Rosner lines up with his violin and is pulled aside by an officer who knows Goeth will want music if he gets out of prison. Rosner simply lines up again, however, concealing his violin under his coat.

It's ironic that Rosner's musical skill—which once kept him alive and in Goeth's favor—is almost what prevents him from getting to Brinnlitz. In this sense, appeasing the Nazis can sometimes make a person more of a target.

In spite of Goldberg's interference, Schindler mostly gets the people he wanted to come with him to Brinnlitz. Pfefferberg, accidentally overlooked by Schindler and unable to provide a diamond for Goldberg, gets some unlikely help by appealing to Schreiber, who forces Goldberg to add Pfefferberg's name.

Though this chapter portrays the darker side of putting together Schindler's titular list, the final results show that the list was not greatly compromised by any behind-the-scenes dealing.

The men on Schindler's **list** leave Płaszów on Sunday, October 15. It'll be another week before the women leave. The journey takes three days and is very cold when the doors open. When they arrive, they are shocked and disappointed to find themselves at Gröss-Rosen, being asked to strip so they can be disinfected. They find themselves exposed to the elements overnight, for 17 freezing hours, although none of the survivors remember any deaths.

Though the prisoners trust Schindler, when they are loaded up into a cattle car, they have no way of knowing where they're headed. There is still ample opportunity for interference, particularly since Schindler won't be traveling with them.

Finally, the prisoners are taken to showers, issued striped uniforms, and crowded into barracks. On the second day in the camp, an SS officer approaches Goldberg, saying that Schindler's **list** hasn't come in from Płaszów. Goldberg has to re-create the whole thing from memory. This provides an opportunity for Pemper (and others) to pressure Goldberg to include Dr. Alexander Biberstein on the list (brother of former Cracow Judenrat president Marek Biberstein. Goldberg had earlier told Dr. Biberstein he was on the list, only for him to find out on October 15th that he wasn't.

As many prisoners feared, the journey to Schindler's new factory is not a simple one. The inclusion of Dr. Alexander Biberstein on the list reflects how many Jewish prisoners still hold a high opinion of how the Judenrat *operated in Cracow (since Alexander is the brother of former president Marek), despite some of their controversial decisions.*

On the third day in camp, the approximately 800 men on the revised version of Schindler's **list** are taken to a delousing station, then packed back up into cattle cars, unsure exactly where they're heading. Two days later, they find themselves at the Zwittau depot. Early in the morning, they are marched through a town that seems to be frozen in a pre-war time. At last, they reach the factory at Brinnlitz, where they are greeted by Schindler in a Tyrolean hat.

Schindler's Tyrolean hat (a traditional hat worn in the Alps) recalls an older, perhaps happier era of German history. Meanwhile, even as the prisoners are bound for a camp where they will ostensibly be treated humanely and kept safe, they are still dehumanized and essentially treated like livestock throughout the journey.

CHAPTER 33

As with Emalia, Schindler equips his Brinnlitz camp at his own expense. Among his expenses are all the facilities he has to provide for 100 SS personnel. Hassebroeck has also taken his own share of what he pleases from Schindler's camp, including alcohol, tea, and porcelainware. Inspectors coming from Oranienburg come expecting their own tribute. Combined with everything Schindler must pay to keep his workers, he is making a terrible business decision, yet he still appears to be celebrating.

The profit-chasing Schindler of only a few years ago seems to be gone by this point. Though Schindler remains as cunning in his business deals as ever, he now uses the money he's saved up not to invest in a new business, but to ensure that his Jewish prisoners will make it to the end of the war.

Emilie comes over from Zwittau to live in Schindler's apartment. Some prisoners fear what Emilie's opinions are, but in fact, she will make her own hidden contributions to Schindler's effort. Ingrid also comes with Schindler, although she won't ever live with him again. Klonowska stays behind in Cracow, apparently with no hard feelings.

The book generally follows Schindler's perspective, so it's hard to know what the various women in his life really think of him. Still, based on the reported lack of hard feelings, it seems that the charm Schindler uses in his professional life also applies to his personal life.

Schindler tells the men that he's confident the women will be coming soon. The women are taking a different route, however. When the women get out, they realize they are at Auschwitz-Birkenau. SS men and women sort the Płaszów women into different groups. They are stripped and led to a delousing plant. Though they fear the showers will contain poison gas, they are relieved to find it's just water.

Auschwitz was the deadliest Nazi concentration camp. The atrocities there have been recounted by many camp survivors, but it was infamous even during the war. This incident once again shows how Jewish prisoners' survival was largely a matter of random chance—given how many people died in gas chambers throughout the Holocaust, the showers could just as easily have contained gas rather than water.

At Birkenau, the Nazis tattoo Jewish people whom they intend to use but don't tattoo those they intend to get rid of immediately. Bau's wife and Bau's mother (who aren't on Schindler's **list**) are comparatively lucky enough to be tattooed, which helps them survive. The Płaszów women on Schindler's list are told to get dressed after their shower without getting tattooed, however. They go back to uncomfortable lodgings in the camp. Even with the rumors, they cannot imagine how many people are gassed daily on a day when things are running at full capacity. The Commandant Rudolf Höss will put the number at 9,000.

Though the tattoos are dehumanizing—they reduce people to a number, and tattoos are forbidden in Judaism—they could actually be a positive sign for prisoners who got them late in the war. The scale and efficiency of the deaths at concentration camps was unprecedented in world history.

The former Płaszów women also don't know about negotiations between Himmler and the Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte. After invading Russians excavated the Lublin camp, news of Germany gassing Jews with Zyklon B was suddenly published around the world. Himmler was secretly trying to make himself a successor to Hitler, and this involved making a promise to stop the gassings. Even after the order went out, some, like General Pohl in Oranienburg and Adolf Eichmann, decided to ignore the new directive, meaning many Jews from Płaszów and elsewhere are still being gassed up until November.

The negotiations between Himmler and Count Folke Bernadotte show that the Nazis weren't always united in their strategy, particularly toward the end of the war as Germany's situation became more desperate. These secret dealings at the top would eventually come down to affect the lives of average prisoners like the ones under Schindler.

