



העם הנבחר

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

BY WILL TRURAN

BUILT ON THE
RACKED
SYSTEM

COLOPHON

This zine was designed and written by William Truran as a part of his graduate studies at Rochester Institute of Technology in the year MMXXI. It was set in the typefaces Work Sans designed by Wei Huang and Avara designed by Raphaël Bastide, Lucas Le Bihan, Walid Bouchouchi, Jérémy Landes, and Wei Huang. The physical editions were printed with an Epson ET 3760 on Canson Newsprint, and hand sewn in Rochester, NY.



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INTRO

The Chosen People is a sample setting intended to inspire and provide an example for how the Racked System can be used. It is not intended for play, but I encourage you to read through this zine with the purpose of inspiration for the setting you want to create. Take the kernels laid out in this sample setting to aid you in creating the framework for your setting. Tell the victim's stories so that people can experience them through a new lens and never forget.

Thank you to the members of the Jewish community in Rochester, NY who have met with me and answered my numerous questions about what to include, what lessons need to be learned, and what messages they want shared. Your input is appreciated far more than you probably realize.

- **WILL TRURAN**

RESOURCES

The greatest tool to running setting-accurate sessions is a library of resources. Much of what can be found in this zine was based on materials found on these websites. If you have questions regarding elements you would like to incorporate within your sessions, use these sites to ensure your creation fits into reality.

THEHOLOCAUSTEXPLAINED.ORG

STLHOLOCAUSTMUSEUM.ORG

ROCHESTERHOLOCAUSTSURVIVORS.ORG

YADVASHEM.ORG

USHMM.ORG

The resources listed are not affiliated with this project, but have served as a great source of inspiration and knowledge in the development of this zine.



1

THE BACKGROUND



The Year 1933

By January 30, 1933, The National Socialist German Workers, better known as the Nazi Party, had become the largest elected party in the Reichstag. With this transformation, pressures built within the government.

THE YEAR 1933

On January 30th, President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Adolf Hitler as Chancellor. This was a major turning point and noticeable shift in power. Prior to Hitler becoming Chancellor, the Nazi's paramilitary, Sturm Abteilung, formed a sub-division called the Schutzstaffel (SS). This special force that was originally intended to be Hitler's bodyguards had now grown to 35,000 members who were chosen based on their 'racial purity' and loyalty to Hitler.

