

# THE BOOK OF KAPO

DOCUMENTING A LARP PROJECT ABOUT DEHUMANIZATION AND LIFE IN CAMPS



EDITED BY CLAUD RAATED



# THE BOOK OF KAPO

# WHAT WAS KAPO?

*KAPO was a Live Action Role Playing game (larp) played in the fall of 2011. The following texts are from the web page.*

## **Introduction**

In 2012 the Politics of Fear reached a new high. Incited by public fear of terrorism and outspread acts of civil disobedience, the Danish government decided to construct the first detention camps for dissidents. First they came for the islamists and anarchists. A few years later, the internet activist and socialists. When they came for you, there was no one left to speak out...

## **Experience**

Kapo is a larp about the dehumanizing social dynamics in a camp for political prisoners. The experience at Kapo will firstly be constructed around the personal relations of the character. Secondly at the confrontation between new and old prisoners. Thirdly through the control of the institution, represented in light and sound. And last through the interrogations in the system area.

Kapo is a story about the prisoners in a surrealistic Danish prison camp, a story of powerlessness and dehumanization. Players will be introduced to an environment of bizarre social norms and values. The camp is ruled by an eat-or-be-eaten mentality, you will die or prey on those weaker than you, ultimately forcing you to choose between yourself and your loved ones.

## **The camp**

At Kapo you will play a prisoner in a Danish detention camps for dissidents. What might have started out as a well organised “terrorist” prison, has deteriorated to a twisted, self governed facility. Guards are not seen in the camp anymore, and the kapos organize everything under fear of punishment from the panoptic system. Once every cycle, prisoners are called to the interrogation rooms, from which few return.

## **The kapos**

The kapos are the ruling class of the camp. The prisoners responsible for running the routines of the camp such as distributing food, introducing new prisoners, running the work squads and roll call.

## **New prisoners**

As a new inmate you will be accused of endangering the State of Denmark, without any other option of leaving the camp, than admitting your guilt to the public and repent on public TV.

## **Not a prison larp/Not a revolution larp**

Kapo will not be about gangs and violence, but rather about the horrible strategies of survival in the environment of the camp. There will be no revolutions during the game. If a Kapo loses her status or leaves the game, another player will take her place. To take on the system is not an option.

# THE BOOK OF KAPO

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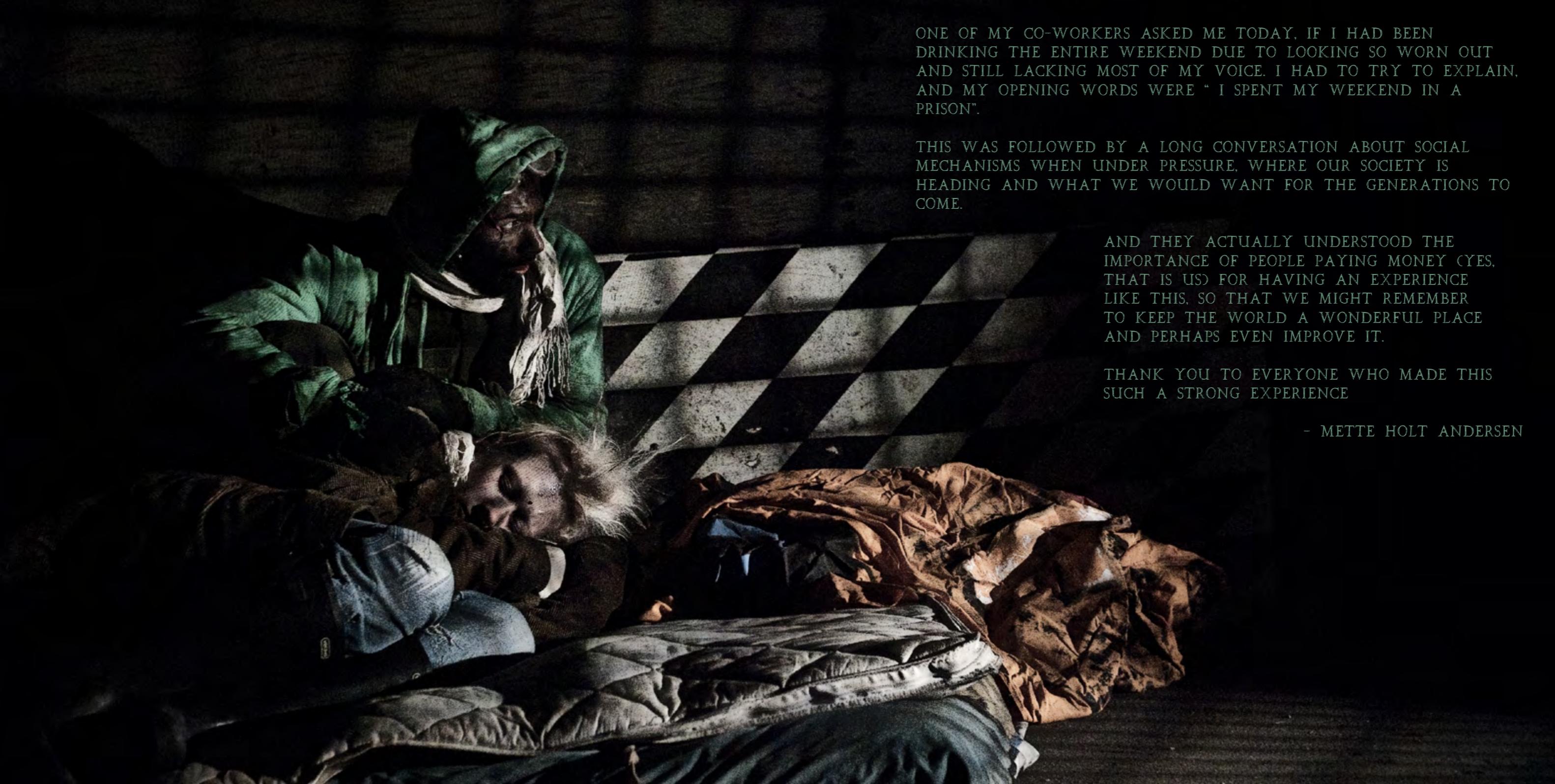
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ONE OF MY CO-WORKERS ASKED ME TODAY, IF I HAD BEEN DRINKING THE ENTIRE WEEKEND DUE TO LOOKING SO WORN OUT AND STILL LACKING MOST OF MY VOICE. I HAD TO TRY TO EXPLAIN, AND MY OPENING WORDS WERE " I SPENT MY WEEKEND IN A PRISON".

THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A LONG CONVERSATION ABOUT SOCIAL MECHANISMS WHEN UNDER PRESSURE, WHERE OUR SOCIETY IS HEADING AND WHAT WE WOULD WANT FOR THE GENERATIONS TO COME.

AND THEY ACTUALLY UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE PAYING MONEY CYES, THAT IS US) FOR HAVING AN EXPERIENCE LIKE THIS, SO THAT WE MIGHT REMEMBER TO KEEP THE WORLD A WONDERFUL PLACE AND PERHAPS EVEN IMPROVE IT.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO MADE THIS SUCH A STRONG EXPERIENCE

- METTE HOLT ANDERSEN

# Welcome to the book

By Claus Raasted

I played KAPO and I had a wonderful experience. So when the organisers came to me and asked if I wanted to produce a KAPO book as part of the documentation process I naturally agreed. I'm a book publisher, after all, and it only seemed right. And naive and enthusiastic as I was, I wrote out to all of the other participants whose mail addresses we had, and asked them to chip in. Many wanted to.

As you can probably imagine, things went downhill from there. The document on the right is the "style guide" I sent out to all those who had decided to contribute. You'll notice that it has basically nothing to do with the texts in this book.

And that's ok.

Because a larp like KAPO is a many-coloured, multi-headed hydra of creativity and co-creation, and while everyone wanted to contribute very few wanted to conform to a certain style guide. In the end, I got poems, anecdotes, artwork, analysis, diaries, quotes and what-have-you. And it was great!

So what you have here isn't a well-structured description of a project. It's a myriad of impressions from 42 different people. And it shows. Some texts are riddled with questionable spelling, some with weird grammar and some are perfect.

In the end what matters is that we created a larp called KAPO. And now we've also created a book about that larp. Enjoy.

- Claus Raasted, March 2012

## It's all in the wrist

KAPO documentation project style guide

### I want diversity and speed

First of all, the KAPO book will be written by many different people and I'm not even going to try to make them dance to the same tune. I'll primarily be trying to get people to produce text so that I can start layouting March 1st. There are two kinds of texts and therefore two kinds of guidelines. As long as you follow these simple rules, the way you write is up to you.

### Thoughts on Thoughts

- 1) Know that your effort is **appreciated**, even though the editor is annoying sometimes.
- 2) If you're the primary author on a subject, begin by defining the subject in 100-150 words, then write **400-800 words** after that.
- 3) If you're one of the secondary authors on a subject, write your text as an answer/comment/new input on the text already there. Not as a totally separate stand-alone text. All secondary texts should be **200-400 words**.
- 4) **Don't mention names** in your examples. Mention specific episodes if you can make the story about them interesting in a general perspective. If not, don't. :)
- 5) Expect that your **text may be changed** to make it more readable (whatever that means). Big change you'll be asked to ok. Changes in language you won't.
- 6) Remember the part about being appreciated, because having text edited can be **annoying**.
- 7) **Bad text is better than no text**. Bad text can still have excellent points and will just be subjected to heavy editing language-wise. No text just means you won't be heard.
- 8) If you need help or have questions, I'm just one **click or phone** call away.
- 9) **Thanks**.
- 10) Thanks again. This couldn't be done **without you**.

### Stories about Stories

- 1) Thank you for sharing. **It means a lot**.
- 2) This is your chance to tell a **personal story**. Basically, you're free to do what you please. Names OK!
- 3) You can make it long or short. It's your call. But don't make it longer than **2.000 words**.
- 4) Your text won't really be edited. Ok, that's not true. It will be, but only to correct really bad language and spelling mistakes. **It's your story** and your style of writing.
- 5) This means that if you want feedback, it's easier if you get it from people around you. This sounds harsh, but is mostly meant to **make the process easier**. I don't mind correcting spelling mistakes if necessary and tightening up language, but I don't want to tell people which parts of their stories are more interesting than others. I want their friends to do that.
- 6) It's ok to use text you've **written before**.
- 7) There's **no right or wrong** when it comes to these stories. Share what you feel like sharing.
- 8) Remember that **non-larpers will read this**. Write as you'd tell the story to an outsider.
- 9) Whether you write as you or your character is **your choice**. Both are fine.
- 10) It takes courage to share. **Thank you** for sharing.

### Don't hesitate to ask

Most of you know me. Those of you who don't should know that I'm very approachable. Write. Text. Facebook-message. Call. Show up. Discuss. I'm here to help you.

### March 1st is the final deadline

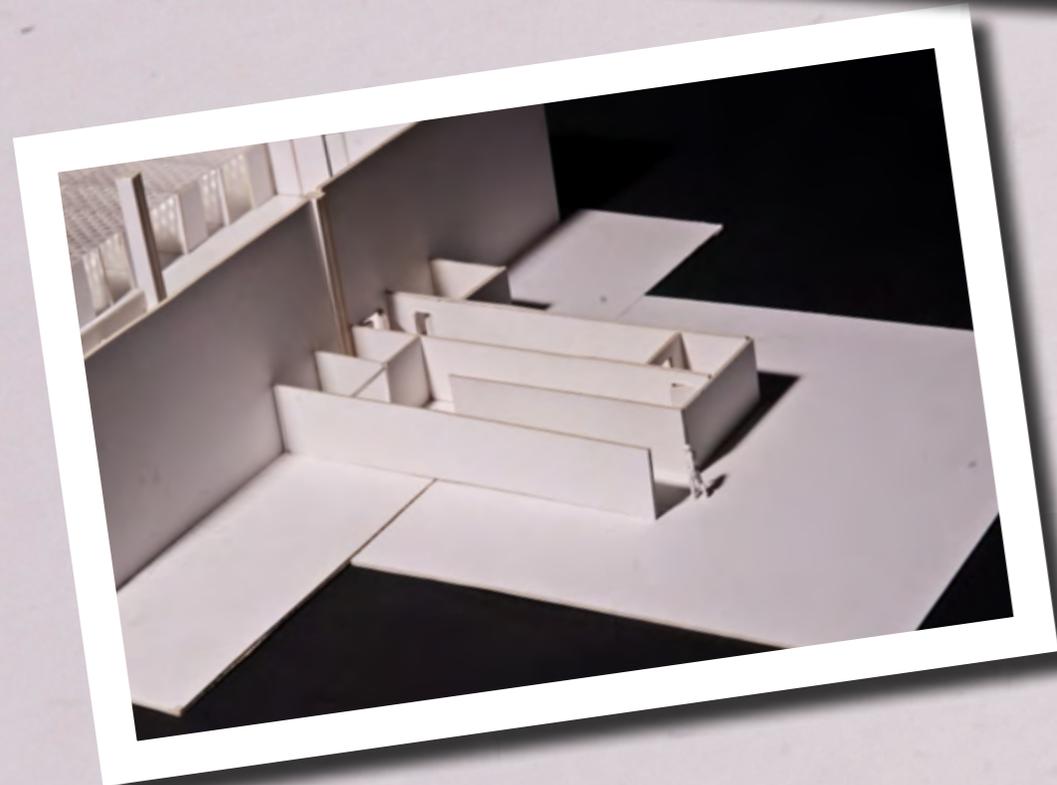
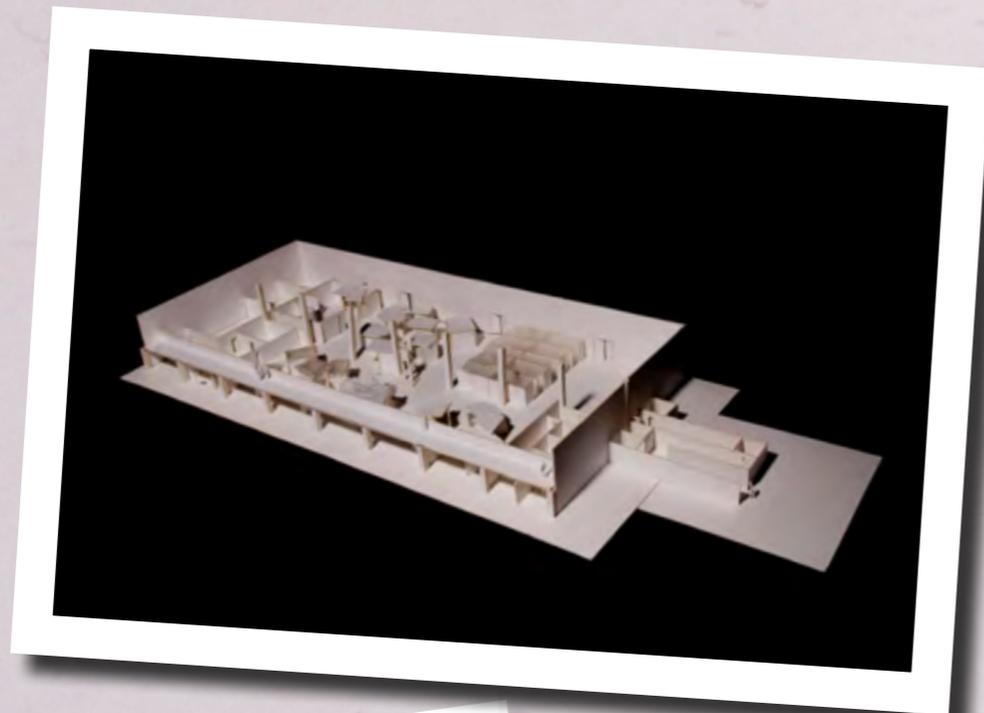
I look forward to making this book come to life. But hurry. But if I don't have your finished text by March 1st, it won't be in the KAPO book. So let's make this sucker fly. Before it's too late.

Claus Raasted  
KAPO book busybody  
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THE FEELING OF STALKING,  
HUMILIATING AND  
BREAKING DOWN THE  
NEWCOMERS...

MMM....

- JANNICK RAUNOW



STRANGELY, I  
MISS THE SMELL.

- ELIN NIELSEN



I WAS RAPED IN A  
PUDDLE OF WATER. I  
GUESS NOW I TRULY AM  
AN IMMERSIONIST!

- MIKKEL HVID AMSTRUP

## SOME KAPO FACTS

**Number of participants**

102

**Date**

30/9 - 2/10 2012

**Price**

300 - 500 DKK

**Budget**

220.000 DKK

**Location**

Ny tap, Copenhagen

**Organizers**

Anders Berner, Jakob Hedegaard, Kim Holm,  
Juliane Mikkelsen, Peter Munthe-Kaas, Frederik  
Nylev, Rasmus Petersen

**A special thanks to**

The guards, the interrogators and all the people  
who helped before and during the larp.

**Homepage**

[www.kapo.nu](http://www.kapo.nu)



# My father was a KAPO

By Julie Streit (G09)

I went to KAPO because my father spent some time in a Turkish prison in his youth in the 1960's - innocently charged and held without evidence.

This is something he's never really talked about. We only know because he suddenly out of the blue turned out to be able to speak Turkish - and he said that was the explanation, but didn't talk further about it.

I went to KAPO to try to learn something about how my father might have felt.

My father (like many others) was invited to watch KAPO from the spectator stands, where they could observe us, while we as players couldn't see them at all. He came, and had brought a package with him - a package that I got in game. It had measuring tape (to measure time), a teddy bear (to comfort) and a packet of dried pork snacks (to trade). And a letter from "Mom and Dad".

His reaction to seeing the setting, the interactions, the people and everything, ended with him driving home with my boyfriend and opening a couple of bottles of red wine. And then, for the first time, he told about his experiences in prison - and especially about how he escaped from there. Twice.

But most surprisingly, he told that he had been a KAPO himself - with people "under him".



PLAYING A GUARD  
ENDED UP COSTING ME  
1500 KR AT A SHRINK  
TO FULLY GET OVER IT.

- THOMAS MERTZ



ART AND TEXT: FRIDA KARLSSON LINDGREN

Random Cafe, 15.21, 3 okt 2011, Copenhagen

I'm still shaking from the debriefing. I don't think I'm defucked yet. I feel I have lots to say but i don't know what.

Looking into his eyes on the third floor, seeing the exhaustion, hit me the hardest. Not pushing people down. not kicking and soaking them in their own shit. No it was the pure emptiness in those cold eyes. He was Kapo. He had raped and tortured dozens of people right before my eyes but somehow i saw what he was beneath, inside. He was so fucking tired of everyting. And i grew tired too.

Fighting.... No not fighting. Constantly giving up to the grey emptiness that was Kapo. There were no hatred, no anger against one another. Just fear and emptiness. And in the darkness of the rathouse he, we fought to stay above surface. But gave in. And kept giving in.

"It's better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved". I'm not so sure really.

I'm lying there, in the middle of darktime and wonder when it will all end. I have no time perspective. If I doze off I have no idea wether I've slept for 2 seconds or 2 hours. I'm lying there, sorrouned by rats and shits, yet alone. I wonder how long I've been in Zeeland. I wonder if my physical and mental health will be okay 'til the next darktime. Will I make it through?

The restlessness is killing me. Weighting side to side. Must do something. Anything. Must kill time. Must fill the emptiness

If I had tried, I could've taken the power over the rats. I would've gone berserk.

That might possibly have crushed me as a player.



ZEELAND

I DON'T THINK THERE WAS ANYTHING  
IN THE SCENOGRAPHY THAT I HADN'T  
HELPED CARRY WITH MY TWO HANDS.

- ANDERS BERNER



# And I'm just I37...

by Mimmi Melkersson (I37)

I wrote a little something yesterday..

Zeeland.

It's nothing I'm proud of, but I never broke down. At least not in the true sense of the word. I caught myself somewhere on the border, rapidly building up some weird kind of self defense. The only true way to save yourself from Zeeland was to become a part of it. And It didn't take long to realize that the only true way to become a part of Zeeland was to lose yourself.

Some catch 22, huh?

I struggled. I really did. But not for long. I saw the empty faces of those who had been in there for a while. And I saw the fearful faces of those who were strong enough to not give in to the rules. But there was no rebellious fire in their eyes. Only the fear. The will to stay out of trouble. That might have been one of the things that struck me the hardest; Not even the strugglers had any hope at all. Their only hope was the will to cling on to what little of them that still was human. It's nothing I'm proud of, but I never broke down. I didn't shed a single tear. I wanted to. In the beginning, I actually wanted to. But I didn't. I didn't even cry when I was forced to hurt my best friend. I just let it happen. But I felt sorry. I really did.

It's nothing I'm proud of, but I got into the routines of Zeeland quite fast. I learned how to not feel guilty about anything. I learned how to break people. And I learned how to shut the feelings out. How to not feel at all. I also learned to let go of myself until I was nothing at all. And yet I was someone. Because that was how Zeeland did work.