All of this means that for their first eight days in Auschwitz, the "Schindler women" are at great risk of being gassed. They are separated, with some sent to huts for the terminally ill. Doctors at Auschwitz, like the infamous Josef Mengele, sometimes inspect them at roll call. Even Schindler may not be enough to protect them, because there is precedent of other skilled Jewish workers being gassed by the trainload, as was the case with the chemical company I. G. Farben. The living conditions of the "Schindler women" at Auschwitz are dire, with many getting dysentery. Some begin to doubt Schindler's promises, while other keep faith in him.

Though Schindler is a careful planner, in some cases, luck is the only thing keeping his prisoners alive. After having the extraordinarily bad luck to be taken to Auschwitz, the female prisoners end up surviving their stay through some very good luck. Disease in particular poses a major threat to them, making it difficult for them to hold on to their health, as Schindler advised them to.

In Brinnlitz, the men arrive to a mostly empty camp that doesn't even have bunks yet. Still, they eventually get things up and running. The workers move at a leisurely pace, just fast enough to please the SS men watching, sensing that Schindler has no real intention of contributing to the war effort. The men begin to become increasingly concerned that the women haven't arrived yet. One day, the men gather around Schindler, and he tells them simply, "I'm getting them out."

Schindler boldly promises that he's getting the women out, perhaps before he even knows how he's going to do so. Still, he's learned that displays of confidence are important, and that sometimes it's necessary to act the part first.

One hopeful bit of news is that the SS men guarding Schindler's factory seem to be middle-aged men who are content to lead a peaceful existence. The one potential problem is that their commanding officer has not yet arrived.

The SS were not a monolith, and like any workforce, there were some who were content to do the bare minimum. In this way, the Nazi's vast bureaucracy and hierarchy worked to their disadvantage, as it allowed apathetic workers, like these middle-aged guards, to go unnoticed.

Amid all the preparations for the new factory in Brinnlitz, Schindler is arrested for a third time. Gestapo show up after a truck from Cracow arrives with cigarettes, vodka, cognac, and champagne. The volume of goods suggests that Schindler intends to make a living on the black market.

Though Schindler and the others can sense that the end of the war is near, this won't save him if his arrest goes poorly. Each arrest puts Schindler and his prisoners in greater danger, as the arrests could potentially draw more attention to Schindler's factory.

In Schindler's office, the two Gestapo men ask Schindler about his connections with Goeth and Goeth's loot. Schindler says he has a few of Goeth's suitcases and shows them to the men. They find nothing but arrest Schindler anyway. Those who knew Schindler will later suggest that this arrest scared him more than any of the others.

Schindler readily provides evidence against Goeth, which confirms that all of Schindler's overtures were just a way of strategically manipulating Goeth and taking advantage of their relationship. But even divulging this information isn't enough to help Schindler avoid arrest, as the Gestapo and other Nazi officials seem to be cracking down more harshly as the war draws to a close.

Schindler is taken by train back to Cracow. At the station, he is approached by a man named Huth, who had been a civilian engineer at Płaszów. Huth's motivation is unclear—he used to act subservient toward Goeth—but it seems that Huth may have been working with Klonowska (who is once again trying to get Schindler off the hook).

Schindler couldn't tell before if Huth was on his side because of Huth's deference toward Goeth. Schindler himself deferred to Goeth, however, which suggests that outward appearances don't necessarily indicate a person's true allegiance.

Schindler is locked in a room on Pomorska Street like he was during a previous arrest. He knows there are torture rooms that they could use on him if they are desperate enough to get dirt on Goeth. Huth comes to Schindler and confirms for him that Klonowska is rallying his old friends. A panel of 12 SS investigators interrogates Schindler the next day. They ask if he ever gave Goeth money to "go easy on the Jews," which Schindler denies. He says the money was simply a loan. He maintains that his goal was to keep up his body of skilled labor so that he could continue contributing to the war effort.

The panel of 12 SS investigators is a visible sign that this investigation has much higher stakes than any of the previous ones. One of the questions running through Schindler's head is whether this investigation is primarily related to Goeth, or if the investigators are just using Goeth as a pretext to investigate what Schindler himself is doing.

The interrogation goes four days, and though there's no torture, it is still very intense. Schindler denies being any friend of Goeth's, at one point saying, "I'm not a fairy," bringing up rumors about Goeth and young orderlies. Goeth himself mistakenly believes Schindler wants to help him and will vouch for him. In the end, Schindler is helped by three things: his lack of actual business connections to Goeth, his natural charm (whether lying or telling the truth), and the fact that his credentials check out. Colonel Lange and Sussmuth are among those who testify to Schindler's importance in the war effort.

Schindler uses rumors about Goeth's sexuality to his advantage (the implication being that Goeth had sex with his male orderlies), trying to distance himself from the disgraced former commandant. Despite Schindler's personal connections with Goeth, he is fortunate that he never did business with him (perhaps because he knew enough not to trust Goeth as a partner).

On the fourth day, the interrogators spit on Schindler and call him a "Jew-lover." He can't be sure whether this is part of the process, or if this is why they actually brought him in. Finally, after a week, Schindler sends a message through Huth and Klonowska to Scherner. Scherner comes and says it's an outrage how Schindler is being treated, but he says Goeth deserves what he gets.

Scherner's preferential treatment of Schindler is telling. Ideologically, Scherner probably has more in common with Goeth, but because Schindler is more likable and generous, Scherner prefers him.

On the morning of the eighth day, Schindler is finally let out on the street. He walks back to where his old factory was located and sends word to Emilie that he's free.

The fact that Schindler is able to come out of this long interrogation unscathed is yet another testament to his ability to make connections with the right people and manipulate the Nazi bureaucracy to his advantage.

Meanwhile in Auschwitz, the "Schindler women" move about carefully, knowing that they are presided over by Rudolf Höss (who will infamously be depicted in the novel *Sophie's Choice*). Despite his fearsome reputation, Höss hasn't murdered any Auschwitz prisoners by hand, preferring instead to rely on more clinical methods like Zyklon B gas. The story goes that it was Höss himself that Schindler had to negotiate with in order to protect his 300 women, though there were other camp officials he also had to deal with.