THE ECONOMIC PRESSURE

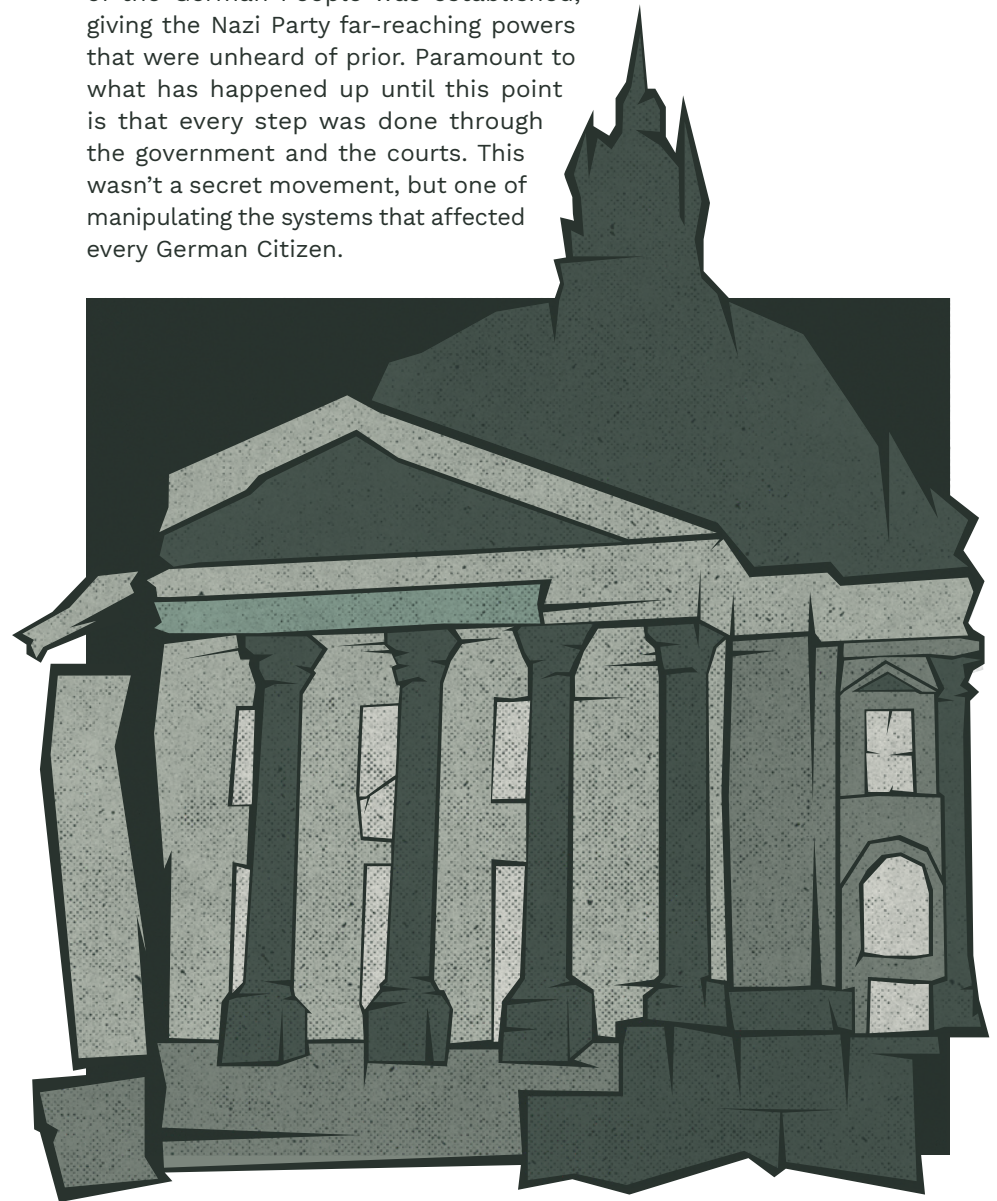
Emerging from WW1 and horribly affected by the Wall Street Crash of 1929, Germany was hurting. This pressure thrust the Nazi Party, who promised solutions, into power and favor among many civilians. Part of their solutions were wrapped around the concept of the Volksgemeinschaft, or the Volk. The Volk is a concept of National spirit and community based on race, specifically the Aryan race.

This racial division is the skeleton of every Nazi movement and will be used to target the Jewish Community within Germany and eventually all of Europe. There are many other details that went into the rise of the Nazi party, but this concept of the Volk and Racial Purity growing in every segment of Germany is the most important and most felt by the Jewish Community.

THE REICHSTAG FIRE

Much of this will come to a breaking point when the Reichstag, the German Parliament building, is set on fire. This is just one month

after Hitler's appointment, and in the midst of many early political moves to ensure the Nazi Party more power. In reaction to this 'attack', the Decree for the Protection of the German People was established, giving the Nazi Party far-reaching powers that were unheard of prior. Paramount to what has happened up until this point is that every step was done through the government and the courts. This wasn't a secret movement, but one of manipulating the systems that affected every German Citizen.



German Reich



Identification Card

2

MAKING A CHARACTER



Here Is Your Identification

As we step into the shoes of a Jew in Berlin in the early stages of the Holocaust, we must be respectful of every decision we make. Do not recreate someone you read about or saw in a movie. Create a new person and place them in these recorded times.

MAKING A CHARACTER

Every player other than the Narrator will begin by choosing an Identification card. Apart from the portrait art, these are identical. Within 'The Chosen People' all players are taking the role of children who are siblings. You will be reminded of this, but continue to push your players to make choices that align with a child's perspective.

We will begin by filling out the left portion of the card and then move to the right. Many of these fields were pulled directly from the identification cards Jews were forced to carry after October 5, 1938 and some will even be left blank until you reach that time period.

City	
Valid Date	19
Last Name	
First Name	
Birth Date	
Place of Birth	
Job	
Unchangeable Race	
Possessions	
Strengths	
Flaws	



Appearance

Personality

4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4
Curious								Cautious
4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4
Careless								Organized
4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4
Energetic								Reserved
4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4
Compassionate								Detached
4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4
Sensitive								Secure

City

The players will be starting in Berlin, so each player will write Berlin for their City.

Valid Date

Leave this blank for now. This will come into play when they are 'given' the identification cards when you reach 1938.