The only true way to save yourself from Zeeland was to become a part of it. Am I heartless? Were my acts of pure evil? I don't know. Did I cross the border as I sacrificed a friend to save myself? It's nothing I'm proud of, but I found a way to survive. Survival meant to do whatever I had to do to break other people. I lost myself to the rules of Zeeland. Saved and lost myself in the same decision: I had to find a way. What are we, really? When did I decide that it was okay to save myself and lose my friends? I mean, after all, I am the villain, right?

The only true way to become a part of Zeeland was to lose yourself. I lost myself somewhere near the builders' camp. Zeeland welcomed us with a bucket of paint and dirty water. It was poured over us. Made us unrecognizable. We would soon forget. At least, most of us would. The dirt, the smell, the paint; it all became part of me. The new me that contained so little of what once had been something. I lost my name somewhere near the builders' camp. It was wiped out before my eyes. I never spoke it again.

I never wrote it again. The number on my arm. That's who I was.

"Who are you?"

"I'm I37 and I'm a threat to the Danish society."

"Who are you?"

"I'm I37 and I'm a threat to the Danish society."

Was I? As I entered the camp? — No. Not even if you did your best to prove it. Was I a threat to the Danish society as I exit the camp? — You bet. Doubtless.

But that was the point, right?

We all know that the system works.

And I'm just I37.

I'M STARTING TO WORRY BECAUSE I'M NOT HAVING ANY KAPO TRAUMAS... I SLEEP WELL, I DON'T CRY, I DON'T EVEN THINK PARTICULARLY MUCH ABOUT KAPO,

AND WHEN I DO - I DON'T FEEL ANYTHING SPECIAL REALLY. WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?!

- LINA BLIKSTAD



WHEN WE DOING THE WATER SCENE FOR THE TRAILER, FREDERIK AND I WERE LAUGHING AND JOKING.

BUT IN THE END, HE HAD TO FORCE MY HEAD UNDER WATER. I COULDN'T DO IT MYSELF. AND I NEVER WANT TO TRY THAT AGAIN.

- EDITH FABRITIUS TVEDE





# Zeeland left its mark

By Anna Vestergaard Holm (Bambi/D20/Maria)

I heard about KAPO on a Wednesday afternoon, when one of my LARP buddies contacted me and said “I’ve heard about this Larp called KAPO, it’s supposed to be really awesome and there are still tickets. Does it look like something you would like to join?” I looked at it, and it looked AWESOME! I was head over heels from the very first moment, and I was so lucky that I got my hands on a 48 hour ticket.

KAPO was only the fourth time I was Larping so the whole thing was, and still is very new to me, so I had no idea of what to expect from this Larp. The two day workshop went well, we were separated into small groups, and my group soon became my family, and slowly but sturdy my character was born, but this workshop also made me realize that I really haven’t really given much thought about all this. I didn’t know what I wanted to achieve from this experience. Not until afterwards.

The workshop was held to prepare us for what we might expect to happen during KAPO, and after the two days, I did feel more prepared, but NOTHING could have made me ready for what was about to happen. Before entering KAPO, I stood outside a big door, with my prison number and my “plate”, water bottle, my spoon and a sweater, and I remembering the feeling of being at the top of a roller-coaster ride, just before the big hill down. I was terrified but excited at the same time.

The cage scene was scary. A vision I often recall was the sight of all the old prisoners standing around it, with that empty look in their eyes, it was like they had given up on life and just accepted their fate. I remember crying and trying to hold on to my sister in law while I at the same time attempted to hide my face for what would turn out to be my worst nightmare. Little did I know that short afterwards, it would be me who stood around the cage with empty eyes and no will to live.

For the next 48 hours I learned what it felt like to be at the bottom of the food chain. You have NO rights what so ever, and your only goal is not to be at the bottom. And the only way to do so is to kick down. To kick the one below you so that you won’t find yourself lying on the floor being kicked in the guts.

It was hard, and I can't remember how often I heard my name being yelled followed by "hey Bambi, come and break this person"... every fiber in my being told me that it was wrong, but I knew that if I refused then I would be punished harder for not doing as I was told, or even worse, lose my name.

Eventually I reached a state where I could do pretty much whatever I wanted without someone bothering me. This gave me time to seek out my family members who had ended up in one of the other groups. It was especially my grandmother and my sister in law from the normalized where we each seized an opportunity to hear how it went and whether they had enough food. As a rat we were not in need of food or sleep, so I was not so worried about my two brothers, at least I was with them, and that made us strong. But my oldest brother, who also ended up in the rats, had big problems.

It took him incredibly long time to get his name, and he was in general very isolated from the rest of the group, which resulted in him walking around in a Jack Sparrow-like state without any sort of purpose... not even surviving. He didn't even fight when they came and picked him up for interrogation room nr. 5. He just accepted his fate. I didn't see him again.

It finally became my turn to go to interrogation room nr. 5 which meant that I would not return to the camp again. I was terrified, because none of us knew what was going to happen when we were taken to room nr. 5. We just knew that people didn't return from that room. When the guard came for me, he tied my arms in front of me, put a sack over my head and put earmuffs over my ears. The guards led me around and I could not see or hear anything.

They put me in uncomfortable positions and doused me with cold water when I answered wrong on the issues they shouted into my ear. Simultaneously, they went on and shouting who I was, to which I would answer "D20" over and over again. Eventually I was led into a strange man in a suit, he seemed friendly but it was just grandstanding. He was extremely uncomfortable and kept asking who I was, what I had done, why I was here and what would happen next.

Eventually I came to the conclusion that; I am D20, I am here because I am dangerous because I am a threat to the Danish society, because I deserved it and now I would be punished and later rehabilitated. After that I got the cap back on and was led into a room with a bright light. There I was put in a chair, after which the cap was pulled off my head, and there was the head organizer and the guards standing ready with hugs and the message that it was now over and that I had survived KAPO.

Unlike other people, I didn't shed one single tear during KAPO. But I did cry afterwards. The morning after KAPO ended I was afraid, sad and felt all alone in the world. Because how could I ever live with those horrible things that I did during the LARP? I've spit on people, poured cold dirty water and a disgusting brown substance on people.

I have yelled at them, and told them that they were nothing, they were less than nothing, they were shit, and I could do anything I wanted to them without getting punished. At some point I wasn't even sure if it was me or my character that were in charge of the situation, which was a horrible feeling, which I hope to never experience again.

48 hours as a prisoner in Camp Zeeland has left a permanent mark inside me. I cannot forget the things I saw, heard, did and experienced at KAPO. It was an important experience and if I had the chance to do it again, I would. Because KAPO has taught me the importance of humanity and moral and how easy people let go of it, in the fight for survival. And now I know that if it comes down to me or the person next to me, I can survive. All thanks to KAPO.





EVEN THOUGH I COULD SEE THE FEAR IN THEIR EYES, THEIR MUSCLES SPASMING IN AN EFFORT TO TRY TO CONTROL THEMSELVES, I WAS HAPPY.

THEY REMINDED ME OF MYSELF AT THE BEGINNING, BUT THAT "SELF" NO LONGER EXISTED.

I GOT A BREAK FROM WORK AND I WAS NO LONGER AT THE BOTTOM OF THE FOOD CHAIN.

HERE WAS MY CHANCE TO BETTER MY POSITION, AND SADLY FOR THEM THEY HAD TO PAY THE PRICE.

- HC SKAARUP

# Things you may not know about KAPO

- Originally kapo was planned for 300 players.
- In the early phases of game design, the organizers considered having ingame guards.
- more than 6 tons of plaster was bought and used in the scenography.
- the largest darling to be killed was the 5 meter tall Justitia statue/robot.
- the organization that made kapo was named “R-boot” because of said statue (robot).
- the system for interrogations was made less than two weeks before the larp.
- a video costume guide was filmed, but never edited or published.
- every time a player changed her exit time, 14 powerpoint slides had to be edited.
- the organizers practically didn't drink beer, before they started building the scenography.
- the organizers had plans to sell the audience small bottles of vodka, crackers, etc. that they could send as presents to the players.
- it took 1 organizer three weeks to make the intricate schematic for interrogations and exits.
- most of the guards were briefed a few hours before the larp started.
- the DJ worked about 36 hours of the larp.
- the original name of the larp was “camp 104”. The name Zeeland came when the organizers found the sign at the location.
- the organizers planned to give all players a collar that vibrated or emitted light when they were due to interrogation.
- the first tickets for kapo was sold at “forum 2010”, four months before the organizing group met for the first time.
- the organizers considered only feeding the players catfood
- the organizers agreed that we could use waterboarding if only we tried it on ourselves first.
- the organizers considered using teargas in the sensory tunnel, but never did.
- the meals at kapo cost less than 2 DKR pr person.
- after finishing the larp, many players threw their ingame clothes back into the scenography.
- all costumes were made of used or second hand clothes.
- the organizers considered feeding the players cat food. But it was too expensive.
- large parts of the scenography was built with scrapped materials.
- the setting was around 1400m2.
- around 200 people saw the larp as audience.
- according to the manager of the location, the cage (and not the three doors leading to the outside) was our fire exit.
- the cage ripped loose from the wall and had to be repaired during the larp.





AS AN ORGANIZER IT WAS A  
SURREALISTIC EXPERIENCE WALKING  
FROM THE DARK AND DAMP KAPO  
SCENOGRAPHY, TO THE OFFICE  
AREA AND A GATE LEADING OUT  
INTO THE SUNSHINE.

- PETER MUNTHE-KAAS

*It was dark, warm and crowded. She asked me about the sun, and I told her about it. About children laughing, birds singing, leaves falling... then I recited Nothing Gold can Stay. She was surprised that I knew stuff like that. Silence... I actually smiled. Perhaps she did too... too dark to see.*

*When I heard who it was my heart sank. We were to scare him, make him freak out. He was a builder, and he was sent to the tunnels... for us to hunt him down and break him. But it was not a random builder... at least not to me. I felt her laying there by my side in the small tunnel. Heard her breathing. I held my breath, not wanting the moment to come. The moment where we would see him, would shout at him and do terrible things to him... for no other reason than being rats and him ending up as a builder.*

*He crawled up the ladder... I held my breath and hoped she would say the first word. She didn't. I shouted at him... but it was without any real meaning to it. In the dark I saw him recognize me, saw him pause and then stop dead at the top of the ladder. He was only inches from me, but I couldn't reach out to him... couldn't tell him that I loved him. She lay there... silent, waiting. I shouted some more, didn't understand the words coming from my mouth... Then she finally talked. Something about him giving us stuff to let him pass. I gasped and sighed in relief... this was by far the easy way out. I heard him leave.*

*My eyes was full of tears... my mouth told some lame joke on his behalf and I laughed. Loud and clear... She'd told him my name... "Attitude". He'd looked at me, and I had had to look away.*

*He came back, gave her his hat, and handed me his gloves. I stuffed them down my shirt and waited. Clamped my fist, hoping like crazy for her to move. An eternity later I felt her crawl away to let him pass... I looked over my shoulder, and to my dearest relief I saw her crawl even further back than I ever hoped for. He crawled up the ladder... when he passed me in the claustrophobic tunnel I grabbed his arm whispering "I'm sorry... I'm so sorry!" He stopped short for a second, then he nodded "Thanks". He turned away his head and moved forward. I think I saw a tear in his eye... but that could have been my imagination.*

*I never talked to him again...*

*Natures first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold  
Early leaf's a flower,  
But only so an hour  
Then leaf subsides to leaf,  
So Eden sank to grief  
So dawn goes down to day,  
Nothing gold can stay*

*- Robert Frost (1923)*

*Story by Kathrine Abel*

A large group of young people, mostly in their late teens or early twenties, are gathered in a hallway. Many of them have their arms raised, pointing their fingers towards the camera or in various directions. They are wearing casual, everyday clothing, including hoodies, jackets, and scarves. The atmosphere appears to be one of intense energy, possibly a protest or a large gathering. The hallway has a drop ceiling with recessed lighting, and a doorway is visible in the background. The overall lighting is somewhat dim, with a warm, yellowish tint from the overhead lights.

THE GROUP WAS YOUR HEAVEN AND YOUR HELL.  
BUT IT WAS BETTER THAN BEING ALONE.

- MARTIN HORN PEDERSEN



# Attitude is a part of me

By Kathrine Abel (Attitude/C45/Marie)

I've written several assignments about KAPO due to my studies at Aarhus University. Though I've tried, I haven't been able to translate them into English, and to make them understandable for people who haven't read the hundreds pages of theory as I - my English simply isn't good enough. Through my writings though, I saw my personal need to write my story, and now I'm sharing it with you. I hope you can forgive my inadequate English.

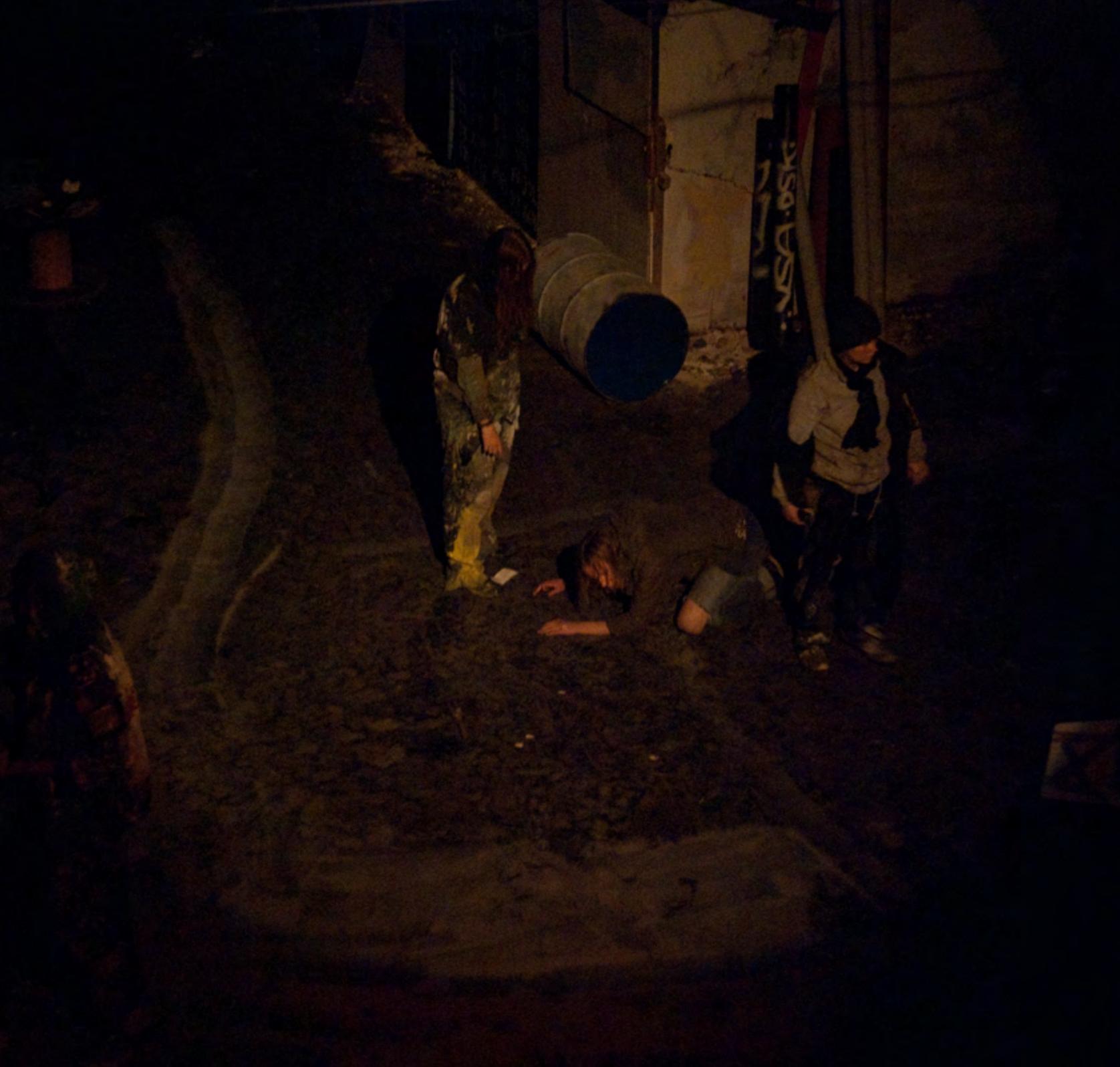
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All the other had been chosen, their screams still echoed in my ears, they voices calling my name "Marie". I couldn't help them.

I looked around, and found myself, and four others, left in the cage to be collected by the rats. The first experience outside the cage, in the camp, was the ritualized washing by the rats. A bucket with shit stood there in the dark, waiting for us. It was absolutely disgusting, and more than once I was sure I was going to vomit. Now I was a Shit, and I would be so until I had proven my worth as a Rat. We were all Shits, no name, no individuality, just Shits. Of course the Rats didn't tell us what we had to do to become Rats, but sooner or later we would find out. Real Rats had kneepads and masks. The Shits was not allowed to wear neither kneepads nor mask.

My first chock hit me when one of the Rats was degraded and had to be punished. All the Shits were forced to wash her in the bucket of shit and to humiliate her. I refused, but was forced to do so anyway – alone in the spotlight. Afterwards I was raped because of my attitude and was left alone crying in the middle of the camp.

I realized that the only way to rise in the hierarchy was by walking all over the others. To humiliate and to punish others when they failed – primarily the Shits. Most of us refused to do so when we first came to the camp, but the more we refused, the more punishment we got.



Suddenly, when two of the five Shits became Rats, I realized I had to do something to survive; everything became a contest. I had to survive; my entire world was based on that instinct all of a sudden.

I was protective, and wanted everyone to be all right – even the Rats. I found out, that the only way for me to protect the other Shits, was to be loud and noisy. When the Rats was humiliating a Shit, the only way to take away a little of her punishment, was to make a lot of verbal noise. So I became provoking, righteous and outspoken, thus receiving a lot of punishment from the Rats.

After some time, I realized that I couldn't keep on protecting the others from my place at the bottom of the hierarchy. I had to rise to some power, to be able to be more protective. It was a creepy realization, because of what I had to do. At the same time it was reassuring, because a part deep inside me knew that I couldn't stand the punishment any longer.

Finally, when I managed to kick another Shit, enough for the Rats to acknowledge me as an individual, the naming ritual was organized.

All the Rats (no Shits) stood in a circle with the Shit in the middle. All around the Rats, randomly, yelled 'Shit', and the Shit in the middle had to react at the title. Suddenly a Rat shouted something else... a name. Now the Shit had to take on the name, by only reacting at the name, and not the shouts that said 'Shit'. Sometimes there were a couple of names suggested before the Rats started shouting the same name.

When the future Rat had reacted to the name for a while, she/he was asked: "What's your name?" and "What are you?", questions which the new Rat had to answer in a satisfactory tone. The given name was suggested as a picture of the person's appearance, charisma, behavior or some that defined the person.

The first name suggested in my naming ritual was 'Flower'. When I laughed scornfully at the Rat who had suggested the name and said "Ha, is that really the best you can do?", the next suggestion was 'Attitude'. And with that my name was Attitude.

Now it was my turn to show that I was a real Rat. To start with, it was possible to use my new status to protect and help others. But after being caught, punished and humiliated many times, I simply stopped. In time I didn't care, I just did what I had to do without ever wondering about all the evil in my actions. I lost myself and became a real Rat – I completely forgot Marie.

Without being told to, I had the feeling I had to live out my name. I had gotten the name for a reason, and now I had to live after it. My name became a part of me, and I couldn't remember who I was before the camp. I was now a Rat. I was a part of their community, and no matter how evil or unpleasant it was, the community became my primary concern and the place where I belonged and felt somewhat welcome.

I was called to room nr. 5. I had said my goodbye to the rats and now, I was on my knees, freezing and panicking. The guard showered me with ice cold water and asked me my name. I answered with my prisonnumber. He went silent, then the other guard asked me my name and showered me again. It wasn't until the word "Marie" came through my clapping teeth I thought of her again... me, the one who wasn't a part of this camp.

Marie, the girl, who should be free and whom I had pushed away into the back of my head. I was showered again and they didn't stop until I had repeated my prisonnumber a million times. I never thought of Marie again.

And then, few minutes later, KAPO ended. It left me with a feeling of loneliness, of being nothing more than a number. A thing, a rat, and an evil being without the right to live in the real world. I felt hopelessly sad, I cried and I smiled. I was happy it was all over. I did everything I could to throw away Attitude, with all I had I tried to remember Kathrine – tried to be me!

The train ride home to Aarhus was horrible. I don't know why, but I cried several times, the tears simply ran down my face, and nothing I did could stop them from running. I realized much later (ex. while writing this), that my battle of becoming Kathrine again, was just as hard as my fight against Attitude to take me over had been.



IT'S HALF A  
YEAR LATER,

THE FEEL OF  
MOIST CLOTHES  
AND HEAT CAN  
STILL MAKE ME  
FEEL NAUSEOUS.

MY KNEES WILL  
NEVER ALLOW ME  
TO PLAY A RAT  
AGAIN.

- KATHRINE ABEL



I've never regretted participating KAPO. It was such a strong experience, and I got so much from it. As a consequence I've raised my monthly contributions to Amnesty International and I've volunteered as a 'visiting friend' in Aarhus, visiting lonely elders twice a month. I've accepted Attitude as a part of me, my evil sister, the one who only strikes when others treat me bad.