Höss only appears as a minor character in the book, perhaps because his life has been so thoroughly documented elsewhere. Some of the most crucial elements of Schindler's story, like how he negotiated the release of the female prisoners, have been partially lost to history because of the lack of surviving witnesses to the events.

Though a lot of mythology surrounds Schindler's dealing with Auschwitz, one certainty seems to be that he sent a young woman to Commandant Höss with his **list**, as well as with a suitcase full of valuable goods, including alcohol, meat, and diamonds. As Stern tells it, Schindler picked one of his secretaries for the job, warning her that Höss had a thing for pretty women but saying that she'd get a big diamond ring for her efforts if she pulls it off. The identity of the woman and the exact terms of the deal, however, remain a point of contention among the survivors.

Because the reality itself is so similar to a legend—in that World War II and the Holocaust were surreal and hard to believe in some ways—it's perhaps unsurprising that myths and confusion sprang up around the events.

The officers at Auschwitz try to convince Schindler to abandon his quest, claiming that his 300 women have become sickly and worthless in the camp, and that there are plenty of other women he could use instead. Schindler continues to insist that he needs his specific women for their skilled munitions labor. Some question his need for 9- and 11-year-old children, but Schindler replies that he needs their long fingers to polish narrow shells (which is, in fact, a lie).

Schindler knows that the arguments he is making aren't especially convincing. He doesn't need to convince anyone, however—he just needs to make the officers think that investigating him would be more trouble than it's worth.

It is true that the women have been worn down by their time in Auschwitz. Clara Sternberg is one who gets separated from the main group and ends up in a separate hut where she's under constant inspection from doctors. She takes care not to cough and even puts clay on her face to make her complexion seem healthier. At one point, she becomes so desperate that she looks for an electric fence to commit suicide, but a fellow prisoner urges her to hold on a little longer.

Clara's strategy of using mud as makeup to make herself look healthier is just one of many desperate tricks that prisoners like her learn at Auschwitz. Her consideration of suicide shows just how desperate the situation at the camp is, even with the hope of a possible rescue by Schindler.

Something terrible happens while Schindler is away from Brinnlitz. The new Commandant of Gröss-Rosen, Josef Liepold, comes to visit the workshop with an inspector. The inspector has been ordered to look for children who can be used for Dr. Mengele's experiments in Auschwitz. Several children, including Olek Rosner and Richard Horowitz, are spotted and rounded up. The parents of the children (including Henry Rosner and Dolek Horowitz) are also rounded up, and they're all taken by train to Auschwitz.

Even Schindler is not able to keep all interference out of his camp. Dr. Mengele is another figure who plays a prominent role in other Holocaust remembrances but who only makes a brief appearance in Schindler's List. *These brief appearances help to situate the book within the larger Holocaust story.*

The SS officer taking the men and children is surprisingly polite—he tells them that after he takes them to Auschwitz, he is bringing the women to Brinnlitz. At one point, the officer even appears to have tears in his eyes. He tells the prisoners, "I know what will happen. We've lost the war. You'll get the tattoo. You'll survive."

The SS officer is one of the few to vocalize what many other Germans are surely thinking: that the war is lost, and therefore, that much of what they did in the name of the Nazi Party is all for naught.

On the very same afternoon that Clara Sternberg considered suicide, she gets word that they are finally being loaded onto trains. Unfortunately, however, she and a 60-year-old woman named Mrs. Krumholz are on the wrong side of a fence (which isn't electric but is built with 18 strands of wire). Although there are gaps in the fence of less than a foot, somehow both Krumholz and Sternberg make it through to rejoin the other "Schindler women."

Sternberg and Krumholz's daring journey to the other side of the fence shows that even prisoners who are old or frail can be motivated to do amazing things when given a little room to hope.

The trains are horrifying, even as the "Schindler women" begin to feel hopeful. Inside a train car, Niusia and Regina Horowitz, along with Manci Rosner, are horrified to see Olek Rosner and Richard Horowitz standing there in Auschwitz. They are concerned for the children, but Olek holds up his arm to show that he has the tattoo, and Richard does the same. Olek then shows some potatoes to prove he won't starve. Their fathers, Dolek and Henry, are away working at the rock quarry—but when Henry Rosner comes back, he shows that he also has the tattoo. When Dolek gets back too, he and Henry try to be cheerful so that the women won't feel like they have to stay for the children.

The experience of the Rosners and the Horowitzes—able to see each other but unable to be together—was a common occurrence at concentration camps. With the war nearing its conclusion, everyone is doing what they can to project high spirits, because surviving through the final days is crucial.

Finally, the train rolls out. After two days, the "Schindler women" are ordered to get out at dawn, unsure where they are. They're marched to a large gate in front of a factory, with a crowd of SS men in front of it. Though they fear the worst, they notice Schindler among the men in front, again wearing a Tyrolean hat. Next to him is Commandant Liepold. Schindler has discovered that Liepold is still a firm believer in the so-called "Final Solution." But though Liepold is technically in charge, Schindler goes to greet the women.

Once again, Schindler is a joyful, reassuring presence to newly arriving prisoners who had to endure fear and uncertainty when they were separated from him. Even Commandant Liepold doesn't bring down the mood, although he has the potential to do some real harm before the war is over. The "Final Solution" was the name for the Nazi ideology that all Jewish people eventually had to be wiped out, and true believers continued to follow this ideology to the end of the war.

Schindler makes a grand speech, saying "You have nothing more to worry about. You're with me now." He says all this in front of Commandant Liepold, who is furious but seems incapable of doing anything for the moment. The men figure out what's happening and are overjoyed to be reunited with the women. For the moment, however, they must remain separated, with the women quarantined to avoid bringing diseases from Auschwitz.

Schindler's boldness in front of the commandant may seem reckless, but because projecting confidence has worked to Schindler's advantage thus far, it's hard to tell where the border between reckless and strategic really is.

Emilie gets involved with the clinic where she tends to the many sick. Some claim that the good work she did there may have been obscured by Schindler's greater fame and absorbed into his legend instead.

Emilie's more reserved personality makes it difficult to assess her role in history, whereas Schindler's more gregarious personality eventually make his deeds known around the world.