Last Name

Players decide together what they want their last name to be. It should be fitting. Here are some examples that could work for your group.



Miedzyrzecki Stern Spicker

Melmed Muhlbaum Weiss Fachler

Chason Rothbaums Kimmel

First Name

Players will choose a name that they like the most or come up with their own name.

Boys

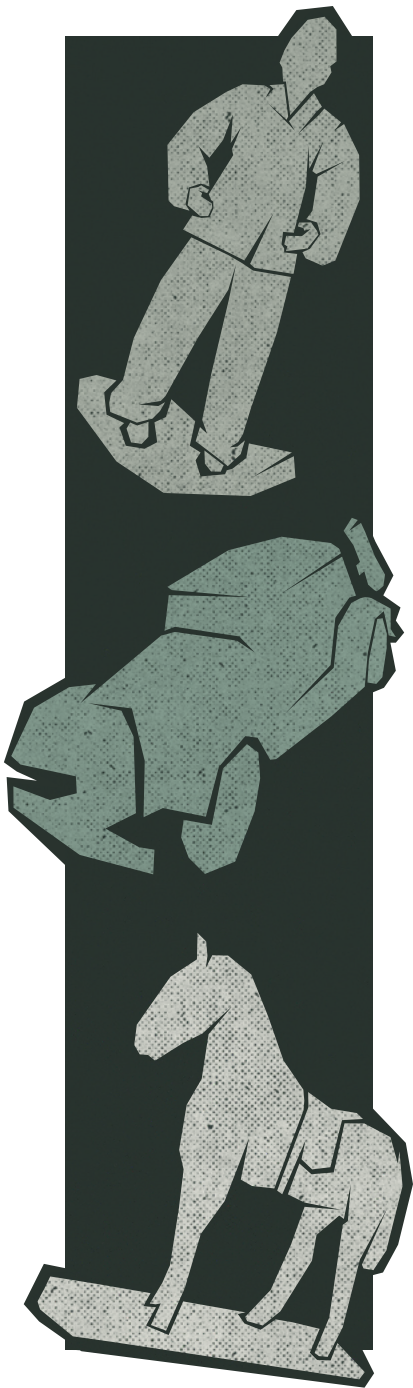
Benjamin Viktor Bernhard Georg

Abraham Salomon Guenter David

Girls

Helga Frieda Chana Mindel

Hannah Sara Tehilla Miriam



Birth Date

Players must choose a birthday that lands within the years 1920 - 1927. This will make them between 6 - 13 years old.

Job

Players may either leave this blank or add "student".

Unchangeable Race

Players write either Jew or the German translation: Jude (male) or Jüdin (female).

Possessions

Allow each player to add a few simple items that they either have back at their home or objects they may carry like a necklace or toy.

Strengths / Flaws

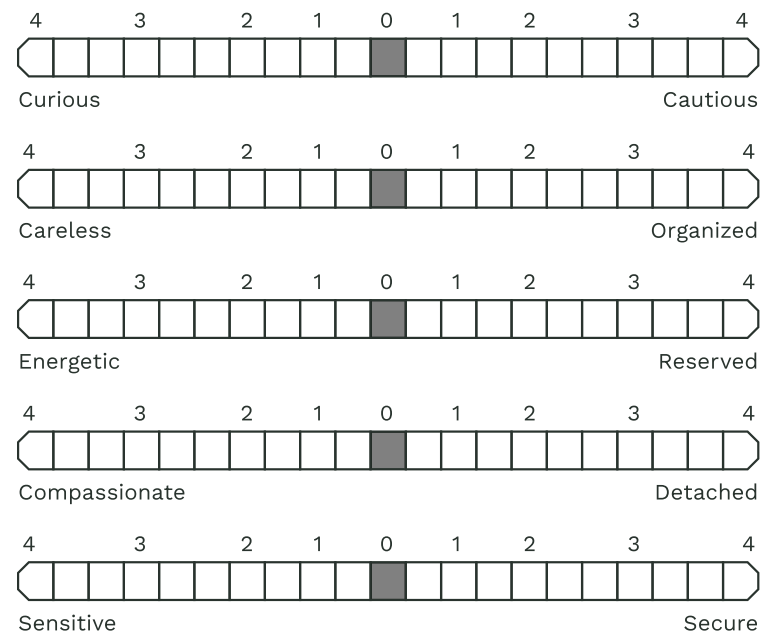
Strengths and Flaws are a bit more abstract, but these will aid in roleplaying later. Players will list character traits that define their character. It may be beneficial to revisit this section after the right side of the sheet is completed.