I've learned a lot about me self from participating KAPO; and I've learned how to grow into a larp, how to give myself in and to embrace the fiction. And, most important, I've learned how to pull myself out again, how to de-fuck and to take with me the experiences learned through a larp.

Before going to the workshop I was nervous. I didn't know any of the other participants. After the workshop I was not so nervous about that anymore. Instead I was really nervous about the scenario... at the brink of fearing actually.

Now: I'm so happy I did it, even though I was on my own. Now I know a lot of people from Copenhagen, I've come to know a handful of people In Aarhus, and my unfounded fear of the 'Copenhagen larps' has been wiped away.

Normally I like to have someone to be supportive with, to talk to and just to be safe with. I hadn't at KAPO, but I didn't mind – it was a mind blowing experience, and everyone was so attentive to one another. I was so glad I attended!





FROZEN SOUP HAS NEVER TASTED SO GOOD.

- NICOLA SKOV LARSEN



Photo  
Kim Holm

Model  
Juliane Mikkelsen

AROUND 25 PEOPLE TOOK PART IN  
THE ACTIVE PRODUCTION OF KAPO

- FREDERIK NYLEV



# Too close to reality

By Louise Amalie Juul Sønderskov (E23)

To me, KAPO started as a semi-drunk coincidence. I'd heard of the larp and found it interesting, but had not really given it any thought after that – until I suddenly stood with a 12-hour ticket in my hand (and a beer in the other one).

Excited and open for new impressions, I showed up to the last workshop for international and last-minute players. The two days of workshops and interaction with new people Wednesday and Thursday, made my excitement for Saturday afternoon and the twelve hours to come, even bigger. I used more time on the preparing workshops than on the actual larp, but looking back I must face that less time had been insufficient.

Sitting in the train on my way to the larp, I felt the anxiety grow bigger and bigger inside me. More than once I considered to just get off the train and home. These feelings help showing how much influence the workshops actually had; where I earlier had been excited, I now felt pure anxiety, and as I met up with new and old friends right before the final 1-hour workshop, I had a difficult time keeping my blood pressure down at normal. The excitement was almost as high among the other contestants, as we changed and collected our personal stuff in big plastic bags.

At the workshop few days before, we had got the opportunity to try the sense tunnel and the cage. Out of context it was a strong experience in itself, but when the time came and we stood in line to enter the tunnel, the experience was entirely different. We had just left our belongings, and was still joking and interacting with nervous laughs, when we first met the guards. They wore black hoods with holes for the eyes, green trousers and black t-shirts. And they shouted. I knew none of them by the time, and as we got lined up before a red door, my heart started beating for real.

One by one, we got our hands tied up, and dragged through the tunnel with a sack over our heads. The feeling of impotence and total lack of control was overwhelming, and didn't get less powerful when I was dragged into the cage. From there I saw nothing but faces.





Some were familiar, but I recognized only a few – the expression in these faces was nothing that I'd ever seen before. The sound- and lightscape helped carry everyone away, and spread an almost hysterical mood. In the cage, I faced, that I wouldn't ever be alone inside Zeeland. There were people everywhere – reaching in their hands, to get anything they could catch. Dirty, smelling and wet were they – exactly like the atmosphere. I remember the feeling of paint floating from the top of my head, down my face and my shoulder – it was red, 'cause I was first sure, that it was blood.

When the sounds had faded, we got pulled out of the cage one by one, and torn apart from anyone whom we might know. Soon, I was dragged to the floor, surrounded by people trying to calm me down. And a little while after, the life in Zeeland started for good. Picking up water with our bare hands, with people shouting, painting newly painted walls with slippers on my hands, and several other projects like them, seemed meaningless in the beginning, but ended up being a routine; were you new, you didn't question, you just did – if you wanted to eat and sleep “safe”.

One of the things that I've been thinking about afterwards was my willingness to start fresh. The first thing I got told as a part of the “Chalkers”, was that now I didn't know anyone. I was nobody, and there would be consequences if I interacted with anyone I was not supposed to know. So I did as I got told – I let go. When the people I knew tried to contact me, hug me or talk to me, I refused, pretended I didn't know them, and refused to react to the sound of my old name.

Looking back on it, I wonder if it is such I would react, if things came to this in real life. I like to see myself as a strong, independent woman with the guts to stand by my opinions and the people I know, but in KAPO, my instincts told me to save myself. Would I react like this in a real situation? Abandon family and friends in favor of my own wellbeing? Truth is, I don't know. I hope not.

KAPO was to me in many ways a clarifying experience. Pushed to the limit both physically and mentally, I learned a lot about myself and my own reactions to experiences, that I wouldn't meet otherwise. KAPO taught me to accept lack of control, and to give in to the experiences life brings. It also taught me how larping can work in many ways – before KAPO, my experience of LARP'ing was combined with fiction and worlds far from our own. KAPO was nothing like that. I, as the youngest and perhaps most unexperienced roleplayer on set, found the event so close to reality, that it took me a couple of months to get the experiences out of my body again. It haven't yet disappeared for good, but I can now think back to the experience with a more healthy view.

I DIDN'T PLAY KAPO, BUT WATCHED IT AS  
A SPECTATOR. IT STILL CAPTIVATED ME AND  
HELD ME THERE FOR HOURS. THANK YOU  
FOR LETTING ME GET A GLIMPSE.

- LINA KRARUP MADSEN



# The cage in KAPO

By Louise Amalie Juul Sønderkov

It all started in the cage. Yes, there were workshops to prepare you for the game, there was a tunnel to drag you in to it, but it was in the cage you felt the fear for good, suddenly very in-character, but unable to act from anything but instinct. It was approximately nine or ten square meters big, and inside it, persons taller than 180 cm would have to bow their heads. Obviously it was a part of the game design, and the effect of you having to bow your head already when you entered the game, brought a humble attitude combined with a feeling of being caught-up and watched.

And watched they were, the new prisoners. Surrounded by unrecognizable people, moist air and a penetrating smell of paint, one's focus was anywhere but on offgame thoughts (not counting the "what am I going into??", though)

Throughout the entire experience, the sound- and lightscape was an important part of the game design. It took basically no time for the players to adapt themselves to the new environment, and very soon most of the players accepted the new terms. The sounds never stopped, and even during nighttime there was still a lightscape to set the mood. Everything was decided from above, on the terms of the System. Even the way you were supposed to feel.

Considering the fact, that every sense of time was long gone, the sound and light played a huge role. Everything went in cycles, and the sound and light told you when to eat, sleep, work, or go to the cage. You couldn't avoid noticing when to go to the cage. The sounds got harder and followed a certain deep rhythm, and worked like an insisting alarm. A spotlight focused on the cage, and when most of the old prisoners had got over there, sound and light changed to hectic, high music and strobe lighting.

With this second phase old prisoners knew, that they should now shake the cage and shout at the new prisoners, who had just arrived. This was followed by a period with calm music and softer light. All this arranged with the intention to affect the minds of both old and new prisoners; welcome to the routines. In spite of the fact that sound and light frequently changed, one thing was always there; the numbers on the wall.

With the entrance, every prisoner had got a number "tattooed", being their new identity. When it was time for a prisoner to get interrogated, his/her number was displayed on the wall, followed by the number of the room that they were going to.

There was approximately seven or eight numbers projected at the same time, and it was when a number got on top and turned red, that the prisoner should go to the cage, to get blindfolded, deafened and tied up yet again.

The question was not whether you should go to the cage when your number turned red. You had to, the System said so. And if you didn't go voluntarily, someone would definitely force you into the cage. No, the question was whether you came back. It was common knowledge, that when a prisoner got taken to room five, they didn't come back.

Exactly how great influence the light- and soundscape had on the game and the players' acting, was showed in the last few hours of the game, as "the cagescene" was played yet again. Different from the several last cagescenes was just the fact that no prisoners was actually arriving.



Although the old prisoners saw that noone stepped inside the cage, their reaction was not to just go back to work – the soundscape for the cage was still there, so they knew that they were supposed to stay and shout. “Supposed” was a central word during KAPO. The sound- and lightscape helped/forced the prisoners to act in certain ways during their time in the camp.

A new prisoner would learn when to work, eat and sleep. If not from the sound/lightscape, then from the older prisoners. During nighttime you were supposed to sleep where someone had told you to sleep. During worktime you were supposed to do work that from the beginning seemed stupid and meaningless – but after being in the camp for just a couple of hours, you would do the “work” as if it was the most natural thing.

For the prisoners that were left, this (empty) cagescene was pure routine. The prisoners that weren’t there got treated just as if they were. Old prisoners shouted at them, craved their belongings and tried to reach them with filthy hands and words.

When the flashlight disappeared, and it was time to pick out prisoners, the reaction of the fact that there were no, was to throw old prisoners into the cage. The weakest ones should now start the process all over, as they got picked to new camps with new leaders. And so, the work could continue. As if nothing unusual had happened.

Unusual, in itself, is a word that gets kind of paradoxical in this situation. Seen from the outside, the whole KAPO/Zeeland project was unusual. But when first you got in there, and somewhat got to be a part of the routines, the unusual factors got very easy to point out.

It all started in the cage, and it all ended here – for new prisoners as well as old ones.

Some never got out of Zeeland, but was still in the camp when KAPO ended, as the guards came in, dressed as prisoners. Light came up, and soundscape turned to the sound of the (fitting) song;

“If you tolerate this, your children will be next”.

I hope I will never have to tolerate this.



WHEN I HAD GOTTEN HOME TONIGHT,  
HAD SOME FOOD AND SOCIALIZED WITH  
MY HUSBAND I SAT DOWN AND WATCHED  
"GRAVE OF THE FIREFLIES" AND RELEASED  
THE TEARS.

I CRIED NOT SO MUCH FOR MYSELF BUT  
FOR ALL THOSE WHO EVERY DAY FIND  
THEMSELVES IN A SIMILAR SITUATION  
BUT CANT SAY "CUT" WHEN THEY THINK  
THINGS ARE GETTING OUT OF HAND...

- ANNICA STRAND





# Work in KAPO

By Claus Raasted (G02)

One of the things that made KAPO different for me was the work that we did during the larp.

There are many larps where the characters do some kind of work as part of the game; writing, painting, cooking, etc.

Sometimes the work done in-game is meaningful, other times it isn't.

KAPO stood out for me, because not only was a lot of the time in-game spent "working" with seemingly meaningless things - during the course of the larp the work acquired meaning in a surreal sense.

But how was that accomplished?

During KAPO there was always work going on. The larp had been designed so that players were almost always busy doing something that had to do with the daily routines in the camp. The Rats made sure that trash was taken care of and wasn't lying around. The Builders built whatever needed to be built out of scrap parts.

The Chalkers painted prisoner numbers on the walls and when they ran out of space they painted them over. They also were in charge of the water supply – both keeping the flooding under control and handing out fresh water. The Normalised made studies of the others in the camp and made sure that books were kept on everyone. Everyone had a function.

As a new prisoner arriving in the camp, I had no idea what was going on and while it was obvious right from the beginning that all the old prisoners were busy doing something, it was almost impossible to figure out what that something was. As time progressed, it became obvious what was going on, and why it – in a twisted way – was necessary work that was going on. Of course the Chalkers should paint prisoner numbers on the walls, so we'd know who was in the camp. And of course they needed to paint them over once in awhile when they'd run out of space.

What KAPO did in a brilliant way was make the meaningless meaningful and relevant. All too often, tasks at larps are important to the characters, but uninteresting to the players. Sure, it might be relevant for the knight to try to secure more land for his king, but if both the land in question and the king never make an appearance in the larp, the emotional investment is lessened.

On the other hand, being told that you need to pump dirty water with a broken-down pump seems extremely relevant if the consequences of refusing are having to sleep in that same dirty water four hours later.

It doesn't matter that the relevance is artificial and has been created by organisers or players. It matters that it's there. In KAPO, the setting was constructed so that water was constantly running into the camp and flooding was an ever-present danger.

This meant that quite a few players spent hours and hours making sure that the water was kept at acceptable levels. Was this a meaningless activity, when viewed from the outside?

Of course.

But from personal experience, I can attest that it felt extremely meaningful while playing. And though, it was uncomfortable, dirty work that wasn't exactly easy on the body, it gave an enormous sense of fulfillment to pump barrel after barrel of dirty water with the grotesque excuses for pumps that we had available. It meant something.

KAPO was impressive in many areas, but to me this was by far one of the most impressive feats. The game design made the meaningless important – and discovering this meaning and feeling it shift your priorities and world view was something that happened not only to the characters, but also to the players. It became important that the painting was done just right, that the trash was sorted in just this way and that the water was pumped. And it really wasn't.

Of the many things I took home with me, that was the lesson I took most to heart as a larp designer. Making the tasks at hand relevant and meaningful not just to the characters, but also to the players.

I've of course seen that done before, but never nearly as well.



THE HARDEST PART WAS HAVING  
TO BE MEAN TO OTHER PLAYERS.

- GERSEMI SIRI PEDERSEN

# Debrief guide

- 1) Create groups of 2-5 people
- 2) pick a quiet spot
- 3) close your eyes and focus on you game experience, which images springs to mind.
- 4) share the images with each other
- 5) take turns interviewing each other about the game using the short guide below
- 6) as a group, try to define the primary positive and negative aspects of the game, and write them down for the organizers
- 7) remember to talk to your defuck buddy, when the game is over.
- 8) we hope to see some of you at Kraftwerket when the game ends at 19.00 Sunday.

Love  
KapoCrew

## Interview guide

The purpose of the interview is to give the player being interviewed a possibility to reflect on her experience. Use the interview guide as inspiration for questions, but feel free to ask additional or more detailed questions.

- how are you feeling right now?
- what was your most intense experience during the game?
- did you feel that you were properly prepared for the game?
- what was the worst experience during the game?
- do you have any issues from the game, that you think might affect you in the future?
- what will you take with you from kapo/have you learned anything?
- did you feel safe before and during the game?
- how do you feel that the organizers handled the communication of the experience?
- are you happy that you choose to participate in Kapo?
- is there anything else you would like to share?



A man with long, light-colored hair and a beard is lying on a bed. He is wearing a white, patterned tank top and a watch on his left wrist. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The bed has a quilted, diamond-patterned coverlet. The floor is made of dark wood with a prominent checkered pattern. In the background, there are some items on the floor, including a blue bag and some yellow fabric. The lighting is dim, creating a somber atmosphere.

IT SURPRISED ME HOW CRUSHINGLY HORRIBLE IT  
FELT TO BE KICKED OUT OF A GROUP - EVEN ONE  
THAT HAD DONE SO MANY BAD THINGS TO ME.

- BIRKA DREGART LARSEN

# Dark time in KAPO

By Anna Vestergaard Holm (Bambi/D20/Maria)

For some the dark period meant sleep and rest. But for others the dark period was the worst time ever, especially if you got caught alone in the streets. If it got dark and you were on your way home, it would be almost impossible to find your way back or even just to find a safe place to sleep.

It was typically in the dark period where the really bad stuff happened. People would get raped in the dark, and left crying on the ground. That's why you, as soon as you sensed the dark coming, rushed to safety. As a rat I slept well. We had safe rooms filled with pillows or clothing, so comfort was never an issue.

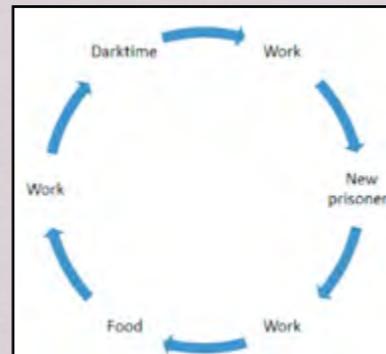
It wasn't real beds like the ones in the normalized camp, but it was better than the builders who practically slept on the cold concrete floor, or the chalkers who, if they were really unlucky, slept with their feet in cold dirty water. Plus the really bad "villains" came from our group, and since you don't "shit where you eat", we could feel safe during the night and get our rest for the next working period where we would need all of our strength.

We could tell that the lengths of the different periods were changing all the time. Sometimes we slept for what felt like 30 minutes and other times it felt like hours. And we got almost no warning for either the dark or the light. I was lucky. I had a good hat to shout out the light, so that if I needed extra sleep that would be possible. But the changing times of the dark periods and us not knowing that time of day it was, or even if the day has changed, resulted in a destroyed Circadian. The organizers had put a lot of effort in us losing all track of time, which succeed quite well.

I remember a time where I walked into the off-game room, because I had to take my medicine, and I just asked "is it tomorrow yet?" because there was no need to know what the time was, I just needed to know what day it was. Because not knowing the time was a part of the experience, and I remember that the first thing I asked when I came out of the camp after interrogation was "what time is it?" and people told me "it's 5 in the afternoon".

Never in my life have I ever been so relieved.

Not knowing the time can really add to the process of driving you insane.



THE BILL BOARD WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE SCENOGRAPHY.

SOME OF MY BEST MOMENTS TOOK PLACE WHILE STANDING SILENTLY SIDE BY SIDE AND WATCHING IT.

- JESPER HEEBØLL ARBJØRN

K39	ROOM	5
J84	ROOM	5
M47	ROOM	5
J92	ROOM	5
Q26	ROOM	5
---	ROOM	2
P47	ROOM	4



THANK YOU KAPO, YOU MADE ME PAINT AGAIN

- FRIDA KARLSSON LINDGREN

# Ars Amandi in KAPO

By Kalle Grill (M18)

Ars Amandi is an ingenious method for playing out sex and intimacy in larps. It works like this: Hands and arms (and sometimes neck) are erogenous zones and all intimacy is role-played using those zones. Other role-play, including looks, breathing and speech, can be used in addition, but no other touching is allowed. This creates a safe way of playing out intimacy and sex. The method was developed by the group Ars Amandi with Emma Wieslander as front person and first used in the Swedish larp Mellan himmel och hav in 2003.

For Kapo, Ars Amandi was introduced during the pre-game workshops. The method was explained rather briefly and there were exercises in pairs using the method to play out different sorts of intimate interactions, including unwanted intimacy or bodily contact. The brief explanation included the rather radical instruction that, in the world of Kapo, hands and arms really were the erogenous zones, rather than genitals, breast etc.

This is one way to place Ars Amandi in a game world; the alternative is to see the arm touching as symbolic of real intimacy, just like symbols can be used for invisibility etc. Perhaps surprisingly, players seemed to immediately accept this radical modification of the game world relative to the real world, even though the game world in most other respects was real Copenhagen in the immediate future.

As has often been noticed, Ars Amandi can be surprisingly powerful and create a strong experience of intimacy. This is especially true if players allow their bodies to be sexually aroused, or let them behave as if they were (it is not obvious that these two can be distinguished). I find myself that increased heart rate and deeper breathing comes quite naturally in Ars Amandi situations.

At least one participant that I happened to talk to after the workshop found Ars Amandi to be too intimate – he did not feel comfortable being that intimate in-game given his real romantic relationship.





I think it is safe to say that sex and intimacy was not a strong theme in Kapo, just like violent conflict was not.

However, given the extreme circumstances in Zeeland, extremes of intimacy and violence were somehow natural.

Ars Amandi enabled players to play out intimate activities and another method enabled playing out violent conflict.

Of course, these two methods could be used jointly to play out violent intimacy – that is sexual abuse and rape of different degrees of severity.

I will now catalogue my own four main experiences of Ars Amandi during Kapo in order to illustrate the many different uses it could be put to.

**Witness to rape:** As new prisoners were welcomed among the group of prisoners to which I belonged, the Rats, they were covered in shit and given the name “shit” or, in Danish, “lort”. They were also sometimes beaten and/or raped. I was not raped when I entered, which was a good thing since the shit and the beating and harassing were quite enough of a shock for me to feel that I had arrived in Zeeland.

However, I did witness how this treatment was given a young woman to whom my character had been a senior in the Scout movement. This was quite repulsive. My character was still struggling to hold on to his humanity and could hardly bear to see and have to accept what happened.

However, it was difficult to take in the full extent of the scene. I do not know how others experienced it, but this may have been an instance where rape was somewhat overused.

**Making out through chain wire:** My character spend his first cycle of the game desperately trying to get close to his girlfriend, who was also imprisoned in Zeeland but with another group. He only managed very short conversations and she was afraid to be seen with him.

Rather late in the game, however, when my character had just went from being a shit among the Rats to being a full member, I happened to be crawling along in our narrow tunnel when my (character’s) girlfriend came up to the chain wiring wall with an apprentice whom she was showing the ropes.

I don’t think we spoke at all.

I stretched out my hands as much as I could through the wiring and caressed her hands and lower arms. She was upset, ordered her apprentice to keep working and looked around in panic to see if we were observed. But she stayed and caressed me back. We were making out through the wiring. It was short, it was sweet, and it was confused. My character felt the connection to something important that he had lost, felt it diluted and tainted somehow, and let it go.