CHAPTER 34

Everyone in Brinnlitz is concerned about typhus because, in addition to the health problems, it could offer a pretext to close the camp. In response, Schindler builds a delousing unit. At one point, welders climb up to work near a water tank and find Schindler and a blond SS girl both naked in it.

Despite the comparative safety of Brinnlitz, disease remains just as much a problem there as anywhere. Fortunately, Schindler has experts among his prisoners who can help him build a delousing station. Schindler and the SS girl seemingly have a sexual relationship, which makes Schindler's character all the more complicated, as he is working tirelessly to help his Jewish prisoners but also cavorting with a Nazi.

Ultimately, thanks to the delousing unit and the effort of doctors like Biberstein, there is no epidemic. In fact, healthy amounts of soup are turning Schindler's 1,000 prisoners into some of the healthiest in the whole continent. Later, one of Schindler's inmates will say that life in Brinnlitz was hard, and that Schindler never cut his own rations to match with the prisoners. But still, the inmate remains grateful and considers his time there a "paradise" compared to the other options.

Biberstein uses his medical expertise to quantify how exactly Schindler's methods end up being successful. The fact that Schindler still lives a fairly lavish lifestyle may seem unfair and hypocritical, although it could be argued that keeping up appearances is essential to maintaining his charade with fellow Germans.

Schindler begins to be absent from Brinnlitz for periods of time. At one point while he's away, 19-year-old Janek Dresner is accused of sabotage (when in fact, he's just ignorant about metalwork). A German supervisor prepares a harsh report. Stern stops some of the reports going out in the mail, though he can't keep a copy from being hand-delivered to Commandant Liepold.

It becomes clear how much Schindler relies on people under him, like Stern, to keep everything running smoothly. Yet Schindler remains a flawed and complicated character, even someone so devoted to saving Jewish prisoners can be indifferent or distracted at times.

Finally, Schindler comes back and hears about the situation from Stern. Liepold wants to preside over a hearing and ultimately hang Janek Dresner (along with his family), but Schindler refuses to let anyone else encroach on his territory. Court convenes with Schindler presiding over. He reads Janek Dresner the details of the report about his alleged sabotage, then proceeds to question him. Dresner doesn't know what to do and admits that he was unfamiliar with the machine.

Though Schindler may sometimes get temporarily led astray, he is back to business when he has a problem to solve. Schindler defends his right to control his own territory in part because he knows this is an impulse that is men like Liepold, who value independence and duty, will understand.

Schindler becomes increasingly irritated with Janek Dresner, at one point even hitting him across the face. But as he does so, he gives Dresner a wink. He complains to the Germans in attendance about the stupidity of Jewish people, and how he only wishes they were intelligent enough to actually commit sabotage. Schindler winds up to punch Dresner again, then yells that he should clear out. He then offers fine cognac to the Germans and suggests they'd be better to forget the whole thing. The Germans, including Liepold, don't seem satisfied, but they can see that at least Schindler appeared to take the hearing seriously. Later in life, Dresner will recall that the entire existence of Brinnlitz was often maintained through a series of precarious, confident stunts.

Schindler has to seem angry at Dresner in order to convincingly sell the performance. His performance may not be totally convincing to everyone watching the hearing, but once again, it doesn't have to be—it just has to be barely convincing enough to discourage men like Liepold from investigating any further into the matter. Yet again, Schindler is able to create the outcome he wants by manipulating the Nazis' bureaucratic and legal proceedings to his advantage.

CHAPTER 35

In fact, Brinnlitz produces nothing, not even a single shell. Schindler uses the excuse of "start-up difficulties" to explain the shortfalls. At one point, he has to ship a truckful of munitions parts (which had arrived at Brinnlitz half-completed) in order to avoid raising suspicion, but that's the extent of it.

Because Schindler is more removed from the nearest concentration camp than he was at Emalia, he has more autonomy and can afford to be less productive.

Schindler's lack of productivity earns him a bad reputation with the Armaments Ministry. Because of the fragmented nature of manufacturing there, his nonproductivity causes problems for other factories too. Schindler simply laughs the complaint letters away.

Schindler's sabotage ends up playing a big role because of how the wartime industries in Germany were connected. This is yet another example of the Nazis' paradoxical treatment of Jewish people: their entire regime is based on anti-Semitism, yet the German war effort depends on Jewish prisoners' labor.

One such complaint letter arrives on April 28, 1945, Schindler's 37th **birthday**. He is overjoyed to find that his antitank shells fail all quality-control tests (because that means they can't actually kill anyone). Still, it is a dangerous time for the prisoners whom Hassebroeck has condemned to death.

Schindler once more gets important news on his birthday. Excitement is high because of the seeming success at Brinnlitz so far, but the risks are far from over.

The **birthday** telegram raises the question of how Schindler's Brinnlitz factory managed to survive the seven months before his birthday. Schindler deals with inspectors by offering them big, boozy lunches and dinners. Legend has it that one resistant inspector boasted that he wouldn't let Schindler charm him, so Schindler tripped him down a flight of stairs, splitting his head and breaking his leg. (Schindler himself never told this story.)

Charming minor officials remains a key part of Schindler's strategy. The book recounts possibly untrue stories about Schindler pushing a man down a flight of stairs because whether or not the stories are true, their very existence confirms that Schindler was elevated to the status of a legend or a hero after World War II ended.

Schindler also uses tricks, like a gauge on furnaces that shows the right temperature even when it's hundreds of degrees too cool. Schindler reacts with indignation, and some inspectors even feel sympathy toward him. Stern and Pfefferberg claim Schindler sometimes bought shells from other manufacturers to present as his own at inspections. Schindler also holds tours and grand dinners to impress skeptical local officials.

Schindler's deception is not only personal—his team of prisoners also find technological ways to deceive inspectors. Still, Schindler's personality remains a major part of his success, as he is adept at drawing sympathy from those around him.

In winter, Schindler begins stockpiling weapons, pretending that he's using them to protect his factory. To get them, he bribes the wife of the police chief of Moravia, Rasch, with a diamond ring. Uri Bejski is put in charge of watching the weapons. Bejski begins taking a small group of prisoners out to train, some of whom are "Budzyn people" (who survived the liquidation of the Budzyn labor camp, which had been under Liepold). The Budzyn people are highly political, with many of them being Marxists.