Appearance

In the top right of the character sheet, there is an appearance block. Players can either build upon the portrait, or come up with a list of significant visual traits to make them unique.

Personality

The personality graph has the most direct influence on the gameplay. Each player has a total of 15 points to distribute among the 5 graphs. All of the 0s are filled in, representing a neutral state. It takes 2 points in a single trait, like Curious, to earn 1+ bonus in that trait. It takes 4 points to get 2+ bonus. Players may not add more than 5 points into any trait at this time and cannot place points into opposite traits, like Curious and Cautious.



Encourage players to deeply think about the personality of their character. Does their character act out of Compassion or find themselves Detached? Once complete, players may have new ideas for their Strengths and Flaws, and are permitted to make edits to those fields and others before moving on.

City	BERLIN
Valid Date	19
Last Name	ROTHBAUMS
First Name	BELLA
Birth Date	12. APR 1922
Place of Birth	BERLIN
Job	STUDENT
Unchangeable Race	JUDE
Possessions	A SILVER PENDANT NECKLACE A DOLL, WITH A RED DRESS A LEATHER BOUND JOURNAL LITTLE BOX OF CHALK
Strenghts	LOYAL, HAS STRONG FAMILY TIES, AND LOVES ANIMALS
Flaws	INSECURE AND HAS A HARD TIME TRUSTING PEOPLE



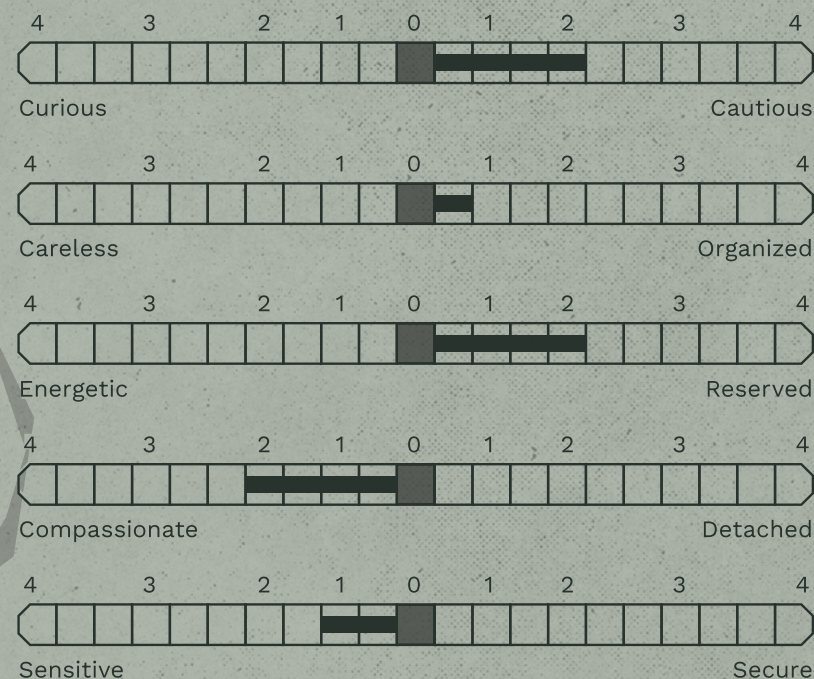
Appearance

**DARK LONG HAIR, LIGHT
SKIN, AROUND 4'8" &
FAIRLY THIN**

**WEARS SIMPLE DRESSES
AND BLACK SHOES**

**CAN OFTEN BE FOUND
SKIPPING AROUND**

Personality



City	BERLIN
Valid Date	19
Last Name	ROTHBAUMS
First Name	THEO
Birth Date	8. DEC 1920
Place of Birth	BERLIN
Job	STUDENT
Unchangeable Race	JUDE
Possessions	A NOTEBOOK AND PENCIL SMALL TIN TRUCK YO-YO
Strenghts	SMART, PATIENT, INTERESTED IN OTHER CULTURES
Flaws	SOMETIMES OBLIVIOUS AND ALWAYS THINKS HES THE SMARTEST IN THE ROOM