**Participant in gang rape:** I do not know how exactly this guy ended up in the Rats' quarters, but there he was and it was obvious that he should be punished or abused. We dragged him into a building and two of us held him down while two others went to work on his arms. To me, this was a good scene of extreme abuse. It was also interesting because my character still had some of his humanity left and went ahead, as usual, only because the older rats told him to.

The two shits who were doing the actual touching were also acting on command and so were themselves abused in this way. Half way through this horrific scene my character started molesting one of the shits, just as she was molesting our "prisoner".

I was taking advantage of the situation, becoming an active abuser rather than being abused, thereby living up to my title of Rat. This gave my character an important push towards utter loss of humanity.

**Asking to be touched:** Quite late in the game some of us rats were sitting on the pile of garbage that we used to go through every so often in search of useful items. I sat down next to one of the older rats that I had started to find more and more attractive. I envied the way she would touch some of the other rats. Now I asked her to touch me.

She did, while I kept still. I felt comfort, felt that there was comfort in this group, not only the abuse. While she touched me I saw the woman who used to be my girlfriend walk by. I felt how some memories, some old feelings, tried to push through to my conscious experience.

But they didn't. There was a short stir, then it died.

Now for some reflections on Ars Amandi and playing out sexual violence.

Some aspects of Ars Amandi are shared by all larp methods that enable actions that would otherwise not be practical. For example, and importantly, when there is a straightforward method in place for a certain type of action, those actions become easy to perform and so will tend to be overused, or at least used more than is "realistic".

THE FACT THAT I  
REALLY FELT BAD  
ABOUT USING ARS  
AMANDI TO "RAPE"  
MY "SISTER" SAYS  
SOMETHING ABOUT  
HOW POWERFUL A  
TOOL IT IS.

- LUCIANO FOSCHI





This is common with violence in larps. We don't see the blood and we don't feel the pain, so it is easier to stab someone with a fake dagger than to do many other things for which there is no method but that would in reality be harder to do. Something similar probably happened with rape and sexual abuse during Kapo, or at least some participants felt that way.

Playing out sex and intimacy through Ars Amandi is different from playing out violent conflict because the physical circumstances differ. Player and character share bodies and sexuality is strongly connected to the body.

Though whether we are sexually attracted or not of course depends on many other factors, when there is attraction it is both strongly felt in the body and normally directed at another body. Hostility, in contrast, is more in the mind and is directed at personalities and perhaps social roles, not so much at bodies.

Therefore, sexual attraction in-game is more personal. While I generally know that the hostility I feel towards another player's character has nothing to do with my real relationship to that player, the sexual attraction I feel towards another player's character is not as easily separated from the game. Her or me stepping out of character may or may not end my attraction.

Using Ars Amandi, I do not actually have sex, but I can be sexually aroused, I can actually want to have sex, and I can get rather close to the actual experience of having sex, including touching the naked body (arms) of the object of my attraction. As any decent lover knows, sex is as much about touching in the right way as about touching in the right place. Regardless of the further psychological consequences, this is already quite a lot of so called bleeding – the intermixing of player and character psychology.

When in-game sex is non-consensual, the ease which comes with the method and the possibility of strong bleed combines in a way that can be rather disturbing. Since I am not actually harming my co-player when I force myself on her, but rather enacting a scene together with her, being creative together with her, no actual violence gets in the way of my sexual feelings (as I suppose actual violence do in healthy individuals).

Therefore, I can experience the rape as sex – I can feel sexually aroused and I may actually want to have sex with this character/player, while I play that I rape her. It may even be that the whole situation is sexually exciting to me, even though I find actual rape repulsive (and morally abominable).

I think all this is a good thing. I think it is good that we can experience rape from the inside of a rapist by larping. We can do so, of course, only to the extent that we can experience anything by larping. It is not the real thing, but it gives us an experience much richer than any other art form and so it can provide valuable teachings about who we are and could be under other circumstances. In the case of non-consensual sex, it can teach us something about our too many depraved fellow human beings who actually rape and abuse.

These larping experiences can be very intense, of course. Real experiences of sexual violence are regrettably common. Such experiences are psychologically complicated and often stigmatizing. We should be aware of this and take measures. The Kapo website mentioned *Ars Amandi* and given the general setting of the larp it should not have been surprising that sexual violence could happen.

However, a case could be made for taking extra care to ensure that people are aware of this possibility beforehand and perhaps to debrief on it afterwards. Though this should be obvious, players could have been instructed to take extra care and pay extra attention to possible stop words in situations of sexual violence. (I am not aware of any bad experiences with this but I have not asked around.) It is difficult to role-play sex in general because actual sex is difficult to start with. And we do not talk much about it.

We do not give each other advice and compare experiences, nor are there good venues for such discussion (compare the way we treat other mostly pleasant but complicated everyday activities like eating and exercising). Larpers are no exception. Witness the wide-spread habit among larpers, at least historically, of cutting play when sex was at hand, hiding together behind some wall or tree and making supposedly sexual loud sounds. This slapstick approach avoids taking sex seriously or having in-game sex be anything like the real experience. *Ars Amandi* has given us a method for playing out sex and intimacy much more seriously. We should be grateful, and we should be careful.



THE SCENOGRAPHY WORKED WONDERFULLY BY PROVIDING BOTH MEANINGFUL GAMEPLAY AND BY ESTABLISHING THE ATMOSPHERE.

WET, TIRED FEET, HOWEVER, DID NOTHING TO ENHANCE MY EXPERIENCE IN ANY WAY.

- MARIE HOLM ANDERSEN



# Offgame room in KAPO

By Rasmus Petersen (Organizer)

*A girl slowly walks through the door. She's been crying and the tears have drawn long black lines in her dirty face, she walks over to a chair in the corner without raising her head or making eye contact with anybody, she sits down and pull her knees up under her chin.*

*After a while she says in a whisper: "I would like to go home now..."*

## **Facts**

For Kapo we had outfitted a former factory office so as to function as our offgame room. The room itself was 4 x 6 meters and we had sealed the room's windows so that the daylight outside would not disturb the players' messed-up sense of time. The room itself was furnished with a sofa, chairs, a coffee maker and a refrigerator filled with food and drink. Outside the room we had placed a round bed so people could get a nap if they needed it. Given that one third of the setting was flooded with water we had also purchased a bag of clean, dry socks and plastic bags for the feet, so hopefully we could avoid the worst cases of trench foot.

## **What did we discuss for the room?**

From the earliest planning stages of the larp there was no doubt on our part that there should be an offgame room at Kapo. We did a lot of thinking and had many ideas about the purpose of the room and the best way to use the available space. We agreed that the room should have two purposes.

First off, it should be a breathing space for the players during the scenario. The idea was that the game would be running at 100% intensity and if a player could not sustain this we would rather that the player went in to the offgame room and had a cup of coffee or a soda until the level of intensity could be turned up again.

Secondly, we had an assumption that some of our players might need a little care and nursing during the game, because it was a rather tough larp we were planning.



We had many different opinions on whether we should put a time limit on how long the players could stay in offgame room; our greatest fear was that players would use the room to escape the dilemmas in the game.

In the end we decided to let the room be open to all and not put time limits on its use. This decision proved to be really good because the players easily managed themselves and when they needed the room.

### **What was the room used for?**

From the start we had decided that everyone was welcome in off-game room; it should not be up to us to be the judge who really needed the room and who didn't, as people under stress show their emotions very differently.

Three players enter the offgame room. They are grinning and are apparently in a good mood. They immediately go to the fridge and grab themselves a soft drink while they are talking about the conflict they have just had in the game.

*"So I took the new apprentice and rolled him in the water! When he came up he was just screaming like a wild animal! Haha!"*

*He then looks at the two others and suddenly asks; 'Do you think he is ok?..."*

There were many players who needed to tell their stories, both to the organizer who sat in offgame room, but also to the players they had played rough scenes with. Often this developed into an agreement on the intensity of play inside the setting. This allowed for the players who took the part of the aggressor to pinpoint their role-playing so that they dared to play at maximum intensity now that they had the consent of their "victim".

The lighting and the interval between the different periods in the setting was controlled by the organizers so the players had a distorted sense of time. It was so bad that some players guessed up to eight hours wrong on what time of day it was. Although the players were confused about the time it was quite obvious that in the early morning hours the players got tired and since a large part of the playing area was flooded, many of our players were not only tired, but also wet.

This meant that their energy levels were low and some of them needed a place to sleep. Therefore, the offgame room was converted to a sleeping hall for approximately six hours so some of our weary players could have a some sleep. A little side note is that the room at this time was almost unbearable to be in for the organizer on duty – the players smelled awful! 😊

The food that we served in game was also not the most appetizing; cold soup with ice still in it, salty oat porridge with blueberries and lentil casserole with crackers. The food could be eaten, but it was not very nice, so to avoid that having players starve more than they felt was good for their playing, we had some really nice food for them in the offgame room.

The feeling we wanted our players to have was that when they were in the setting, they were at the bottom of society, but when they walked into the offgame room they should feel like beloved players. Needless to say, this meant that no player at Kapo suffered hunger pangs without wanting to suffer hunger pangs, and we were quite happy about this.





### **What did we get out of the offgame room?**

For us as organizers the offgame room was the only way we could get real insights into what was going on in the setting and it was there we had the opportunity to find out whether there were defects in the game.

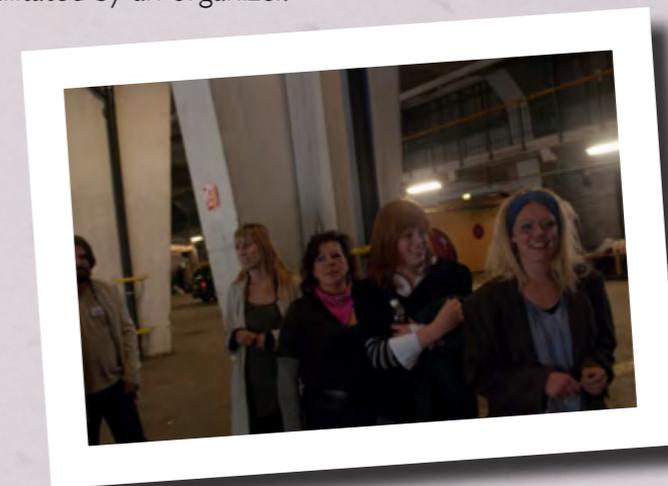
At one time the players had managed to rip the cage loose from the walls during the cage scene; therefore we were forced to send in “the system” in the form of a working crew in order to repair the problem. Had we not had offgame room, we would not have been able to identify such a problem, and since the cage was very important to the larp it would have been potentially problematic. And then some.

Additionally, it was important for us to give the players a relief valve so that if they experienced severe problems in the game they would not be alone with them, but would always be able to contact an organizer whose only job was to take care of just that player.

*A player enters the offgame room. He looks thoughtful.*

*“I feel like I can’t get any further with my game. It’s like that I stuck in the role of Kapo and I want to experience a loss of power. I could imagine that some of the boys would team up on me and put me in my place, but I just can’t figure out how to make it happen...”*

Another task for the organizer in the off-game room was to help coordinate scenes or make suggestions for how the players could move forward if they were stuck in their role-play and needed to arrange a scene. For this purpose, we had a “blackbox” where players could practice and arrange scenes. Often, these exercises were facilitated by an organizer.



### **What could be done differently?**

In a setting filled with paint and water it is quite important to make sure that the furniture can withstand dirt and water! We had not thought about this enough, and therefore it was a pretty big task constantly having to clean up fine leather furniture so the paint and the filth the players dragged into the room wouldn't be a new permanent addition to our borrowed office. The devil is in the details.

The actual layout of the room could also have been more optimal.

We had arranged it so that the players could get food and drink for themselves, but since the players were so dirty and wet, it was necessary to serve the food for them for hygienic reasons. Neither did the players have the surplus energy needed to clean clean up after themselves, so the whole feeding process would have been easier if there had been a bar counter or something similar.

The reason for not installing a bar counter to begin with was that we wanted the players who entered the room to meet a smiling organizer at eye level and our concern was that if we put the organizer behind a counter, it would act as a barrier for the personal contact.

The offgame room was also used to keep the players' private belongings such as medicine, keys, money and cigarettes, so the room quickly became too small and crowded and it became a hassle to find the players belongings. For this purpose we could have used a separate locked room for storing.

*I look up at the crying girl and asks;  
"why don't you want to play anymore?"*

*"It's just really hard to play when you're constantly the one with the lowest status. It's not because I don't want to play anymore, it's just really hard"*

*"That I can understand" I reply. "How do you feel about me making you a cup of coffee, then giving you a hug? Then we can talk about how to get you back into play and get exactly the kind of role-playing experience that you want to have?"*

*"I don't drink coffee... but I'd love to have a hug" she says, smiling through her tears...  
And suddenly the world was alright again.*



ARS AMANDI WAS USED AS A TOOL TO  
DEMONSTRATE POWER. "RAPES" OCCURRED  
OFTEN, WHICH MEANT THAT MANY  
PLAYERS HAD SCRATCHED ARMS WHEN  
THEY CAME OUT OF THE GAME.

- TINA HEEBØLL ARBJØRN



# Documentation of the

v. 0.5.1

## MAIN RESPONSIBILITY:

Peter Fallesen, Jakob Ponsgaard

## CONTACT:

peterfallesen (at) gmail.com

Guards include the individuals in ski masks, the doctor, as well as the unmasked interrogators. One early exit player was also used as a plant during the last two cycles. The full guard rooster will not be put in this document since it is shared access. If anyone wishes the complete list, they can obtain it by contacting Peter Fallesen.

1) All players were registered by two guards when taken for questioning to secure identity, any issues and the comfort-level (1,2,3).

The players comfort level was written on his/her hand and checked regularly.\*

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\*This was not done in the first cycle due to a low number of players in interrogation. Instead, each player was assigned a specific guard who followed the player during the entire interrogation.

# KAPO-interrogations

2) Only organizers, helpers and guards was allowed in the water room, the noise room and the interrogation rooms.

3) There were AT NO TIME onlookers inside the water room or interrogation cells when they were being used, and only organizers and helpers was allowed to look into the noise-room. The latter did not happen on more than a handful of occasions for less than 30 seconds.

4) No one except guards interacted with the players while the players were bagged

5) No level 2 and 3 players spend more than 6 minutes at a time in the noise-room, and no level 1 players more than 12 minutes. There was always a guard on duty in there, and we noted number, level, entry-time and exit-time\* on all players

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\*Only when more than one player was in the room

6) All guards were hand-picked by Jakob and Peter and given a full briefing on the guard-function and the comfort levels. They were also given training in take-down techniques by a sergeant in the Danish army as well as a brief rundown on interrogation techniques by said sergeant and a officer cadett.

All interrogation experiences was tested by at least one of us before the game started. The doctor was an actual med-student who have worked as a blood sample collector for the last three years.

7) When a player was transferred between two guards, we also transferred any relevant information - both in regard to player safety and the role-playing experience.

8) We were not in-game. We did have numbers tattooed on our forearms and necks but we used our real names in all internal communication.

9) We had ongoing evaluations during the game and in all our breaks





10) Almost no players was handled in front of an audience. There were one communication glitch Friday where an audience saw a hooded fully dressed prisoner being moved through the main hall and lying on the ground.

They also heard the guards shout from the interrogation cells - we did not know there would be an audience present in the hall at that time and nothing involving players was staged for their amusement. From that point we used dummies when there was an audience present.

11) We were not there to have fun.

12) Players was only left alone in the interrogation cells, but a guard was never more than 10 meters from the rooms curtain. At all other times there were always at least one guard present.

Two guards were always present during the full body hose-downs in the first cycle of the game. Whenever we had the manpower, also during scenes with a high amount of physical pressure.

13) No interrogations was filmed. Pictures and video was only taken of transfers, stress position and in the noise room. Some interrogations was taped, but then the recording device was always visible for the player and the player was not wearing a hood.

14) The guards joked around with each other - also wordlessly in front of hooded players from time to time - but players was not staged for our or any other onlookers entertainment or for photo ops. In our pre-game meeting we agreed that we would not make jokes with sexual references, but that we needed to be able to joke around in order to cope. We did not have fun.

15) We had running conversations with organizers, exit-players and players in the off-game room to get feedback on the interrogation-experience.

16) The three anthropology-students was allowed to observe and tape transfers and the sound from the noise room.

17) Mistakes did happen, but fewer than we had anticipated. When they did, we talked about it internally and with the organizers and took steps to make sure it didnt happen again.

18) Inspiration for the interrogations was drawn from the testimonies and pictures from Abu Ghraib [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu Ghrai\\_b\\_torture and prisoner abuse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abu_Ghrai_b_torture_and_prisoner_abuse)

19) Comfort-level guides were made for all three comfort-levels.

20) If one of us became insecure about a situation or handling a specific prisoner we either treated it as a cut-incident if alone or immediately evaluated the situation together with a second guard.

21) Some interrogations was done with two or more players in the same interrogation room. We also used a plant to set up mock executions.



22) The guards ran a full debriefing amongst themselves after the game ended. We discussed our internal jargon during the game, our behavior and our experiences. We discontinued the jargon we have had while the game ran (calling the players prisoners, talking about treatment 1,2,3, etc.) and talked in off-game terms.

The general consensus was that the experience in hindsight hadnt been pleasant, but we were glad we had supplied the service to the game. The risk of mild PTSD and/or post-larp was also discussed, as well as measures one could take in case it happened. For some, it did.



I WAS QUITE IMPRESSED BY HOW MANY OF THE SMALL DETAILS THAT EMERGED DURING GAMEPLAY I COULD RECOGNIZE FROM PRIMO LEVI AND LITERATURE OF THAT SORT.

- OLIVER NØGLEBÆK

# Fragments from I90

By Anne Serup Grove

## Being sold

Standing in the traffic between The Builders camp and the main square - just behind mom's secret safe place, I was yet again just looking at the activity. Like ants all with direction were they moving around. From my outside perspective they just seemed more confused. They were doing a never ending pointless job. I wasn't observing just looking. Observing implies thought about the observed. I was numb.

From the main square mom and the work kapo from The Builders came walking. He was in a hurry yet mom tried to make him walk faster. She wanted the dream machine to work. It wasn't working and she was desperate. She was never more relaxed than when we were sitting staring at that machine - and now it was turned off. It was like a drug to her. And it was turned off.

She took a hold of my wrist when she passed me. He stopped and looked at me. In her desperation of him stopping mom said: You can have her. Here, take her. He had a surprised look on his face. He hesitated and said: Uhm, okay. And the three of us went to the dream machine. Mom was impatient but the minute it started moving she was gone. Lost in her own little world. I was sitting next to her and I slowly started disappearing while humming to myself.

He sat down next to me and took my hand and placed it on his thigh. He asked me to hum louder. And louder. When I couldn't hum any louder I started singing. For years I couldn't remember more than the first four lines of that lullaby, but right then the rest came back to me. Just like that. And I sang them as well. Over and over again. When he was done he walked away.

He only really looked at me once after the rape: when he was in the cage. The last thing he did before they took him away was to hold my hands. He held them so tight it hurt but he looked me right into my eyes. His glare was empty but he looked at me. Then they put the bag over his head and stripped him and he was gone.

His name was Parker. It didn't hurt like when mom or dad did it. He didn't have intentions, good or bad, it was just circumstances. I loved him for the absent of this.



## Forgetting

I was so lucky in midst of all my bad luck. My husband came to the camp before me. Standing in the cage I caught a glint of him. He looked like a ghost, a shell, compared to the gathered and serious man I knew. I only saw his face for a second before he disappeared in the dark sea of people.

I was pulled out of the cage. The Normalized had chosen me - I could read and write. That was of use to them. To my great relief he was amongst the Normalized was Erik. He looked at me with such sadness in his eyes. I took his hand but was pulled away from him. He barely acknowledged the warmth of my hand. I threw my arms around him and was pulled away again. This one is trouble the others said and dragged me to the home of the Normalized. Here I was assigned a family. A family like I had never seen it before. It was pure madness. All of them were mad.

The first work period started and we, the new ones, were assigned a job. I felt that once more I was lucky as I was put to work at the same station as Erik. We didn't speak much but from time to time he tried to say something. Every time he had to finish before he got the sentence finished. He simply couldn't. He was so exhausted. I tried to hug him to tell him that it was okay. But this just tore him up. He was glad that I had ended up at the Normalized, crazy as they were, the work was not physical. But the guilt tore him up. I was there and he believed it to be his fault.

All in all the first work period went well. I sorted files. My job was to alphabetize them continuously as they were picked out to be updated and put back onto the little desk I had in front of me. I managed to do my job well and when sleep time came I went to bed tired, confused but with the feeling that it was okay, as long as I had Erik and that job.

When the lights came on and we got up there was no doubt that something was wrong. I was tired from too little and bad sleep. I was in the doorway on my way out of our camp. I had just stepped over the doorstep when the strange feeling of something being wrong hit me again. The other Normalized that had got up was looked at me and then all looked down the long road and into the spotlight of the Rats. I turned my head to see what they were looking at. It was Erik. He was standing there in the spot light, where they initialized their new rats. My eyes caught his just when he poured a bucket of sewer water over himself.