The stockpiling of weapons suggests that Schindler and his prisoners are preparing for the worst—perhaps for the possibility that the Nazis will want to go out with a bang rather than quietly surrendering.

CHAPTER 36

People like Goeth and Bosch believe that Schindler has some virus-like condition that makes him sympathize with Jews. Sussmuth seems to be one who "caught" Schindler's disease. Over the winter of 1944 to 1945, they plan to get 3,000 more women out of Auschwitz. They will be sent to factories in Moravia that are harsh but endurable, camps that are perhaps small enough to escape the extermination orders coming to the bigger camps.

Because Schindler has invested so much in building relationships with Goeth and Bosch, they see Schindler as a victim instead of an opponent. Schindler, meanwhile, looks for ways to expand his rescue effort, as saving his prisoners has seemingly emboldened him to try to save even more lives.

Schindler has an almost religious drive to keep doing more, so he applies for 30 metalworkers, partly because the request will help validate this camp. Moshe Henigman is one of the 30. Previously, he was one of 10,000 prisoners at Auschwitz who were marched in the cold to Grӧss-Rosen, of which only 1,200 would survive.

In the context of the Holocaust, during which millions of people were killed, 30 lives isn't very many. But Schindler seems to be living by the Talmudic verse that Stern quoted for him years ago ("he who saves a single life saves the world entire") and chooses to help anyone he possibly can.

Advancing Russians continue to seize more territory. As news of Russian advances comes in, Henigman and the other survivors of the march are taken to an SS compound. There, he is surprised to be put in a railway car with 30 others and even given food for the trip. He is even more amazed when he arrives at Brinnlitz and finds "a camp left where men and women worked together, where there were no beatings, no *Kapo*." (Henigman slightly exaggerates: there was still some segregation and rare cases of beatings.) Though Schindler was able to save Henigman and the other 29 tinsmiths, this is only a fragment of the 10,000 originally in Henigman's group.

Henigman provides an eyewitness account of what it was like to come to Schindler's camp at Brinnlitz as an outsider. Keneally is careful to point out that Henigman exaggerates a bit, although perhaps after the conditions Henigman endured, it's not surprising that he would be so amazed by Schindler's camp.

Schindler makes another costly deal with the Gestapo about prisoners. One subject of this deal is Benjamin Wrozlawski, who is an inmate at an Auschwitz subsidiary camp called Gliwice. When the threat of an impending Russian attack causes the Nazis to start shipping prisoners out of Gliwice, Wrozlawski and a friend named Roman Wilner jump off a train, managing to escape before being arrested in a small village and taken to the Gestapo offices. A Gestapo officer tells them that nothing bad will happen to them, though they don't believe it. About two weeks later, they are released and amazed to find themselves at Brinnlitz, feeling just as amazed as Henigman. They are part of 11 escapees that Schindler arranged to take in from the Gestapo, prisoners who otherwise would have been shot.

Schindler once again strains the pretense that his prisoners are actually doing useful work for the war effort. He is effectively banking on his own personal connections and the goodwill he's amassed (as well as the money) in order to get what he wants and avoiding interference.

In 1963, Dr. Steinberg tells the story of another one of Schindler's wildly generous whims. Steinberg was a doctor in a small Sudeten work camp. He heard a rumor about Brinnlitz and visited the camp to see if he could pick up some supplies to take back. He took food back to his own camp, and his medical opinion is that this extra nutrition helped save 50 lives.

Though Schindler focuses on the prisoners at his own camp, he knows that he can do the most good by helping others too, which is why he allows Steinberg to have some of his supplies. Again, 50 lives is a small number compared to the millions who died in the Holocaust, but Dr. Steinberg's gratitude suggests that gestures like these are nonetheless meaningful and worthwhile.

One of Schindler's most amazing feats involves the prisoners from Goleszów, a quarry and cement plant in Auschwitz. As the various parts of Auschwitz are being disbanded, 120 quarry workers from Goleszów are packed into two cattle cars. Many others in Auschwitz are also being moved around at this time. Dolek Horowitz is shipped away to Mauthausen, though his son Richard will stay and eventually be found by Russians. Henry Rosner and Olek, meanwhile, survive a perilous seven-day trip to Dauchau where half of the people in their car die.

The experience Goleszów prisoners' experience viscerally demonstrates how lucky Schindler's prisoners are compared to some of the alternatives. It also shows how transportation between camps may seem innocuous but was in fact one of the deadliest parts of the Holocaust.

The Goleszów quarry prisoners will face an even worse trip than the Rosners. They stay in their train cars for more than 10 days, with the doors frozen shut, surviving off ice scraped from the inside walls. They are refused at many camps because the biggest killing machines are winding down, and the prisoners have no industrial value. Sometime near the end of January, they are abandoned in Zwittau, where Schindler hears about them from a friend.

On the one hand, the Goleszów prisoners end up being particularly unlucky because their journey occurs during a transitional period at the concentration camps. The fact that any of them survive, however, is due to their tremendous luck in being abandoned near Schindler.

On a morning with subzero temperatures, Schindler orders for the two cars of Goleszów prisoners to be taken to Brinnlitz. Pfefferberg gets welding gear to cut open the cattle car doors. Inside, they find a gruesome scene, with a pyramid of frozen corpses and none of the survivors weighing more than 75 pounds.

Even at such a late period of the war, men like Schindler and Pfefferberg encounter new horrors. The graphic image of the pyramid of frozen corpses and emaciated survivors is a testament to the Nazis' brutality and callous dismissal of Jewish people's lives.

Liepold doesn't want to take the survivors and says there's no way anyone could pretend they're munitions workers. Schindler admits this is true but asks to pay for their labor, anyway, saying he'll use them once they recover. Though Liepold still disapproves, he sees an opportunity to please Hassebroeck by getting more labor fees on the book.

Liepold's desire to look good for his boss is stronger than his commitment to Nazi ideology. Schindler intuits this and uses it to his advantage, rescuing prisoners who have very little value as laborers.