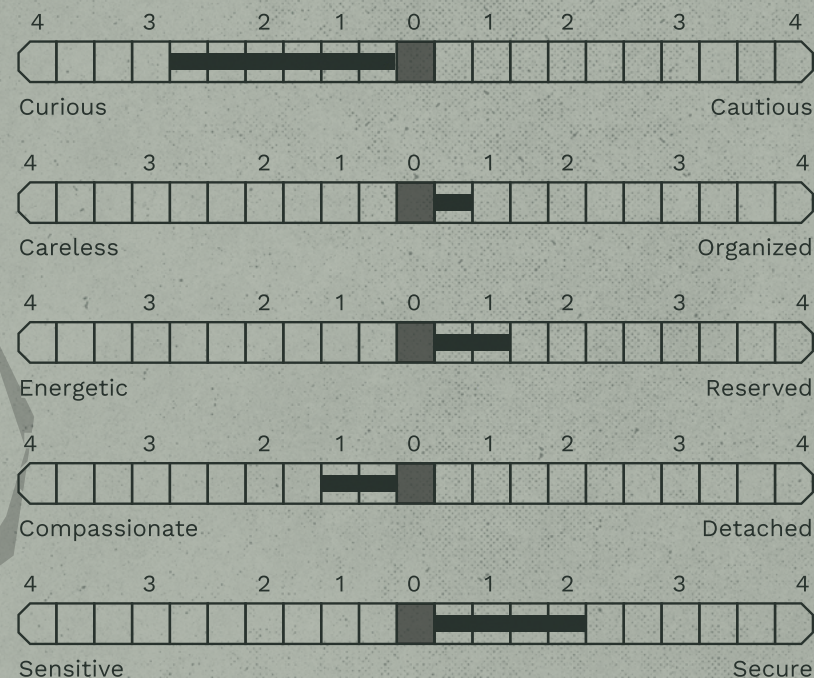
Appearance

**SHORT DARK CURLY
HAIR, LIGHT SKIN,
AROUND 4'8" & FAIRLY
THIN**

**WEARS DARK BUTTON
UP SHIRTS AND BLACK
SHOES**

**CAN OFTEN BE FOUND
STUDYING**

Personality





3

1933 PART ONE



Boycott & Law For The Restoration

The Nazis quickly made sure everything they did was not only in favor of many citizens, but also according to the law. These are the first days of the Holocaust.

APRIL 1ST

Utilize the USHMM Archive to fully grasp what the events looked like. Visit the following link and search images with “boycott”. You can also filter by year.

[collections.ushmm.org](#)



Events

The events of this day will include the players experiencing one of the first major events that made the Nazi Party’s agenda clear, the Boycott of Jewish businesses. They will also become familiar with their family and each other’s characters. Begin by Introducing the parents, list what they do for work, and perhaps introduce a neighbor or two if the moment allows. One of the parents should have a government job or possibly be a professor, read the next event to understand why. This first section is fairly linear and should be a soft start to the coming atrocities. This is a great moment to make them feel like this is their home. There should be people who care about them and happy interactions mixed in amongst the bad.

The following scenes have a suggested location, but are meant for you to pull from and use as needed. Choose which of the following scenes fit within your Journal Keeper’s setup and begin there. If none of them fit perfectly take a moment and adapt one. Perhaps they aren’t at home with their parents, but their parents can still take them to a shop from wherever they are.

Read Aloud

Since The Reichstag Fire, there are rumors that it was caused by the Communist Party. Based on these false claims the government has been arresting Socialists, Communists, and other political enemies. There has been a growing amount of propaganda appearing in public spaces promoting a strong and unified German country. A boycott of all Jewish businesses has even been planned by the Nazi Party, Reichsminister Joseph Goebbels gave a speech defending it.

It is Saturday April 1st, 1933.

At Home

The parents know that the boycott is going on, but feel as though they need to support their friends who own a store nearby (Choose a type of store, perhaps a grocery store). The parents try to get the children excited to go out and if they don’t want to leave they ensure them that there will be no issues.

On The Streets

Walking down the street people can be heard yelling slurs and they can see Jewish Stars painted on the windows of stores often accompanied with slogans like “*This Jew is no longer true*”. Some stores even have posters plastered against the walls saying “*Germans defend yourselves against jewish atrocity propaganda*”. Others have SA officers, in their brown uniforms, standing with signs that say “*Don’t Buy From Jews!*”.