The other Normalized was whispering. He walked down there himself - What? - He did it voluntarily, we didn't send him to the Rats he walked down there himself. In that moment I was all alone. My heart dropped as if he had cut it from its place. He had abandoned me. Just as I had found him again he had left me.

Scared I went to work. The little room was empty as I stood there on my own. All I could hear was He walked down there himself repeated again and again in my head. I started the sorting of the files yet again.

First by letter, then by number. A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. I stopped. My head was empty. I started over. A, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k and stopped again. I couldn't remember what came after K.

In disbelief I went over it again and again and again. At some point in my search for the next letter Ink came in. Ink, what comes after k? She answered L and I turned back to my work.

When I had finished organizing L I stopped again. A, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l and I couldn't get any further. It had disappeared. I had forgotten it. I couldn't find it anywhere in my head.

I got more and more angry and the tears started streaming. But I didn't stop trying to do my work. For each letter I had to turn around and ask someone.

I had forgotten half the alphabet. I had started forgetting. Forgetting myself and what was normal. I had become part of the camp. I was I90, Little, daughter of Ink and Don. I did no longer have the strength to remember what once was outside the camp.

I was I90.



## The Hospital Bed

I had become naive, I had forgotten who I was other than a number, I90, I was a Normalized. I had to be mediocre. I had to work on being normal, being close to the average. I had taken on the role as a child, refusing to be more than an innocent observer. Everything my adult mind told me was wrong was brushed away to be able to keep sane, as sane as one can be in a camp like Zeeland.

I was exploring the dormitory of the Normalized like a child going in to the addict for the first time, curious and observant, slightly hesitant. I had until then only been to the room where my family would sleep and eat until then. Behind the room I lived in was another room. It had been abandoned. Mom sometimes took Don into that room and they did things that made him scream. I stepped into it. It had been ravished. Pillows, pieces of the wall, old dirty clothing was spread all over the floor.

In the far back of the room there was a hole in the wall and a strange green light streamed in. It drew me towards it. Curious and naive I walked over and put my head through the hole. I should never have done so. It turned out to be a rat room. It was bare except for an old bare hospital bed. It was just on the other side of the wall and on it was two rats.

I knew there was nothing I could do when I saw who it was. Baby Blue did not like me. They took a hold of me. Baby Blues big friend held me down while she herself started touching me. There was no kidding around with the rats. They would go right after you and she did. In such it was very gentle for a rats touch but Baby Blue didn't use force, she touched one mentally. She would pull up my skirt just to see me pull it down again. She would whisper in my ear how much I deserved it. How much I didn't deserve my husband. How I was to blame for him being in the camp.

Suddenly she was bored and they simply pushed me straight from the cold, hard bed and into to abandoned room again.

## The Punishment

Mom had been gone for a while. I had work to take care of and couldn't look after her. She would always wonder about in search of herself, she said. A family meeting was called and she had to be there. As mother of a family she had to be present in the big family group meeting. I went out to find and that I did. She was just around the corner lying in the shallow water crying. I picked her up and got her back to the camp where she collapsed on the floor. The work kapo immediately called her unfit.

She was obviously no longer capable of being the leader of the group. His looked at me as said You must be the new mother.

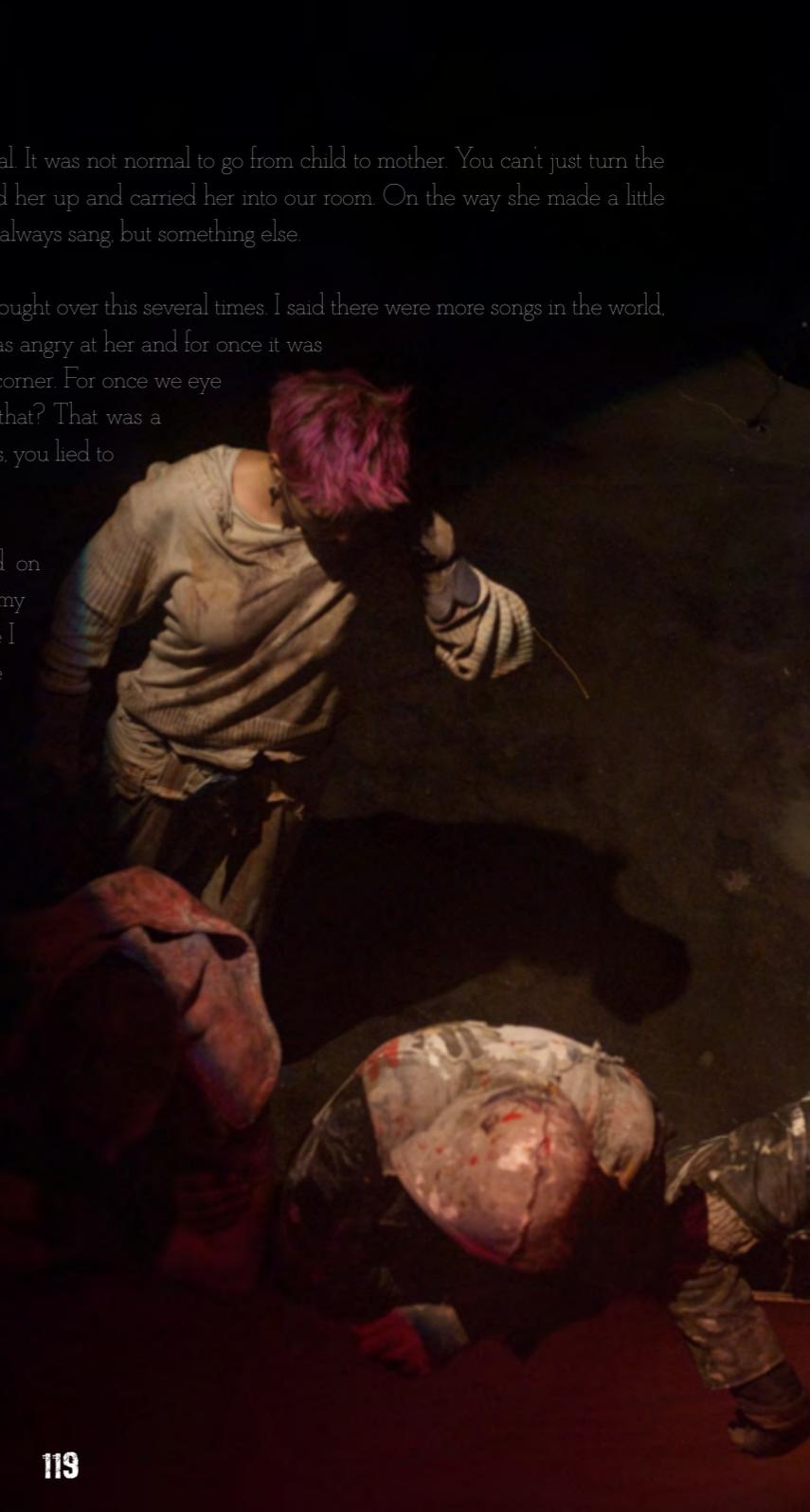
I couldn't believe it. It didn't make sense. It was not normal. It was not normal to go from child to mother. You can't just turn the roles around like that. It is just not normal. Again I picked her up and carried her into our room. On the way she made a little sound. It sounded like a tune of a song. Not the song she always sang but something else.

She had always said there were no other songs. We had fought over this several times. I said there were more songs in the world, she refused to see it. That one note was the last drop. I was angry at her and for once it was me that was the powerful one. In the room I put her in a corner. For once we eye to eye. She was crying. I started drilling her. What was that? That was a song! A different song! You said there were no other songs, you lied to me! Admit there are other songs.

Tell me! Say it! There are more songs! I went on and on and then I lost it. I looked down at the tie in my hand, my husband's tie. I had been holding tightly on to it ever since I had found it, ever since I had remembered him again. She had made me forget him. She had told me he didn't exist. Now it was my turn to let my anger out on her.

I took the tie and put it around her neck. Now we play, I said in a childish voice, Like mother and child does. You are Enk and I am me. Now we play. She started bawling. I got more and more angry with her, the more she didn't take on my play reality. I kept repeating

Now we play. You are Enk and I am me, until she was all broken down. I just kept getting angrier for every second she didn't play along and in the end I ripped the tie of her. She fell to the ground crying. I walked out of the room angry as ever. But at least she had been punished.



TRUST AMONG PLAYERS WAS QUICKLY  
BUILT AT THE WORKSHOP, AS WE ALL  
IN SOME WAYS BROKE OUR BOUNDARIES,  
PLAYING SILLY GAMES AND JUMPING  
AROUND LIKE MONKEYS.

- LOUISE AMALIE JUUL SØNDRSKOV





# Glimpses of Zeeland

Liselle Awwal (Tråd/F80/Elisa Frederiksen)

## The cage

Entrance into Zeeland was the same for everyone. Guards wearing black ski masks would cuff you with plastic cable ties, pull a hood over your head, put ear muffs on you and lead you through what appeared to be a disorienting maze before shoving you onto a chair inside a small but brightly lit room where your prisoner number was applied to your wrist and neck. Then you were instructed to leave the room through a hallway which led into a welded metal cage - low enough that you had to duck your head to stand up inside it, and no larger than a few square metres large.

When the cage alarm sounded inside the camp, the response was immediate. Everywhere, people ceased what they were doing, and tangible excitement spread. Fresh meat. It was almost always a welcome break from the routine of work, sleep and food, and before long everyone would make their way to the cage, surrounding it completely. Slowly then, the cage would fill with new prisoners, one at a time.

Reluctantly, they filed inside, with equal parts fear and confusion written upon their faces. Oftentimes they would come in clutching plastic food bowls, water bottles, spoons, and try to shield these few belongings from old prisoners greedily reaching through the bars, trying to grab at anything within reach. As more and more new inmates amassed in the centre of the cage and room grew sparse, some were forced close enough to the bars that those outside were able to grab a hold of their clothes, hair or limbs.

Commotion broke out as the panicked new prisoners inside the cage tried to wrest their unfortunate comrade out of the grasp of the ones outside. Many of the old prisoners would simply stand motionless around the cage, staring at the ones inside. Sometimes the Rats would bring a bucket of their "shit" concoction and throw it at the new ones, effectively ruining their otherwise clean clothes and unnerving them. Occasionally someone on either side would decide to attempt conversation, but usually such attempts were quickly shushed by others nearby.

THE CAGE WAS DANGEROUS FOR EVERYONE. WE COULD ALWAYS CALL PRISONERS OUT THROUGH IT, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT WE NEVER ENTERED IT OURSELVES TO GET THEM.

- RENE KRAGH

*The doorway leading into the cage itself was low enough that most people had to duck their heads going through it, but to make matters worse, there was a metal traffic sign overhanging the door as well. Three prisoners in a row were distracted enough by the frightening, unfamiliar surroundings to bang their heads into it, each prompting unsympathetic laughter from the old prisoners on the other side of the bars, surrounding the cage.*

*Two of the new arrivals, a man and a woman, clung to one another from the very beginning. The man held the woman protectively, and she buried her face into his shoulder, sobbing, as if trying to escape the reality of what was happening. He, on the other hand, peered warily through the bars. Hands reached for the couple, desirous of the water bottles in their possession. "Is this what you want? Take it then, and leave us alone!" the man demanded, his brow furrowing as he held out the water bottle in offering. It was immediately torn from him, and a scuffle broke out outside the cage as a couple of prisoners wrestled for it.*

*The respite was short, and soon hands were once more reaching for the couple, clawing at them. "What is it you want from us? Why are you behaving like this? You're like animals!" He grew increasingly frustrated, backing away from the outstretched arms attempting to reach him. It was what I had been waiting for, and the moment he was within reach, I went for the spoon poking out of his jacket pocket, effortlessly fishing it out. He started in alarm and spun around to glare at me, but remained silent as I held up the utensil triumphantly before pocketing it.*

The number of prisoners herded into the cage varied from cycle to cycle, but eventually no more would come. The alarm went silent, everything went dark – and finally hell broke loose. The old prisoners screamed at the cage, kicked at it, rattled the bars, pounded it with objects. Inside, the terrified occupants would cling to each other, cover their ears, or curl up in fetal positions on the floor.

## Chalker symbols

Verbal communion was often sparse among Chalkers. In its place there was touch, gestures and, perhaps most importantly, painted symbols which each represented an emotion. There were several: Fear, Sorrow, Hatred and Desire were the common ones, and they were visible everywhere within the camp, in different sizes and colours depending on the mood of the Chalker which had painted them. It was customary for Chalkers to paint over their old symbols at the beginning of a work period, but some always tended to remain.

One symbol was rarer than the others – Shame.

One rarer still: Hope. Every Chalker who had ever dared paint it had been called to Room 5, and thus it had come to be viewed by many as suicidal. Most considered it forbidden and were loath to speak of it or teach it to newcomers.

*Krogen grabbed my arm, hard, and jabbed his finger animatedly at a symbol upon the wall. "Did you do this?" he hissed at me. It was a Hope symbol, and I came very close to smiling upon seeing it. Someone had chosen pastel blue to express this particular – forbidden and dangerous – emotion. He examined my hands for splotches of pastel blue. Composing myself and arranging my face into an appropriately sombre expression. I shook my head. It was obvious from his state of agitation that he did not believe me, and I could hardly blame me. He once caught me in the act. "Do you want to die?" he demanded, shaking my arm hard enough to bruise it. "Erase it!" I shook my head again. "It's not mine, I di--"*

*"Erase it!" he repeated in a snarl, grabbing my hand and forcing it into a nearby bucket of fresh paint. Sighing, I reluctantly painted it over with a glob of dark gray.*

## Dark time

Waking up in Zeeland at the end of each Dark Time was like finding yourself trapped inside a nightmare that you were unable to wake up from. A sensation which was highlighted by the fact that it happened over and over again.

Looking around at the others inside the relative comfort of the small sleeping tent you saw others who were as reluctant as you to get up and go outside as yourself. The sleeping pile inside the Chalker camp was often a tangle of limbs. Being part of the group you automatically sought physical contact with the other members, whether awake or asleep.

Thankfully, the sleeping tent was relatively dry, in comparison with the rest of the camp. A water leak flooded the entrance, but it was contained by a drain. If you were careless enough to climb inside as one of the last, you could well find yourself on the wrong side, having to resign yourself to sleeping in the puddle of paint-water.

It was not the end of the world. Odds were your clothes were already damp or soaked for one of various reasons (including having been hosed with water by guards during an interrogation, being forced down on all fours or onto your stomach as punishment by fellow prisoners, or having spent time pumping leaked water back into the pool).



I SLEPT ON THE FLOOR WHEN  
I CAME HOME. MY BED JUST  
DID NOT FEEL THE SAME WAY,  
AND THE MORNING LIGHT WAS  
STRANGELY AMAZING.

SORRY I DIDN'T STAY, BUT  
SOME PART OF ME NEEDED TO  
GO HOME.

THANK YOU FOR A WONDER-  
FUL EXPERIENCE, I'M GOING TO  
GO FOR A WALK NOW, IN THE  
FOREST, SEEMS LIKE THE RIGHT  
THING TO DO...

- PETER LORENZEN

*It was the cycle in which I had obtained the green can of spray paint from Tyr. I had desired the can greatly from the moment I learned he was in possession of it. A common way of discovering who was behind forbidden signs among Chalkers was to check their hands for paint - painting with your fingers left telltale signs. Spray paint did not, it was like the perfect crime. Tyr had only one condition: I was to write "HELT NORMAL - ENTIRELY NORMAL," somewhere in the Normalized head quarters. Visibly, in large letters. I agreed, and he handed me the can at the beginning of a Dark period.*

*I went about it immediately, and chose their brand new door - made from a white plastic tarp. It was exhilarating, and once I had begun painting with the spray can, I found myself loath to cease. I started spraying randomly, then grew bolder and went back to the Chalker camp itself. The others had been asleep for a while, but there was no disguising the sound of a spray can, so I kept looking over my shoulder as I painted, fearful of being caught.*

*Once I had decorated the inside of several tents with both words and symbols, I decided to get some rest. The spray can I hid inside the water tent, among stacks of old paint buckets. Then I went to lay down inside the Dining Tent, upon one of several podiums raised above water level, as I did not want to crawl inside the Sleeping Tent and risk having someone discover what I had been up to.*

## Sleeping alone

*I am not sure whether I had managed to fall asleep entirely, but I woke when I heard footsteps upon the wooden walkways outside, and sat up half way. There was a silhouette in the entrance of the tent. Someone tall. "Are you all alone?" English with a slight, Swedish accent. Squinting, I made out his white mask in the dim light. A Rat. I had seen him before, but did not know his name.*



*"Yes, the others are asleep," I replied drowsily. Only once he took a step inside inside did I realize just how foolish my answer had been. Had there been any doubt, he soon enlightened me as he sat down beside me. Was I not aware that there were Rats prowling during the Dark Time? That it was unwise to sleep alone? He began touching me, like it was the most natural thing in the world, but his mere presence had unnerved me to the point where I did not even dare to refuse him. I am not certain when his advances turned painfully ungentle, but I remember that at some point the conversation did as well, when we touched upon the subject of Doctor.*

*She had been expelled from the Chalkers, and he demanded that I explain my relationship with her. Under normal circumstances I would have been hesitant to divulge my feelings about anyone to a Rat, but I hoped compliance would satisfy him and make him go away. I told him Doctor and I had been lovers. This apparently incensed him and made him forego all pretence of gentleness. I let him know that he was hurting me, but he did not seem to care. He wanted to know whether I still had feelings for her. I admitted that I did, thus angering him further. He told me she was rat shit now - this is what they called their newest initiates - how could I have feelings for rat shit?*

*It appeared at this point that it mattered little what I said, so I refused to give him the satisfaction of forcing me to renounce someone who was still important to me. I told him that to me she was still Doctor. I don't remember what was said after that, only that he was furious and that I was in pain. Eventually, he had had enough and made to rise. He paused then, and reached out to touch me. "I'll be back to find you again."*

## Awakening

The first order of business for the Chalkers at the beginning of every cycle was to gather by the memorial wall of handprints. A section of the wall next to it was chosen by the Barracks Kapo, as well as a paint colour, and each Chalker and Rusker used a finger to paint a single line. It was a way of keeping count at the beginning of a cycle, and it was erased immediately after the ritual was complete, for to let it remain would enable people to count cycles, and keeping track of time was taboo in the group.

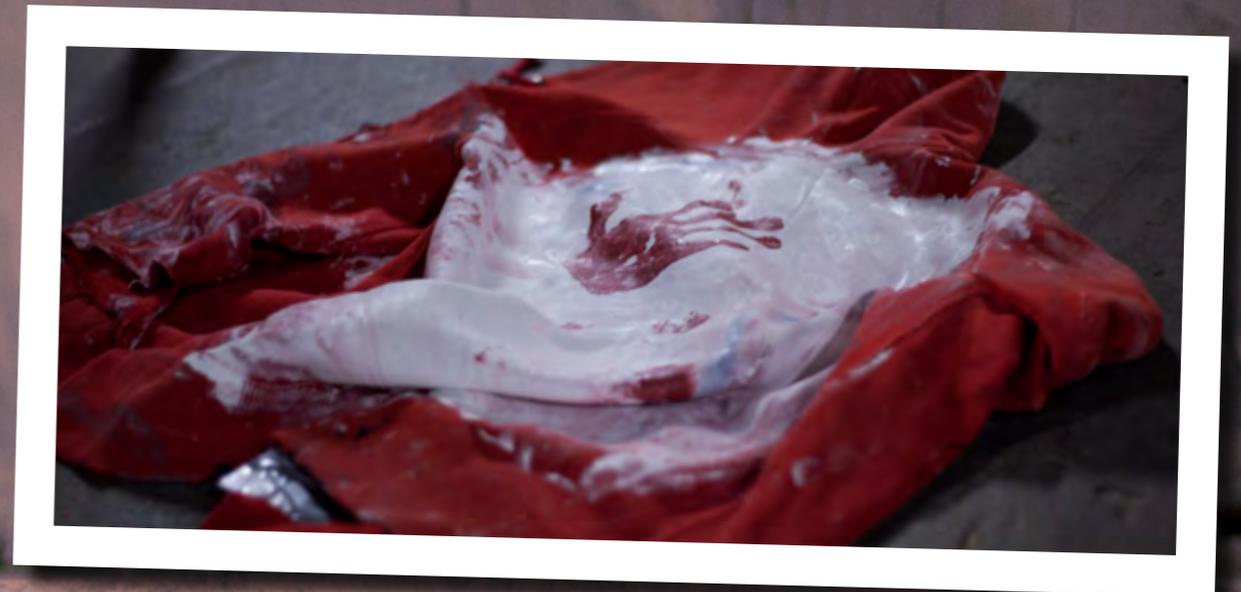
Next came the distribution of status handprints which defined Chalker hierarchy. Each named Chalker had one to give, and the common way to hand one was to wet your palm with paint and whisper a condition into the ear of your chosen Chalker. If your terms were accepted, the recipient would respond with a nod, and you would leave a handprint upon her back, thus boosting her status. Occasionally handprints were offered freely, perhaps as a reward or a gift.