Schindler refuses to have any of the corpses burned. In the past, he caused trouble with Liepold over this issue, at one point allowing a prisoner who died of cancer to be buried instead of burned. When the Goleszów cars arrive, Schindler goes a step further by buying a plot for a Jewish cemetery. He even pays a middle-aged SS officer a small sum to keep the burial area well-maintained.

Schindler's refusal to burn corpses is a symbolic refusal of Nazi principles. By burning bodies, the concentration camps treat prisoners like garbage to be disposed of. Schindler reasserts deceased people's dignity by giving them a ritual burial, and the ritual also helps the survivors maintain some semblance of normalcy and dignity.

Meanwhile, Emilie Schindler is making her own deals. She procures frostbite medicine and other necessities to help the Goleszów prisoners. After some early deaths, there are no more among the Goleszów people.

Fewer stories exist about Emilie's role in helping prisoners survive, but from passages like these, it seems clear that her role in helping Schindler's operation was vital.

That winter, Amon Goeth, released from prison because of his diabetes, comes to see the Schindlers. Even today, it's unclear exactly what motivated Goeth's visit. After prison, Goeth is a shell of his old self, and the investigation into him is ongoing.

Goeth's visit reinforces just how fragile his power really was. Gone are the days when Goeth had a whole camp at his command as a tyrant. This was always the risk he took by putting so much stock in hard power and physical domination. By contrast, the book implies that true, lasting power is the type that Schindler embodies—that which is gained not through violence, but through building trust and mutual respect (or, sometimes, through nonviolent trickery.

During Goeth's visit, he corners his old typist Pemper, having heard the SS officials were interrogating Pemper in relation to his work with Goeth. Pemper refuses to tell Goeth anything, which enrages him, but he has no power to do anything anymore. When Goeth finally leaves, it becomes clear that he's lost all of his old power, although prisoners will continue to be haunted by him in their dreams, even 30 years later.

The fact that Goeth continues to haunt prisoners even after he's powerless (and even after he's dead) shows that, while his style of ruling wasn't effective in terms of giving him lasting power, it was very effective in traumatizing the people below him.

CHAPTER 37

Schindler celebrates his 37th **birthday** on a Shabbat with all the prisoners. The day is festive, despite the fact that recently a telegram went from Hassebroeck to Liepold giving instructions to eliminate large portions of the Jewish population, should the Russians come near. The prisoners don't yet know the specifics of this telegram, but they have still heard troubling rumors.

Perhaps it's just coincidence, but the 37th chapter of the book coincides with Schindler's 37th year, which will prove to be one of the most important years of his life. Shabbat is a joyful time, but although Schindler has some reason to celebrate his success at Brinnlitz so far, but the rumors that prisoners are hearing suggest that the last stretch of the war will be perilous.

In fact, Liepold himself hasn't seen the telegram. Pemper intercepts it and brings the news straight to Schindler, who says "All right then. We have to say goodbye to *Untersturmführer* Liepold." They know Liepold is the only SS man in the camp who is fanatical enough to calmly order the death of 1,300 people.

Schindler recognizes that a bureaucracy is only effective when the individual members carry out their duties, and that the orders to liquidate his camp will only be carried out if a fundamentalist like Liepold is overseeing things.

In the days before his **birthday**, Schindler secretly lodges complaints to Hassebroeck about Liepold. He makes similar charges about Liepold to Rasch. He shows them both letters he's written to General Glücks in Oranienburg. It's a bold move—Schindler is hoping they'll transfer Liepold without bothering to investigate too much.

Though the Nazi surveillance apparatus is used to instill fear and command obedience, it also creates a state of paranoia that men like Schindler can exploit.

Schindler collects more evidence against Liepold by inviting him to dinner at his apartment. He gets Liepold drunk, which causes Liepold to threaten to execute his workers. Schindler then reports that Liepold has made *immediate* threats of execution to Hassebroeck, who, in spite of being responsible for the deaths of thousands of Jews, still agrees with Schindler's logic that his labor should be protected until the Russians arrived. Schindler says Liepold has told him he'd like to go into combat, and Hassebroeck tells Schindler he'll see what can be done.

Hassebroeck is an unlikely ally to Schindler, but Schindler knows how to emphasize the points of disagreement between Liepold and Hassebroeck. Hassebroeck is less zealous than Liepold and sees no particular reason to protect the commandant instead of Schindler.

On his **birthday**, Schindler makes a speech promising the prisoners continued life. SS officers and German civilian personnel are present for the speech, and some, like Pfefferberg, worry that they'll shoot Schindler for what he's saying. Though Schindler seems oblivious, he is quietly concerned about what the SS guards might do if things get desperate.

Schindler's speech is a bold move, but it may also be strategic—the Germans are every bit as much his audience as the Jews are. Schindler needs their cooperation to ensure that they won't go rogue at the end of the war.

Within two days of Schindler's **birthday**, Liepold gets orders transferring him to an SS infantry battalion near Prague. He goes without raising any complaints, and because Liepold used to brag about his desire to go into combat when he got drunk, no one finds the transfer unusual.

Liepold's sense of pride prevents him from refusing a chance to serve on the front lines—and Schindler knew he'd be too proud to lodge a complaint.

Schindler does not passively wait for the end. In May, he gets a tip about an abandoned warehouse and goes to raid it. He is frightened by reports that Russians are executing German citizens without asking questions but doesn't let it paralyze him. Finally he hears the news from the BBC that Germany has surrendered and the war in Europe will stop on May 8th.

Based on all the plans he's making, Schindler increasingly seems to be preparing for a life after the war. Yet it becomes clear that Schindler is at risk of being targeted for being German, and particularly for being a former Nazi.

Schindler celebrates by totally breaking the charade that he's running a business and blasting Churchill's victory speech throughout the camp. The SS in the camp aren't sure what to do, but a sense of duty keeps them at their posts.

Germany's defeat makes it safer for Schindler to be open about his sympathy for his prisoners. He knows that the SS guards at his camp are generally not fundamentalists and are therefore not interested in staging some sort of last stand.

Using materials at hand, some of the prisoners prepare makeshift gifts for Schindler. Schindler gathers the prisoners on the factory floor. The Germans haven't left yet, though they are making escape plans. Unlike Schindler's **birthday** speech, this one is recorded in shorthand by two prisoners (though those present will say that the themes of the two speeches were similar).