Entering The Store

When entering the store people yell slurs at them and try to make them turn back. A neighbor seeing this runs to their side and joins them as they enter. Consoling them and telling them “This will pass and things will go back to normal, I’m sure of it!”. Inside the store there is a mix of Jewish and non-Jewish people. The player’s should see that not everyone is taking this boycott seriously. In fact many aren’t.

Leaving The Store

Down the street the players can see a group smashing windows of stores. The group is mostly made up of stormtroopers, similar to the officers seen earlier. The streets breaking out into a riot the parents will try and hurry their kids home.



Information, including an interview, about the boycott can be found at:

[encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/boycott-of-jewish-businesses](#)

Finish the day at home with the parents going over what they saw and comforting the children.

Events

Not one week later another attack on both Hitler's political opponents and the Jewish community was enacted. The "*Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service*" were put into place making it illegal for Jews to hold a civil position. This affects teachers, lawyers, and many government positions. We set up one of the parents to be affected by this new law. This will create the main Journal entry for the day.

The law's text can be seen below, with available scenes on page 28.

If the parent who is losing their job is a lawyer, use this event on September 30th when a new law was passed targeting them.



Wilhelm Frick wrote the first draft of the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service

LAW FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL CIVIL SERVICE

The Reich Government has enacted the following Law, promulgated herewith:

§ 1

1) To restore a national professional civil service and to simplify administration, civil servants may be dismissed from office in accordance with the following regulations, even where there would be no grounds for such action under the prevailing Law.

2) For the purposes of this Law the following are to be considered civil servants: direct and indirect officials of the Reich, direct and indirect officials of the Laender, officials of Local Councils, and of Federations of Local Councils, officials of Public Corporations as well as of Institutions and Enterprises of equivalent status...The provisions will apply also to officials of Social Insurance organizations having the status of civil servants....

§ 2

1) Civil servants who have entered the service since November 9, 1918, without possessing the required or customary educational background or other qualifications are to be dismissed from the service. Their previous salaries will continue to be paid for a period of three months following their dismissal.

2) They will have no claim to temporary pensions, full pensions or survivors' benefits, nor to retain designation of rank or titles, or to wear uniforms or emblems....

§ 3

1) Civil servants who are not of Aryan descent are to be retired (§ 8 ff.); if they are honorary officials, they are to be dismissed from their official status.

2) Section 1 does not apply to civil servants in office from August 1, 1914, who fought at the Front for the German Reich or its Allies in the World War, or whose fathers or sons fell in the World War. Other exceptions may be permitted by the Reich Minister of the Interior in coordination with the Minister concerned or with the highest authorities with respect to civil servants working abroad.