*I spent a while shifting my weight indesisively from one foot to the other, watching others exchange whispers, glances and handprints. I had already dipped my hand into a bucket of white paint, but I was nervous. In the end, I could not refrain, and went to stand by Echo, leaning in to quietly whisper in his ear.*

*"I'll give you this – if you swear to keep a secret." Was there hesitation? He met my gaze for a second before nodding silently I pressed my hand to the back of his shoulder, and briefly inspected the imprint it had left, before squatting down to rinse my hand in the dirty water.*

*Afterwards I met him inside the Water Tent. He eyed me questioningly as I kneeled to retrieve something from behind the discarded paint buckets in the water. I held can of green spray paint towards him and his brow knitted once he realized what it was. He as well as the other Chalkers had seen and discussed the spray painted forbidden signs and text which had appeared overnight. The culprit had not yet been found.*

*"You have to paint them over," Echo said, sternly. There was no mistaking the displeasure in his voice. "And no more, do you understand? Never again." I nodded, satisfied that he would reluctantly keep my secret. It was a relief to have shared it with someone.*



## Expulsion

"Come on!" I was half dragged, half shoved into the camp, and brought before the Memorial Wall. Someone was standing there, holding a bucket of paint at the ready. Another instructed that my status handprints were to be painted over. I opened my mouth to protest, and my complete confusion must have registered, because someone finally deigned to explain: "You're on the board! Room 5!" I was already in the process of being pushed to my stomach. "What's your number?" someone demanded, and I twisted my head to get a look at the Interrogation Board. My number was not even on the list, red, Room 5 or otherwise, and I managed to convey this fact while trying to rise.

I was shoved back down while another Chalker, Skejs perhaps, unexpectedly revealed a number of my crimes to the small gathering: The green spray can, forbidden signs... For a moment I feared she would mention the letters I had received from Outside. One of them bore my name. My real name, from Before. I was afraid that being robbed of the letter would make me forget again. In desperation, I had painted it in bold letters somewhere in the camp.

I meant to speak up in my own defense, but white paint was sloshed onto my back. Ungentle hands smeared it, effectively erasing my status symbols. The hands withdrew, but pressure was soon applied once more as Red's foot left the symbol of disgrace for all of the camp to see. I was speechless, as I had not seen it coming. I reached out for a nearby paint stained hand, but the person recoiled from me. Someone spat at me, another kicked at my leg, told me to get out of the camp.

Expulsion. Among Chalkers, it was the ultimate punishment, and potentially permanent. To have your handprints erased was to have your identity and status stripped from you, and the footprint was a warning to other groups in the camp. Not even the Rats would accept an outcast Chalker.

"Leave! Get out!" Mechanically, I got up and started walking. The reality of what had happened had yet to fully register.

"Crawl!" someone demanded, but it was a while before someone physically pushed me down. I crawled on my hands and knees through the puddle of water outside the camp. A few Chalkers had followed, and continued to spit on me and voice their disgust. Once I had reached the common area which was once the garbage dump I had no idea where to go.

My options were the Normalized camp to one side, and the Rats to the other. I curled up on the ground until the other Chalkers were tired of abusing me and went away, then crawled over to sit by a garbage bin, drawing up my knees and wrapping my arms around them. My face was wet, but by tears or water from the puddle I had been forced into I was not really sure.

When I moved away from the rat tunnel I had been leaning against, I discovered that my back, still wet with paint, had left an imprint upon it. Face to face with the silhouette of a footprint, it hit me: For the first time in Zealand, I was truly alone.



## Helplessness

There was no way to avoid the horrors of Zeeland. You could hear, see, smell and feel them wherever you turned. Eventually you were subjected to participation, whether it be as an unwilling victim or perpetrator, but what strikes me afterwards about it is the apathy of the witnesses - myself included. The reluctance to step in to prevent abuse of even those closest to you, and resignation to the fact that such was simply the way of things. I doubt that screams or cries for help ever availed anyone in Zeeland.

*I had just bid someone called to Room 5 farewell for the very last time, but the recollection of who it was has faded into the shadows of what happened afterwards. It had taken me a while to tear myself away from the bars of the cage, and everyone else had gone back to camp. I rose from the nearby podium, where I had spent a few minutes collecting my thoughts and process my grief and turned to walk back - then stopped dead in my tracks. Softy was walking towards me, leisurely, in no hurry.*

*For a moment I thought I could dodge him by going around the small podium - then I realized that he had not come alone. There were two of them, and they split to approach from both sides. There was only one way for me to go - backwards, straight into the dark corner, and they knew that as well as I. Even behind his mask, malicious triumph was written on his face. Panic turned into almost immediate resignation. Whether I slid onto the floor myself or was forced I don't know.*

"I told you I would be back," Softy said, crouching next to me before instructing his companion, a blonde Rat, to restrain my hands. I was sobbing before he even touched me, but likely incapable of coherent speech. I know I soon begged for him to stop, which is probably what he wanted. The very reason he was so brutal.

He paused and tilted his head curiously for a moment, asked me whether I was bleeding, then continued, gently, while calmly asking me whether I truly wanted him to stop. Then he offered me the chance to play a game. I refused initially. Moments later, desperate for it all to end, I agreed. They explained that if I went and found them another to take my place, they would let me go. Coming back empty handed or trying to hide would make them start over.

I rose unsteadily and tried to compose myself as I went off in search of another victim. I was certain whoever I approached would be able to tell by my dissheveled appearance that something was up. Eventually, I met a Normalized woman whom I had always sincerely disliked, a feeling which appeared to be mutual. I told her that someone had expressed a desire to talk to her up by the cage. She looked puzzled, but went there. I stayed long enough to watch the Rats each place a hand on her shoulders, then bolted.

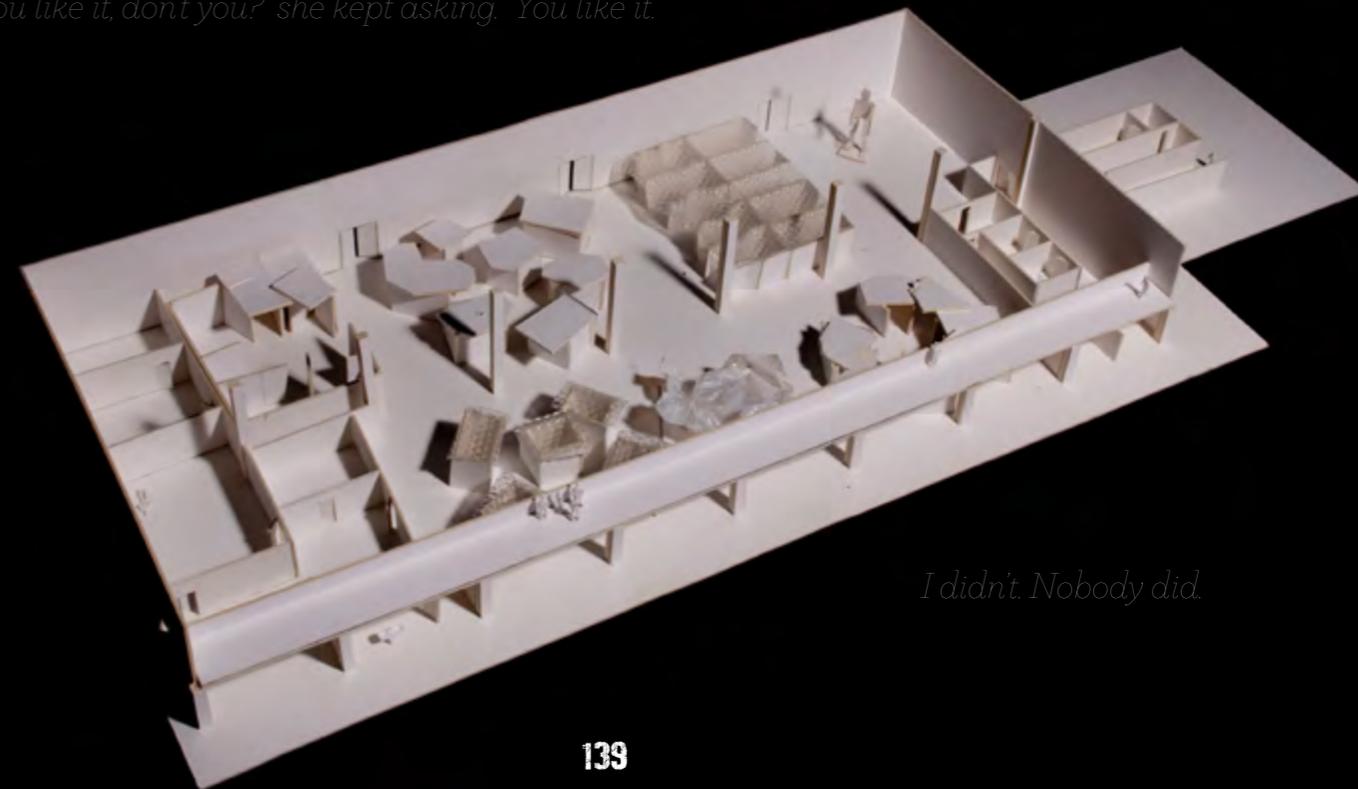
Knowing what they were going to subject her to, I felt terribly guilty, enough that the relief of having escaped myself was mostly blotted out. I tried to explain to someone what had happened, and was told that it was my own fault, that it was past, to forget about it. I was hoping for sympathy and was met with rejection, as was usually the case in Zeeland. Amazing how that never ceased to surprise me.

## Revenge

It took me completely by surprise when suddenly I found myself face to face with the woman I had lured into Softy's trap. Her hands were balled into fists, her face contorted with fury. I am not certain what she said, but I think she demanded to know whether I had found it amusing, that little trick. I opened my mouth to explain it all, to apologize, but I doubt words came out before she grabbed me.

She wrestled me to the ground, forced me backwards, down. I heard the sound of fabric ripping, then I impacted hard with the partially padded floor of a familiar place – the Chalker Sleeping Tent. A second later she bore down on me, grappled at me, tore at my clothing, cursing. She was going to repay what they had done to her.

"You like it, don't you?" she kept asking. "You like it."



*I didn't. Nobody did.*



WHEN THEY STARTED THE END-MUSIC  
I WAS KIND OF UNCERTAIN WHETHER  
WE WERE SUPPOSED TO GO OFFGAME  
IMMEDIATELY OR AT THE END OF THE  
SONG OR...?

ONCE THE GATE OPENED, HOWEVER, THERE  
WAS NO DOUBT THAT IT WAS OVER.

- RIKKE MUNCHKIN SØRENSEN



# The diary of S73

By Mads Holst (S73)

This diary was written during the LARP scenario KAPO in the first weekend of October 2011. Before the scenario we, the players, had prepared a lot. We had two weekends with workshops before the scenario. At the workshops we had talked a lot of how bad this was going to be and many of the potential nasty things that we might be doing to each other. Strangely enough I have never felt so safe at a LARP before. I trusted my fellow players and the organisers completely.

There are in the text describe some very nasty things and it is important for me to point out, that nothing of that happened for real. There was no stunt fighting in the setting because that it could be potential dangerous. The situations at interrogation were not as hard as described. Most of it was simulated but still it felt real.

Another thing was that every loving touch of a person was done using a roleplay technique called 'Ars Amandi'. The technique is that you only touch each others arms and that is from the most gentile touch of love to the most brutal rape. That means that you can simulate a lot without passing peoples intimate boundaries but the feelings is still there. It didn't felt good but that was a part of the idea. When you are a friendly person it is hard to be mean. For me it was.

I shall apologise for my English. It is too many years since I have written anything in English, the original manuscript was in Danish, but I hope that you get the feeling of the diary.

Hope that you enjoy the words.

- Mads Holst/S73

## 1st day in prison

I write this to have proof when I get out.

I was arrested yesterday when I came home from the graduation ceremony at law school. As Professor in Human Right I was one of the speakers. I told the graduates that they had an important mission when they left today.

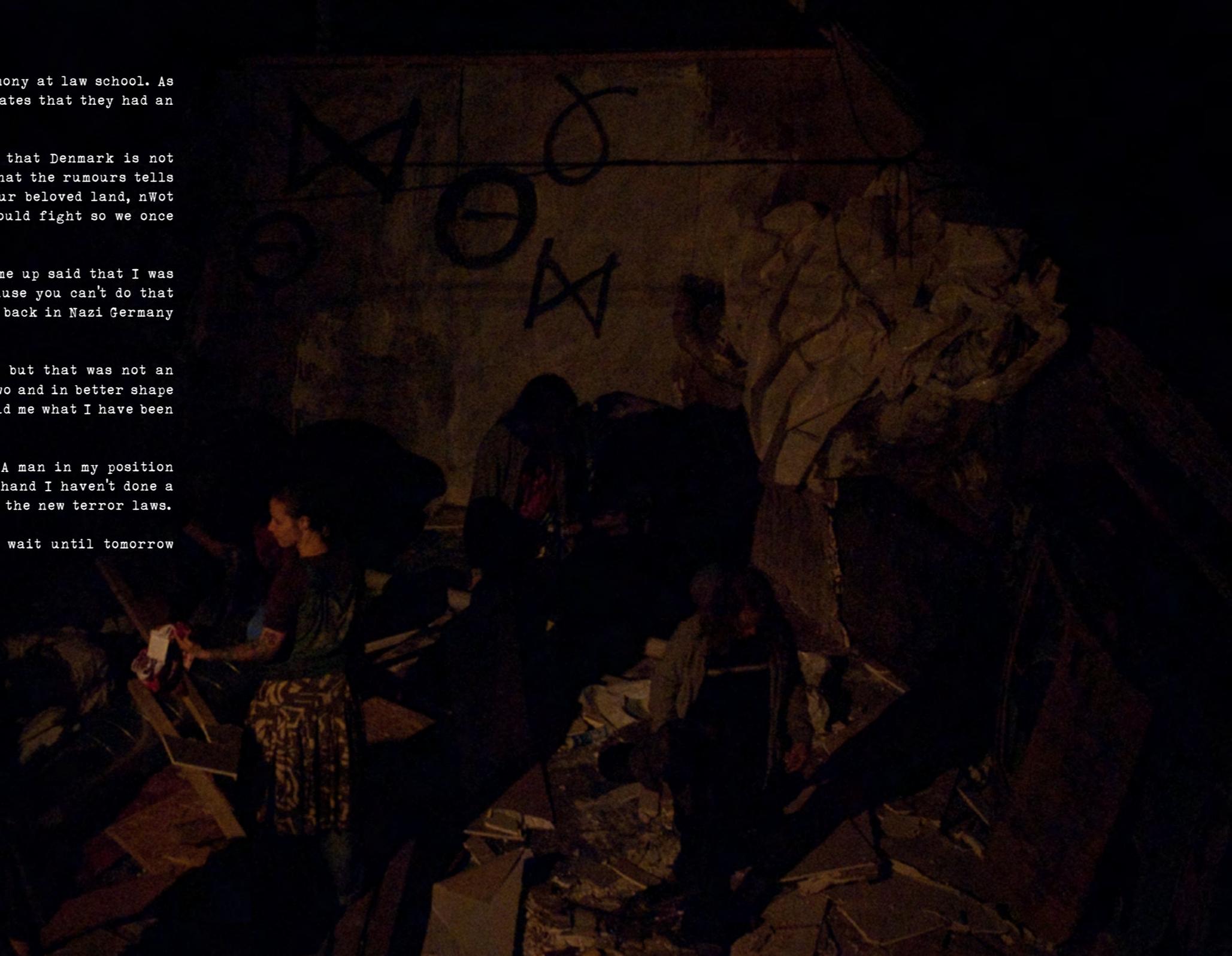
They should stop ignorance and stupidity in society and make sure that Denmark is not heading in the wrong direction as a fascist state because, that is what the rumours tells me are going on at the moment. They should fight this takeover of our beloved land, nWot with weapons but with words because that's what lawyers do. They should fight so we once again could be proud of Denmark.

Or, I'm not sure that I was arrested. The two policemen that picked me up said that I was "detained for threats against the State,.". That's just ridiculous because you can't do that in Denmark. I pointed out that it sounded like protective arrest used back in Nazi Germany but nothing helped.

I asked if I could be allowed to leave a message for my wife Susan but that was not an option. In a crazy moment I considered fighting them but they were two and in better shape than me so I followed them freely. No one has through my detention told me what I have been charged with and no one is listening.

Just wait until I get to talk to a superior then they will regret. A man in my position will be missed and I have friends in the right places. On the other hand I haven't done a thing and therefore they have to let me go in the morning even with the new terror laws.

There is nothing I can do now so I think I will go to sleep. Can't wait until tomorrow because someone is going to loose their job for this. I don't hope that Susan is getting too worried.



## 2nd day in prison

Today nothing happened. At the other side of the cell door I can hear people yelling but the only thing that have happened today is that I've been given food through a slot in the door. I must have been here more than 24 hours, so they have to let me go. I don't know what time it is because they took my watch when I was put in the cell. Another thing is that someone must worry about me. Something must happen soon.

I don't hope that Susan is too worried about me. She wouldn't want to scare our daughter Mona. I swear somebody is going to loose their job over this.

## 3rd day in prison

Nothing happened today and it makes me crazy. This is exactly why we as a society based on the rule of law should be extremely cautious of using solitary confinement. No matter how hard I knock on the door, nothing happens. I get food 3 times a day and the guy that delivers it must be deaf and dumb. I could need a bath and a clean shirt. Susan must be dying of concern at the moment. If only I could call home to tell her where I am. I begin to fear that all the stories of how bad shape society is in, is true. If that's true I'm surely fucked.

## 4th day in prison

Today I was at interrogation. My interrogator told me that I was charged with a number of different things. Among others I was convicted for treason to the state of Denmark, participation in theft of public documents and abuse of power. In addition, to that I have as a professor in law at the university where I work, helped some people with legal advice and those people had been convicted of treason as well.

I told him that I would like to se these accusations in court because that is just nonsense, but he just laughed at me. People charged with treason don't go to court, or that was what my interrogator told me. I can't believe it; I hope he just said that to scare me. This is too far out for Denmark. The interrogator told me that I should just confess everything and tell him who my co-conspirators were or he would make me regret that decision. I laughed at him because it sounded like a line from a bad action movie I saw once.

After that I was followed back to my cell. On the way back we passed some other interrogation cells and it sounded like someone was being beaten in there. I'm sure that this is just the old trick of having a tape-recorded standing in an empty room with noises from a brutal interrogation only to scare the other prisoners. We don't use torture in Denmark. not anymore.

## 5th day in prison

I'm upset and afraid. I barely know what to write. I was interrogated again today and they did everything they could to make me regret. The interrogation leader first asked me if I had anything to confess. My answer was still 'no'. I was handcuffed and then he hit me so hard that I slammed against the wall. He then kicked me a few times and put me back in the chair to ask me the same question.

My answer was still the same. He hit me again and this time I ended up half unconscious. After that it was time for shock treatment and it just continued. I must have been unconscious at a time for the next thing I remember was being back in my cell. It hurts just to move a muscle in my body and my right leg is hurting so much. I fear it might be broken. I'm so tired and hurt. If I just knew what they wanted me to say or to confess, then I would gladly do it.

Susan I miss you and Mona so much. I miss to feel you both in my arms where you belong. Susan, I have not always been a good husband. Forgive me.

## 8th day in prison

I have been interrogated every day for the last couple of days. No matter what I'm saying the guards just keep beating me. It's hopeless. Had no energy to write the last few days. Can't move a muscle without my whole body hurts. It helps thinking of Mona and Susan. It gives me strength. Mona has only lived 12 years and she deserves a better Denmark. I hold on for my daughter, I owe her that much.

## Xth day in prison

I can't recognize the days from each other. Every day I'm being dragged to interrogation. Beating is the standard now and all the time I'm afraid that this is it, now they are going to kill me. But they don't. Other times days goes by without anything happens which is almost just as bad. The isolation makes me crazy. I need someone to talk to. I need to hold out for my daughter. She deserves a better future in Denmark.

Why is there no one looking for me? What take them so long?

### Xth day in prison

A doctor was present today at the interrogation. He injected me with something that made me see double and become quite tired. I can't remember much from today but I hope that what I might have said today isn't causing any trouble for someone I know.

### Xth day in prison

I heard some of the guards talking about me being transferred later on. I had told them everything they needed. I fear what I might have told them under the influence of drugs. Is this going to harm other because of me? They told me to pack my few belongings, as to indicate that I'm leaving tomorrow.