Those in attendance can tell that they're living in a pivotal moment in history, which is why a transcript of Schindler's speech survives. This reverence makes it clear that although Schindler was, in many ways, an ordinary man who saved a relatively small number of people, his efforts still mattered immensely to those he saved.

Parts of Schindler's speech are directed to the SS garrison. He invites them to leave and asks the prisoners to let them. Schindler talks about his own experience, getting nostalgic but perhaps also trying to distance himself from figures like Goeth and Hassebroeck.

Schindler's appeals to the SS are strategic—though he may genuinely believe in mercy, he also knows that any sort of armed conflict could lead to his prisoners being killed.

After touching on several themes, Schindler finally thanks the SS garrison for being so humane, despite what they were asked to do. Some prisoners are aghast at this, but Schindler sees his speech as a tactical way to prevent the SS from becoming combatants. Schindler ends his speech with three minutes of silence.

Schindler risks upsetting his prisoners because he knows he already has their trust. They aren't used to seeing this side of him, but in fact, Schindler has spent a great deal of the war flattering men who participated in some truly evil acts.

CHAPTER 38

After Schindler's speech, the SS garrison begins to desert. The Budzyn people and other prisoners have already been issued weapons, but this is intended more to discourage the SS than to actually start a battle. By midnight after the speech, there are no visible SS in the camp.

As Schindler predicted, his particular garrison of SS members isn't in the mood to make trouble. His speech may have helped reassure them that fleeing was a safer option than fighting.

Schindler hands over to Bankier the key to a storeroom full of materials that he got in a contract with the intention of using the materials to provide a starting stake for the Brinnlitz Jews. As Schindler passes over the valuable key to the room, he and Emilie are wearing prisoner's stripes. With the help of eight prisoners, the Schindlers are driven off in their prisoner's clothes to a place in Europe that will be safer for them.

Schindler's generosity even includes trying to get his prisoners set up for life after the war. Though his decision to leave the warehouse full of materials to his prisoners is generous, it is also at least partly tactical—being viewed as a wealthy German could cause invading Allies to view Schindler with suspicion.

After the SS leave, all that remains in Brinnlitz is a German *Kapo* with a deadly reputation. Some male prisoners hang him from a beam in the factory, though others try to prevent the killing, and his death brings mixed feelings to the camp. The next day, the goods from Schindler's massive storeroom are distributed. At one point, a Panzer unit comes by and fires two shells into the camp. Fortunately, no one is seriously injured, and none of the prisoners make the mistake of responding to the tanks.

A Kapo is a prisoner, but one who is charged with carrying out the orders of the SS, hence this German's bad reputation among other prisoners. It is perhaps unsurprising that the Jewish prisoners would use the opportunity to take revenge and equally unsurprising that many would regret it. A Panzer unit is a unit with armored tanks—the Panzer unit that passes by the camp is retreating, not actually attacking the camp.

Czech partisans stop Schindler and his party at one point, and Schindler still pretends to be a prisoner. The Czechs let them go but take their weapons. They spend the night in an abandoned jail and find the next morning that their vehicles have been stripped down and can't be used anymore. They take a train, then walk, encountering some American soldiers who let them pass. Finally, they find the full American infantry company and tell them the whole truth about Schindler's identity.

Though Schindler's journey is relatively easy compared to some of the treks Jewish prisoners endured, it is still perilous. Even supposed allies could pose a threat, particularly to a German like Schindler.

The commander of the company leaves. Half an hour later, some Jewish American soldiers, including a field rabbi, arrive. They're amazed: Schindler's group is the first group of concentration camp survivors that they've met. Schindler and his party are treated as welcome guests for two days before being given a captured ambulance to leave.

Though the horrors of the Holocaust were becoming well-known, many Allied soldiers would not see what things looked like until they arrived at the camps in person.

Those remaining in Brinnlitz hang false signs about a typhus breakout to hopefully keep any lingering SS out. Some Czech partisans show up at the gate and say the prisoners are free to go, but the prisoners remain suspicious and say they'll wait for the Russians to arrive.

The last days in Brinnlitz are filled with tense waiting and suspicion. Though the worst is over, there is still ample room for things to go wrong—in this way, even though the war has ended, Jewish people's fates are still fragile and uncertain.

That night, a party of SS men on motorcycles pulls up at the gate asking for gasoline. Though some prisoners are in favor of shooting them on sight, Pfefferberg suggests that it will be safest to just supply the gasoline. The men take the gasoline and cause no further trouble—this is the prisoners' last interaction with the SS.

The case of the SS motorcyclists proves that the prisoners have internalized Schindler's message from his speech—that mercy for the SS at the current time may actually be the best strategy.

Finally, a lone Russian officer on a pony comes to liberate the camp. The prisoners let him in, and he gives a generic liberation speech in Russian. Once the speech is finished, he smiles and says he'll answer questions. They talk with him on a more personal level, navigating a language barrier. The officer asks if there's anything he can do, and they all ask for food, which he says he can provide. As the officer is leaving, Pemper and Bejski ask him where it's safe for Jews to go. The officer says he doesn't know and adds, "Don't go east—that much I can tell you. But don't go west either. They don't like us anywhere."

The Russian officer provides a slightly surreal and anticlimactic ending to the war. Though he first presents himself as an emissary of his country, as he gets to know the prisoners, he becomes more personal and honest with them. The meeting suggests that even people from very different backgrounds can find common ground when circumstance brings them together.

At the advice of the Russian officer, the Brinnlitz prisoners finally leave the gate to see some of the outside world, the youngest ones venturing out first. Eventually, the prisoners begin moving out, going to various places around the world.

The presence of a Russian officer proves that Germans have abandoned the surrounding area and that it's safe for Jewish prisoners to venture out.

At Linz, Schindler's party reports to the American authorities, trading in their ambulance to be taken by truck to Nuremberg, which has become a center for freed concentration camp prisoners. Schindler is taken to a town near the Swiss border. Reubinski, one of the eight in Schindler's party, recalls how their group was apprehended and suspected of being concentration camp guards in disguise (since they were better nourished than before and were carrying jewels and currency). Finally, they bring a Polish speaker to test Reubinski's claim that he's from Cracow. Reubinski breaks down crying and tells his story in perfect Polish.