§ 4

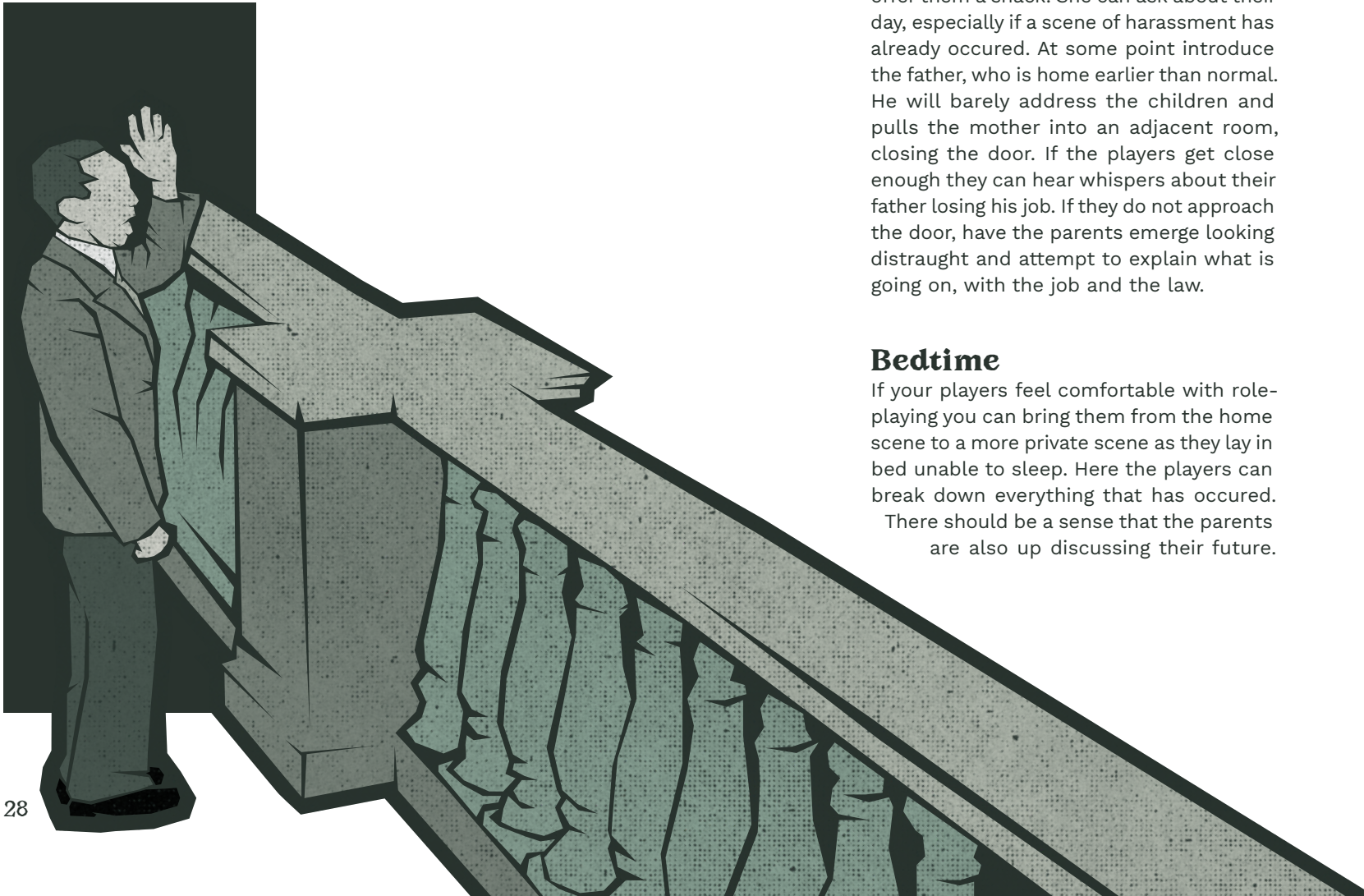
1) Civil servants whose previous political activities afford no assurance that they will at all times give their fullest support to the national State, can be dismissed from the service....

Read Aloud

It is just under one week since the boycott. Many stores were closed due to damages and even though it was only one day, the effects can still be felt in the streets. Your friends assure you that it was a one off thing and that "life will go back to normal".

It is Friday April 7th, 1933

Reichsminister Joseph Goebbels gave a speech defending the boycott in Berlin, April 1st.



On The Streets / At School

If the players are unaccompanied by an adult, a small group of Hitler Youth will make remarks against them, calling them names like *pig-dog* or calling them weak. Some say the Hitler Youth grew almost 20x in 1933, perhaps the kids mocking the players are new recruits.

At Home

When the players arrive at home from school have the mother greet them and offer them a snack. She can ask about their day, especially if a scene of harassment has already occurred. At some point introduce the father, who is home earlier than normal. He will barely address the children and pulls the mother into an adjacent room, closing the door. If the players get close enough they can hear whispers about their father losing his job. If they do not approach the door, have the parents emerge looking distraught and attempt to explain what is going on, with the job and the law.

Bedtime

If your players feel comfortable with role-playing you can bring them from the home scene to a more private scene as they lay in bed unable to sleep. Here the players can break down everything that has occurred.

There should be a sense that the parents are also up discussing their future.

THE NAZIS ATTEMPTED
TO DESTROY THE
PUBLICATIONS OF ALL
WHO OPPOSED THEM.
THEY TRIED TO ERASE
THE HISTORY OF AN
ENTIRE PEOPLE.



4 FINAL THOUGHTS



The Hope

The Racked System was built to help explain history in a new way. This sample setting is meant to inspire you to tell the stories you know, but to look past the dates and data that so often become the focus. Feature the micro events that altered the lives of those hurt the worst. These encounters are the very elements we can understand and relate to. They are the ones that will stick with us long after we leave the table.