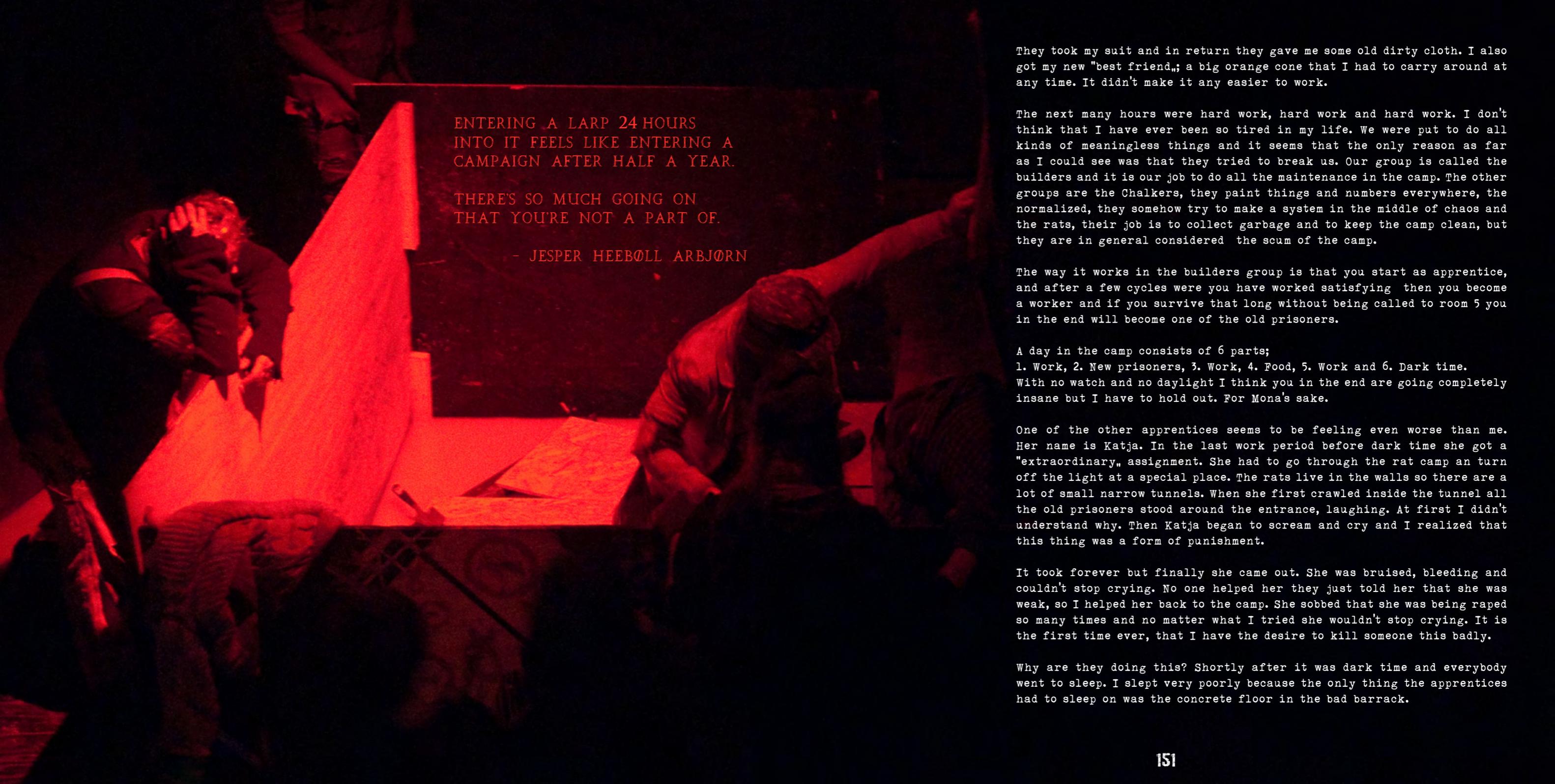
### Cycle 1

I got handcuffed and was dragged out into a dark car. I don't know for how long time, but it must have been long because I fell asleep. At the camp I was first put in a chair and my new number was tattooed on my right forearm and on the right side of my neck, S73. My picture was taken and after that I was led into a dark corridor that led into a cage in an almost dark factory floor. The only light was centred on the cage. Other unlucky people were already in the cage. The first I noticed was the smells that hang in the air. It smelled old and you could almost taste water and paint in the air. Out from the darkness came the inhabitants of this place. All of them look like hobos.

Their clothes and faces were dirty and they began to gather around the cage. They were all completely silent but I could feel their eyes and they were not friendly. The light then turned off and it was completely dark. Then the light began to blink and all the people around the cage began to hit on the cage and scream like animals. I was terrified. People in the cage tried to get as far away from the bars as possible, and we all gathered in the middle, like a group of small animals. Then the light turned on again and the noise stopped.

The leaders stepped up in front of the door to the cage and began to bargain of the people in the cage. When they all agreed they sent people in to take us out of the cage one by one. Some people in the cage looked like they knew each other and clung to each other but for little help. All were brutally separated from each other. I was chosen as one of the last one in the cage and was chosen by a group that looked like craftsmen because they were all having some kind of tools but none of less their cloth was still dirty and ruined.





ENTERING A LARP 24 HOURS  
INTO IT FEELS LIKE ENTERING A  
CAMPAIGN AFTER HALF A YEAR.

THERE'S SO MUCH GOING ON  
THAT YOU'RE NOT A PART OF.

- JESPER HEEBØLL ARBJØRN

They took my suit and in return they gave me some old dirty cloth. I also got my new "best friend"; a big orange cone that I had to carry around at any time. It didn't make it any easier to work.

The next many hours were hard work, hard work and hard work. I don't think that I have ever been so tired in my life. We were put to do all kinds of meaningless things and it seems that the only reason as far as I could see was that they tried to break us. Our group is called the builders and it is our job to do all the maintenance in the camp. The other groups are the Chalkers, they paint things and numbers everywhere, the normalized, they somehow try to make a system in the middle of chaos and the rats, their job is to collect garbage and to keep the camp clean, but they are in general considered the scum of the camp.

The way it works in the builders group is that you start as apprentice, and after a few cycles were you have worked satisfying then you become a worker and if you survive that long without being called to room 5 you in the end will become one of the old prisoners.

A day in the camp consists of 6 parts;  
1. Work, 2. New prisoners, 3. Work, 4. Food, 5. Work and 6. Dark time.  
With no watch and no daylight I think you in the end are going completely insane but I have to hold out. For Mona's sake.

One of the other apprentices seems to be feeling even worse than me. Her name is Katja. In the last work period before dark time she got a "extraordinary," assignment. She had to go through the rat camp an turn off the light at a special place. The rats live in the walls so there are a lot of small narrow tunnels. When she first crawled inside the tunnel all the old prisoners stood around the entrance, laughing. At first I didn't understand why. Then Katja began to scream and cry and I realized that this thing was a form of punishment.

It took forever but finally she came out. She was bruised, bleeding and couldn't stop crying. No one helped her they just told her that she was weak, so I helped her back to the camp. She sobbed that she was being raped so many times and no matter what I tried she wouldn't stop crying. It is the first time ever, that I have the desire to kill someone this badly.

Why are they doing this? Shortly after it was dark time and everybody went to sleep. I slept very poorly because the only thing the apprentices had to sleep on was the concrete floor in the bad barrack.

## Cycle 2

I woke up after what felt like ten minutes of sleep and realized that Katja was gone. One of the old prisoners told me that he had seen her going to the cage. At the cage where the door you should go to if you were called to interrogation. Room 1-4 was normal interrogation and room 5... well if you were called to room 5 you would never return. Nobody knew what was happen to the people that left but everybody had their own theories.

You could as well go through the door even if you weren't called but then you would be taken straight to room 5. The old prisoner told me that Katja had gone that way. They broke her and I hate them for it. I'm an apprentice under an old prisoner called Skipper. He is a very hard man and nothing is good enough for him. Every time I have finished something it has to redone again and again and again. I have no idea if it is him who is an idiot or if it is because I'm just bad at it. There was a reason why I chose university. The food had been horrible until now. This time it was frozen soup.

## Cycle 3

I've done so well that I have been promoted to worker and I even got my new name. It seems that you get your name at that point. When I arrived in the camp my leg was damaged and I therefore needed to use a metal stick as a crutch. That is my new name, Stick. Being a worker means that I now am allowed to sleep in a better barrack. It was amazing for the first time in I don't even know how long to be able to sleep well. Another benefit of being worker is that you shall not carry on your best friend anymore.

New prisoners arrived in the cage and this time, it was me, along with the other builders, who should humiliate them so that they were able to know their place. Not a very pleasant thing to do but I had to, to keep what little status I had. I sometimes think that I'm a part of Dante's Inferno, one of the worst parts. If I just knew what my crime was. I have always tried to be a good man. I started my writing to secure evidence. Now I write to survive mentally but I don't know how long I can keep it up.

## Cycle 4

I can't take it anymore. Things is just repeating them self again and again and again and again. Every time we get new prisoners I feel like I'm losing a little bit of my self and my humanity. I feel like I'm dying a little bit inside every time. I have once claimed, that humans are born good and that it is only the circumstances that makes us evil. I now realise that I was wrong. Humans are born evil and stupid and it is only society's rules that stop us from doing what ever we want.

## Cycle X

Once again I've lost track of time. I don't know how many cycles I have been here and over time one cycle takes another. Today I was assaulted by one of the normalized, Ink. She assaulted me for no reason. I was completely paralyzed. Her eyes reminded me of the female commander who was in charge when I was taken as a prisoner while posted as a UN soldier. The commander forced me to watch while her men raped, tortured and killed a young girl in front of me. I couldn't save the girl then and I'm ashamed of my self. Both for that time and for now. I should have fought harder and saved the girl.

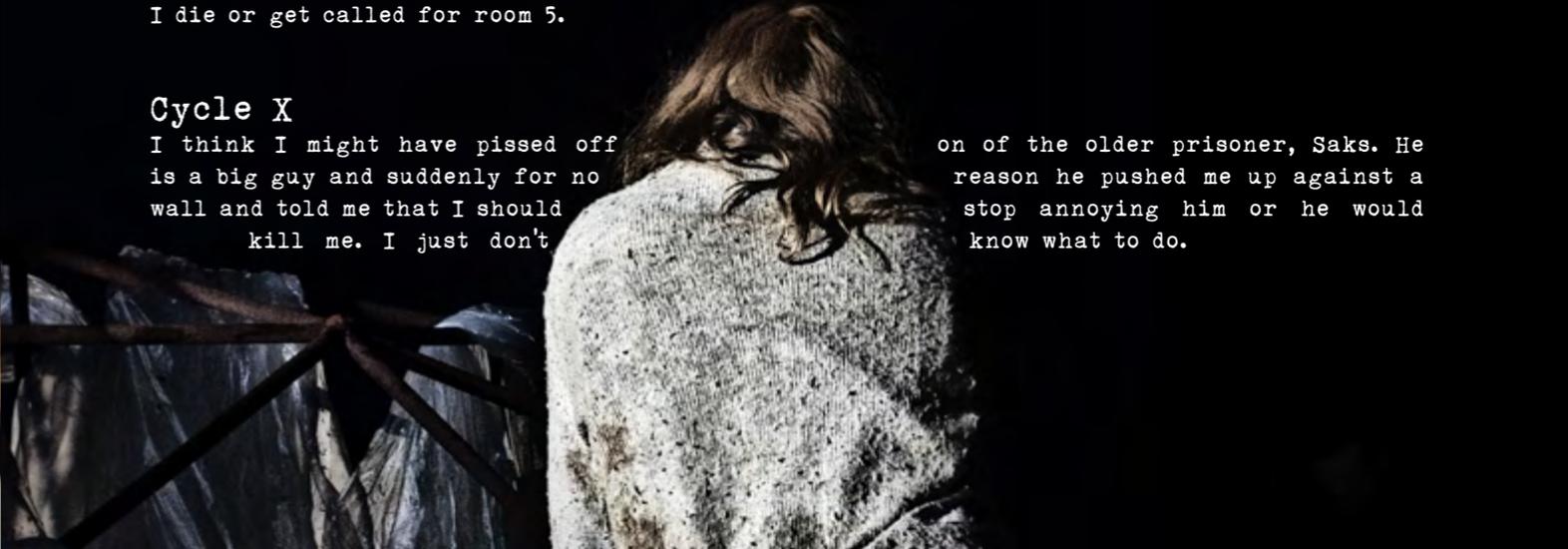
## Cycle X

New prisoners come and go and the same routines are repeated again and again. Some prisoners are being called to "normal," interrogation in room 1-4 and other is called to room 5. People who go to room number 5 don't return. I don't even feel like a human anymore. I have done so much that I would rather forget. I have realized that there is no chance for me, leaving this place alive.

My position in society is too high and I'm capable of causing too much damage to the system, so I had to go. I'll never see my wife and daughter again, not in this life at least. I hope they are able to forgive me. I must accept my fate, and just try to survive in here until I die or get called for room 5.

## Cycle X

I think I might have pissed off on of the older prisoner, Saks. He is a big guy and suddenly for no reason he pushed me up against a wall and told me that I should stop annoying him or he would kill me. I just don't know what to do.



## Cycle X

I have been living here so long now that I've become one of the old prisoners. I have no idea of how long I have been here; it could be months, or even years. The cycles keep repeating again and again to infinity and even though I've tried not to, I've lost my counting.

The old barrack KAPO has been called to room 5. His position is now free for anyone to claim. I'm still afraid of what Saks might do to me and therefore I have convinced my mentor Skipper that I should be the new barrack KAPO. As long as I'm in charge Saks can't touch me. I was elected barrack KAPO, so now I'm safe. But the problem is that; in order to keep my position I have to kick down on the other prisoners. It is not a thing I like to do, but it's them or me.

*(here the larp begins)*

## Cycle XX

I haven't been writing for a long time. I think that I had given up on it all. I even considered suicide but then the system would win. By my existence I beat the system.

New prisoners have arrived again. We got two new apprentices, a man and a woman. Unfortunately the woman is Swedish and don't understand any Danish. It was my decision to pick her, which puts me in a bad light because she's Swedish. But it was either her or a big Swedish man; he works harder, eats more and takes up more space. At least she eats less. Ink is still after me. At the cage she got hold on me again. I have tried to talk to her but that woman is insane.

I believe I saw Maria around the cage today. What is she doing here? She was completely innocent (a poor girl with a mental illness). I used to help her getting through the hard parts of life; she hasn't done anything wrong except of being a poor and sad girl. I can only fear that was my disappearance was what tipped her over the edge. She was so fragile. Oh Lord, what have I done? Why didn't I just shout up and bow my head like I was supposed to? I should have thought of the safety of my family and my loved ones.

No it can't be Maria! Am I seeing ghosts? Or did I finally go insane?

That pestering woman Ink swung by our camp today. She specifically asked for me and demanded that I should come over to the normalized camp and fix a broken light. I fear the worst but there is no reason in postponing the inevitable. When I walked down to the normalized camp Ink saw her chance to assault me again. It was not that bad she was only toying with me, just showing me that she still was the strongest. I saw Maria in the normalized camp; she is one of them now. She wouldn't know by me. She was standing all apathetic crying. What have I done?

## Cycle XX

New prisoners arrival, again. This time we got our hands on a priest. I wanted her she might be one worth talking to, but Soem got her as his apprentice instead. That bastard. I'm number 2 on the interrogation-list. Room number 3. No reason to hide for the inevitable. I must take it as a man. They must not win. If this is the last thing I write, then forgive me, Susan. Forgive me that I shall never hold you and Mona in my arms again.

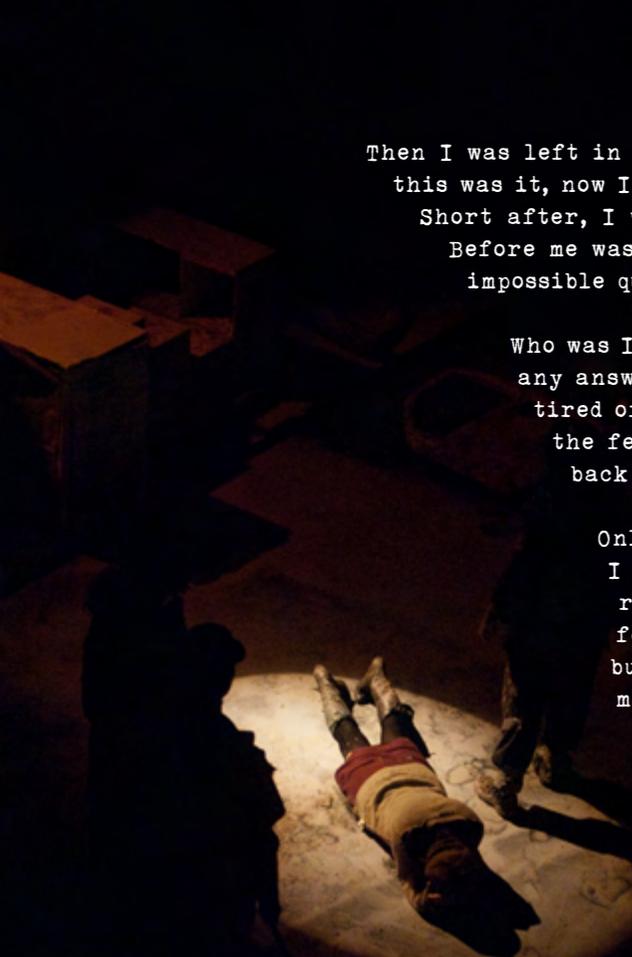
Instead of the priest I got another apprentice. He was a craftsman before he was taken, that might just turn out to be an advantage for me.

Still waiting for my number to turn red. The waiting is driving me insane. Waiting is the worst. Finally my number turns red. I left my coat in the camp and walked to the cage. None of the builders followed me, but one of the chalkers, Tråd walked me up there. I guess that she is the closest to a friend that I'll ever get in here. I felt that I could tell her everything, even my true feelings.

I was afraid that the guards would beat me to death, and the fear made my whole body shake. I waited in the cage and short after a guard came out the door. He chained my hands, pulled a bag over my head, hearing protectors over my ears and then followed me to interrogation.

First they threw me on the floor where they would kick and hit me. Then I was dragged in to another room where a big guard who was wearing a balaclava was spraying me with cold water from a hose.

I was freezing and my clothing was soaked. Afterwards they left me in a room with a loud, unknown noise playing in the background, similar to the sounds from a TV, I don't know how long I was lying there, but it felt like forever. Suddenly I was grabbed and the interrogation continued with more beatings, stress positions and the cold, at last I lost track of time.



Then I was left in a stack of what felt like dead bodies and I thought that this was it, now I was going to die. Then one of the bodies moved and talked. Short after, I was taken to another room where they put me in a chair. Before me was a guard wearing a black balaclava. I was asked the same impossible questions over and over again.

Who was I working with to conspire against the state?. I didn't have any answers because I didn't do anything. In the end the guard was tired of asking questions and he said that this was the end. I had the feeling that the guard behind me was pointing a gun to the back of my head and the feeling of despair grew inside me.

Only half wearing my cloth I was thrown back in the camp. I trembled back to my bunk in the builder's camp. I can't remember when I have been hurt so badly or if I ever have felt so much pain. I didn't think I was able to cry anymore but I cried myself to sleep. I can't take it anymore. I miss my wife and my daughter. I miss them so much it hurts.

I only slept shortly. It was the next part of the cycle and Diva woke me up, it was time to work. I was interrogated while the others got food and there were almost nothing left for me. All I got was leftovers.

I'm in so much pain that I can barely move. Skipper has gotten me some gin from the rats. It takes a little of the pain.

I can't take it anymore. Maria has been kicked out of the normalized camp. She was standing crying as I limped by. I couldn't do anything to help her. I was in to much pain. Only one time in my life I have felt so helpless. Could hell be worse?

Maria has returned to the normalized camp. She told me that she is happy now and everything is good. I don't know what is worse? The fact that she is here or that she is lost. The fragile and lovely girl I knew is gone. When the darkness settled I found out that Diva had given away my sleeping gear to the new apprentices. I got most of it back but I have reason to believe that Diva is trying to overthrow me.

## Cycle XX

I have slept miserably. The first thing I did when I woke up was to go to the apprentices and get my sleeping gear back.

New prisoners and among them is Kathrine. She was my contact inside the system and now she has been taken as well. I fear that they found her through me. She was chosen in the cage to be a builder. She became Pusles apprentice but Pusle had something else to do and therefore I had some time to talk to Kathrine. Kathrine was called to interrogation in the same cycle. She returned quite fast, because she had hit a doctor in the head. The other builders then assaulted and punished her because you never go against the system without consequences. Because of her we might not get any food next cycle. I was forced to participate in her punishment otherwise I might lose my status in the camp. I hate myself. The food in this cycle was hot and consisted of beans and carrots. Food that actually tasted of something. NICE.

When dark time came I went on my normal round in the camp to see if all builders were home. I met Maria in a corner in front of the normalized camp. She was crying because she once again had become an outcast. She was sent away from the normalized camp and she had no place to sleep. Her only other option was to sleep in the rat camp and take the consequences. I felt sorry for her and then I smuggled her into our camp where she borrowed my sleeping gear for the night. I watched her sleep and she looked so peaceful. She was even snoring a bit.

One moment I felt that I have done something good, she was safe. I, on the other hand, didn't sleep at all. I was afraid that someone would notice her. The other builder would surely punish me if she was caught. I might have slept a little but nothing more than just one minute.

## Cycle XX

At the break of light I got Maria out of the camp in a hurry. Luckily no one saw her, or at least I think so. Diva, the work KAPO, has been overthrown. One of the new prisoners, the priest who had got the name Knob, and Pusle asked questions about Diva's work and with the blink of an eye Diva was overthrown. I didn't do much to help her because she had given my sleeping gear to the apprentices last dark time so I didn't know if she could be trusted.