Schindler's group faces suspicion because many Nazis were trying to use the confusion at the end of the war to escape to a place where they'd be safe. Fortunately, Schindler doesn't have to lie, and he has Jewish prisoners with him who can vouch for his character. In this way, Schindler's connections are still benefitting him even after the war—but this time, in contrast to life in Nazi-occupied territory, his connection to a Jewish person is an advantage rather than a risk.

The interrogators are so moved that they embrace the eight members of Schindler's party. What little remained of Schindler's wealth has already been passed along, but he is pleased to be with his chosen "family."

The reasonable Allied interrogators contrast with the paranoid, seemingly irrational Nazi interrogators who have hounded Schindler and others throughout the book. The fact that Schindler is unconcerned about his wealth and is content with his chosen "family" serves as a final example of Schindler's generosity and selflessness.

EPILOGUE

Nothing Schindler does after the war will be as noteworthy as what he did during the war. He does, however, remain generous and skilled at tracking down things that seem unobtainable

The book emphasizes Schindler's ordinariness after the war not to knock him down, but to show how extraordinary circumstances can bring out the best in otherwise ordinary people.

When Goeth is captured by General Patton's army, he foolishly considers calling both Helen Hirsch and Oskar Schindler as witnesses to his character at the trial, although he doesn't. Pemper is a witness for the prosecution and uses his amazing memory to provide evidence. Goeth is hanged on September 13, 1946.

Goeth continues his downward spiral, emphasizing the ultimate failure of his brutal style of leadership, which has left him isolated and without any real connections.

In Munich, Schindler himself identifies Liepold, who is in the custody of Americans. Liepold is angry, but Schindler asks, "Do you want *me* to do it, or would you rather leave it to the fifty angry Jews who are waiting downstairs in the street?" Liepold is hanged too.

With the war over, Schindler no longer has to be discrete about his allegiances. Even Liepold, who was perhaps a little more self-aware than Goeth, is surprised to see Schindler betray him.

Schindler goes to South America with Emilie to breed nutria, which are large aquatic rodents valued for their skins. The business never really takes off, and in 1957, Schindler heads back to Germany, leaving his wife behind in Brazil. He gets a cement business going with money from the Joint Distribution Committee and "loans" from some successful "Schindler Jews." Still, by 1961, he's bankrupt again.

Though Schindler would eventually be recognized as a hero, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the war, it may have been easier for him to go to somewhere like South America in order to avoid being taken for a former concentration camp manager. His lack of business success suggests that he struggles without people like Stern, Bankier, and Klonowska to manage many of his day-to-day affairs.

For the rest of his life, survivors whom Schindler saved welcome him to their homes, and in 1961, some of them invite him to Israel. It's the same year as Adolf Eichmann's trial, and Schindler's visit makes the international news, with many making favorable distinctions between him and Eichmann. Some Holocaust survivors, however, remain skeptical that any camp could be as benign as Schindler's.

Eichmann was one of the architects of the Holocaust, so it makes an interesting parallel that he is in Jerusalem at the same time as Schindler, one of the greatest resisters of the Holocaust. It's significant that all this was taking place in the 1960s—the events of World War II were so momentous that it took decades to sort out what really happened and to deal with the consequences. The publication of Schindler's List *itself (as well as the eventual film adaptation) played a role in shaping how the history of World War II is discussed.*

The same judge as for Eichmann's trial presides over an initiative put forward by Stern, Sternberg, and Bejski to announce an official tribute to Schindler. The hearing attracts a large collection of statements, almost all positive, with four more critical statements (which still admit that Schindler may have saved their lives). Tel Aviv becomes the first place to honor Schindler, unveiling a plaque for his 53rd **birthday**. Madritsch and Titsch are among the others with memorial trees in the park.

Keneally dutifully records negative statements against Schindler in order to avoid being accused of being biased or following a specific agenda. He shows, however, that in the context of the evidence, these negative statements were few in number and fairly mild in content. Once again, Schindler's birthday coincides with a major event in his life and serves as a benchmark of how much he's achieved since his 34th birthday earlier in the book.

Despite positive stories in the German press, the additional fame only brings Schindler more problems. In 1963, he punches a factory worker who calls him a "Jew-kisser" and gets charged with assault, forced to pay damages. Incidents like this make Schindler even more dependent on the generosity of his former prisoners.

As this passage shows, the end of World War II didn't end anti-Semitism in Germany by any means. Even figures who seem to be universally beloved like Schindler could have some very vocal opponents.

Stern, Sternberg, and Bejski continue to lobby the West German government for a pension to Schindler. Finally, in 1968, their request is fulfilled. Schindler continues to testify against war criminals, giving confidential information about Płaszów personnel on his **birthday** in 1967. He is a willing witness but also a careful and meticulous one. In his sixties, Schindler starts working for the German Friends of Hebrew University, continuing to drink like he did when he was younger.

Schindler's former prisoners feel that they owe him their lives and that it's the least they can do to make sure he's provided for financially. Schindler has another important birthday when he testifies. This is his last birthday mentioned in the book, and in many ways, his testimonials help close out his involvement in the war.

Emilie never leaves Brazil, and as of the first publication of *Schindler's List*, she still lives there. She comments briefly about Schindler in 1973 for a German documentary about him.

Though Emilie cooperated with Schindler at Brinnlitz, it seems clear that when the two of them didn't have a shared mission to connect them, they had little in common.

In 1972, Schindler goes to New York to see a floor in a research center that is dedicated to him by some former prisoners. He is visibly ill at the time. In October 1974, Schindler collapses near a Frankfurt railway station and dies in the hospital. Per his last wishes, he is buried in a Catholic cemetery in Jerusalem. Many "Schindler Jews" attend his funeral, and his death is mourned around the world.

Schindler's burial at a Catholic cemetery in Jerusalem highlights his many contradictions: he wasn't Jewish or even devoutly Catholic, but he was a virtuous man who pursued his efforts to save Jewish prisoners with a zeal that resembled religion and with a selflessness that is valued highly by both religions.

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