Maybe it was stupid of me, because the rumours in here talks about that Diva is a complete psychopath and had killed two people even before I entered the camp.

Diva was put in the "shower", and humiliated. The shower was a little wooden box in the end of the camp. It measured 1 times 1 meter and 2 meter high with a hole in the top. When you were put in the Shower the other would close the door and pour 5 litres of cold dirty water through the hole.

At first it was Söm who were chosen to be the new work KAPO. He didn't want it so it was Vaesel who ended up being work KAPO. I made sure that Diva got her vengeance later in the cycle. Knob had in all secrecy made a big wooden cross out of two pieces of wood from the storage and painted some letters from the bible on it. This was strictly forbidden and she was forced to destroy the cross and afterwards she was punished by all the other builders.

She was crying the whole time. I told this to Diva and together we forced Knob out on the storage where we put her on the ground and punished her severely. We left her crying at the storage floor. How could assault and punishment become so normal that you just do it without thinking? I did it to keep my status. I kept my status but I lost my humanity. I'm not a human anymore.

Parker has now also being overthrown. Köter is now food KAPO. New prisoners again. I have got a new apprentice. He's not totally useless. I'm sure that I saw Susanne, an old girlfriend, among the new prisoners. She was in fact the first girl I really loved. I refused to believe it, but it was true. Because later that cycle I met her in the camp. She had changed a lot since we dated 20 years ago but she was still beautiful. She cried in my arms. I'm not sure if I can take it anymore.

Ink came by the builder's camp. She had been interrogated and suffered from some kind of amnesia. I took advantage of that and assaulted and punished her as revenge for all the times she had assaulted me. I left her crying in a corner of the camp. How is that assault and punishment is something I just do. I have lost everything now.

If I can do anything, if I'm being called to interrogation again I will whatever they want to save Susanne. Köter hasn't been seen for a while and when food was distributed he wasn't there. No food for us this cycle. We had to drink water instead to stop the hunger. When we find him he will be punished. Work Kapo Vaesel is called for room 5. New work Kapo is Parker. New food Kapo is Kathrine/Börste. Köter was back and we punished him as he deserved. We left him in the water near the chalkers crying then the rats could take him if they wanted him.

Later on I met Maria. I think she still is an outcast but she seems to be doing better. She gave me a paper butterfly as a token of her gratitude. She has had it concealed in the collar of her blouse so the other normalised wouldn't find it. In their camp they have no pockets for in pockets there can be secrets and you don't keep secrets for your new family.

I cried when she gave it to me.

I haven't seen Susanne in a while. She's with the rats. I fear what's going to happen to her. My apprentice has got the job to turn off the light at the rats. Poor him. A girl with pink hair contacted me while I was working. She was the one who desperately held on to Susanne when they arrived in the cage earlier. She told me that she was 18 years old and Susanne's only child.

It fits very well that Susanne was pregnant when we split up 19 years ago. She says that she might be my daughter but she didn't know. Susanne is still missing. I must have an answer.

I'm tired and hungry. I need to sleep soon.

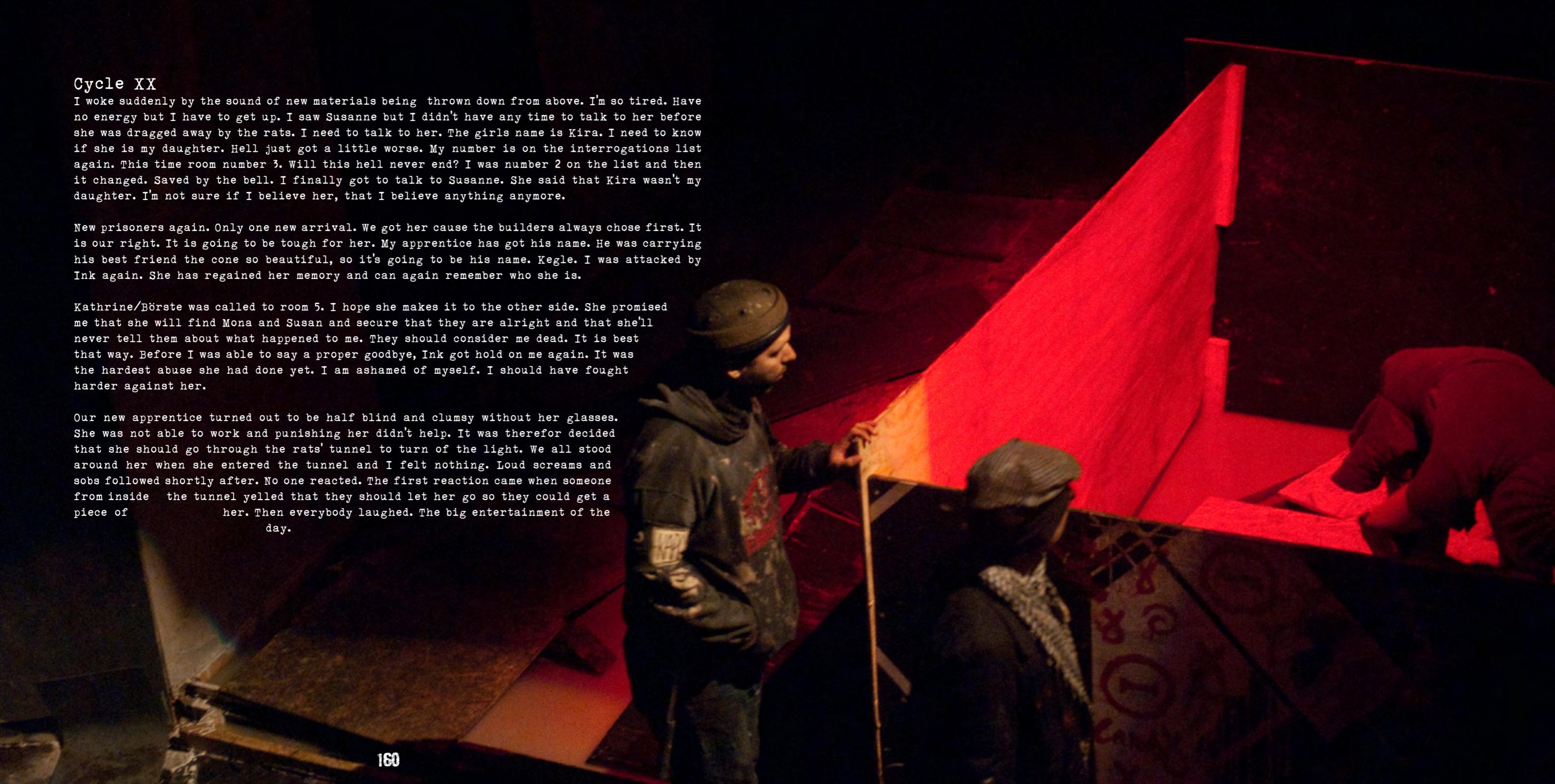
## Cycle XX

I woke suddenly by the sound of new materials being thrown down from above. I'm so tired. Have no energy but I have to get up. I saw Susanne but I didn't have any time to talk to her before she was dragged away by the rats. I need to talk to her. The girls name is Kira. I need to know if she is my daughter. Hell just got a little worse. My number is on the interrogations list again. This time room number 3. Will this hell never end? I was number 2 on the list and then it changed. Saved by the bell. I finally got to talk to Susanne. She said that Kira wasn't my daughter. I'm not sure if I believe her, that I believe anything anymore.

New prisoners again. Only one new arrival. We got her cause the builders always chose first. It is our right. It is going to be tough for her. My apprentice has got his name. He was carrying his best friend the cone so beautiful, so it's going to be his name. Kegle. I was attacked by Ink again. She has regained her memory and can again remember who she is.

Kathrine/Börste was called to room 5. I hope she makes it to the other side. She promised me that she will find Mona and Susan and secure that they are alright and that she'll never tell them about what happened to me. They should consider me dead. It is best that way. Before I was able to say a proper goodbye, Ink got hold on me again. It was the hardest abuse she had done yet. I am ashamed of myself. I should have fought harder against her.

Our new apprentice turned out to be half blind and clumsy without her glasses. She was not able to work and punishing her didn't help. It was therefor decided that she should go through the rats' tunnel to turn of the light. We all stood around her when she entered the tunnel and I felt nothing. Loud screams and sobs followed shortly after. No one reacted. The first reaction came when someone from inside the tunnel yelled that they should let her go so they could get a piece of her. Then everybody laughed. The big entertainment of the day.



When the new inept apprentice re-entered our camp we traded her to the chalkers for one of their new ones. We got Kira and I became her master. Even though she is not my daughter I still feel a lot of affection towards her.

Ink came by the camp. She had lost her memory again. I was working together with Kira but I left her while I forced Ink into the storage in our camp. I got my revenge for last time she was after me. I left her in crying in foetal position. That bitch. Then it was food time. Warm oatmeal with blackberries, the salt/sweet taste of porridge and berries tasted good, the best we have had in many cycles. There is starting to be disorder in the numbers for those being called for interrogation. I looked away for one moment, and when I looked again Kira was gone.

She left her best friend behind and I saw her go through the door for room 5. I believe she saw what I did to Ink and now she hates me for being a monster. Susanne was completely destroyed when I told her that Kira had left. What have I done? The System is broken. Many people are being called for room number 5, even some of the old prisoners. Susanne blames me for Kira's disappearance which causes her to hate me. Why! Why could I not protect Kira?

My number is on the list. I'm up for room 5. I'm afraid of what is going to happen. Dark time arrived right before my number was up. Ink told me that she would punish me if I didn't let her speak to one of the apprentices. Skipper found out and took my KAPO armband. The band I kept around my arm as a symbol of my status. He told me that this was a matter that would be discussed after dark time.

At the moment I was standing with Maria in my arms saying goodbye. How will I now be able to help her? She is an outcast from the normalized camp and has no place to sleep. I shall leave in the next cycle and she can't stop crying. Neither can I. What can I do? Who shall take care of her? I left her at last and walked away with heavy steps, and an even heavier heart. I needed rest but I couldn't sleep I was afraid of what was going to happen when dark time ends. Must sleep now.

### Last cycle

Got up. Skipper put it as the first topic of the day that I had failed the darktime before. After the others had mutilated me, it was up to the new prisoners in the camp to decide what was going to happen to me. They decided to put me in the shower. Now my clothes are all soaking wet before I'm going to interrogation.

I'm been put to build with Pusle. She won't talk to me or see my way because I have failed. I'm number 4 on the list for room 5 and Diva is going right after me. I'm toggles my last nail in the board for those that have left us. I have hidden my sleeping bag somewhere outside our camp so I can give it to Maria. That's the last thing I can do for her, the only thing.

Maria is disconsolate. How will she survive without me to take care of her? Now I'm number 1 on the list.

By the cage Maria is clinging to me. Two of the chalkers had been inside the cage. On the wall behind the cage, there was someone who had painted. It is only the chalkers who are allowed to paint so that the person who had done it should have his punishment. The painting was a handprint, Maria's number and the chalkers sign for hope. I think she did it for my sake. The two chalkers molested Maria straight in front of me and there was nothing I could do to stop it because behind me stood the other builders and waited for my departure. In our group you help no one for else you are considered weak. I gave Pusle my gloves.

Where I'm going I don't need them anymore. When the two chalkers had finished I pick Maria up. She cried and so did I. I told her that I loved her. She has been the last thing that has kept me from losing my humanity. Then my number turned red and I had to go in to the cage. Maria clung to me and wouldn't let go. I tried to push her away for the longer she held the worse it would be for her when I was gone. I could not get her to let go of me not until two builders forced her from me and then I entered the cage.

Around the cage stood most of the builders and looked at me. I could not judge whether there was sadness or disgust in their eyes so I turned around and faced the guard. He threw my hat on the floor and pushed me up against the wall. While he put cuffs on my hands I saw Maria on the other side of the cage with her arms reaching through the bars trying to reach me, she was crying. The guard pushed her away.

So I got the bag over my head and the last I heard before the hearing protectors were put on my ears were someone who was yelling "we will take good care of your little friend.". After that the guard pushed me through the door to room number 5. Everything is lost, I'll not be returning.

I JUST CAME HOME FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE BEFORE KAPO, AND EXPERIENCED A VERY VIOLENT REACTION I HADN'T SEEN COMING AT ALL.

I CAN'T STOP CRYING AND I HATE, HATE, HATE BEING HERE, IT MAKES ME PHYSICALLY SICK. NO IDEA WHERE IT'S COMING FROM, AND I THOUGHT I WAS MUCH FURTHER ALONG IN MY OWN DE-FUCKING PROCESS.

- LISELLE AWWAL

### In the cell after interrogation

I don't know for how long the interrogations went on. I was dragged from place to place. First stop was a place where I repeatedly was forced to hold out my hands and then a guard would hit them with something hard. My hands are hurting so much that I hardly can write anymore. Second stop was the water room. I was put on my knees and was sprayed in the face with cold water every time I answered incorrectly to the questions the guard yelled at me. I barely understood the questions. Several times, I had the feeling of drowning.

Then I ended up at the doctor where I was tied to a hospital bed. I was crying while he took blood samples. I think he misread the tears and thought I was afraid of him. Perhaps I was but mostly I was crying over what I have lost.

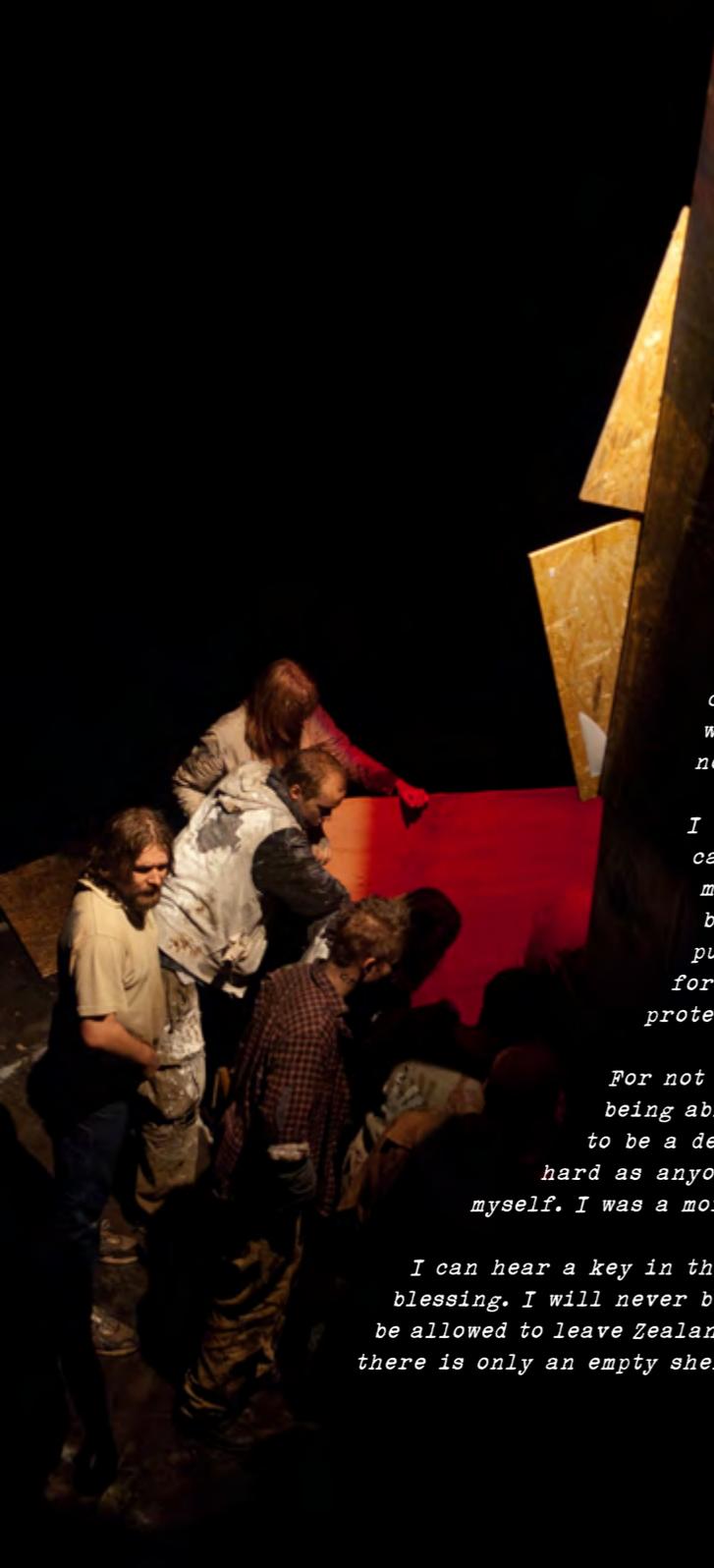
I tried to say something to him, but he was just saying that it was for our own good while he hummed a little tune. It was strange, for the first time in many months to see a person without balaclava in normal clothes. When the doctor was finished I got the bag over my head again and we continued. It turned out that the doctor was the last stop before the interrogation in room number 5. I was put on a chair, my hands were chained and the bag was removed from my head. I was in a little office and in front of me sat a woman in a grey suit,. A guard wearing a balaclava was standing right behind me.

The interrogator asked me to tell her why I was in the camp. No matter what I answered, it was wrong. In the end she told me that I was in the camp because I was a criminal and that I deserved to be there. In the end I should stand up and yell the same again and again "I'm number S73, I'm a criminal and I deserve to be here," for else she would leave the room and let the guard do what he wanted to me. I should have fought more. I wish that I had fought more but I could not fight anymore there was nothing left. Finally I have lost it all. Their threats didn't touch me anymore for what could they do that I had not already done to someone else or had been done to me?

After yelling for awhile the interrogator was satisfied and she left and the guard got to do what he wanted anyway. I didn't put up a fight because I had nothing to fight for. After that I got a bag over my head again and was led to a cell where I am now.

*(Here 'KAPO' ends for me) \**

\* It is important for me to say that I haven't been harmed for real and that everything described in this text, beside the feelings, was simulation.



The bag was removed from my head and in front of me stood one of the organisers and the two guards that had been taking me around at the interrogation. They were ready with big hugs and compassion. I am very grateful for the opportunity to experience something terrifying and evil but in the end truly amassing and very life assuring. It would not have been possible without them. The few lines beneath is something I wrote as the character just after I came out of the scenario. I wrote it to get something of a closure to the history of my character Christian.

*I hear the guards talk about my execution that will happen soon. I'm lying on the floor alone, cold and soaked in water with my thoughts as my only company. What I was yelling at the interrogation was not true when I arrived to Zealand, but it is now.*

*I have done the worst and most horrible things you can imagine to others and it is only in this last moment that I have time to feel remorse. I deserve to be here. I did it just to survive. To those whom I have punished and done things to, that where unforgivable; forgive me. Maria; for not being able to give you hope, protect you or even save you, forgive me.*

*For not being a good father or husband and for never again being able to hold you in my arms; Susan, forgive me. I tried to be a decent person and I failed, but know that I tried as hard as anyone. I have sold out on all values, for that I hate myself. I was a moral person but I don't know what I am anymore.*

*I can hear a key in the door. I don't wish to die, but death will come as a blessing. I will never be able to look myself in the eyes again if I should be allowed to leave Zealand. How could I? Everything I believed in is gone and there is only an empty shell left. It is time to meet my destiny.*

*Maria, I love you.*

## Aftermath

The morning after KAPO I wrote the following on the facebook page of the scenario and for me it did say a lot:

Thank you all for having this experience. I had a three hours train ride home to Århus after the debriefing. I fell a sleep several times and was awake again didn't know where I was. Finally home I was lying on my bed in my little dorm room just being grateful that I had something that was mine.

I woke this morning to the sound of birds from the open window just being grateful being alive but I didn't know what to do. Thank you to the organisers for doing this for us. Thank you to the helpers and especially the guards for being so mean. I love you guys. Thank you to the players for that we together could create this unique experience

Afterward I wrote a little thing about my experience and thoughts:

Zealand, I look back on our friendship with mixed emotions. In one hand I wished that I newer ever had meet you and on the other hand I wouldn't be without you. What you taught me was essential in so many ways and I can without a doubt say that you made me a better person.

I can only hope that I learned a little and that I have been a little bit enlightened. Sometimes I wish that many more could have tried this but as someone wisely before me said "everyone should know, but no one should try," and that is true. Zealand, you gave me the opportunity to see my own reflection in the darkness of the abyss and I am not sure that I liked what I saw. Even people like myself who consider us self as good people would be able to do horrible thing if we were put in the right/wrong situation.

I would like to thank the two people who have helped me translate this long text into English. Without your help, I'm not sure this had been so decent.

Anna Vestergaard Holm  
Andrea Plovgaard Frederiksen

- Mads, March 2011

<b>F80</b>	<b>K23</b>	<b>C55</b>	<b>I90</b>	<b>L41</b>
<b>U19</b>	<b>I35</b>	<b>Y63</b>	<b>G35</b>	<b>C99</b>
<b>B19</b>	<b>B67</b>	<b>V13</b>	<b>G82</b>	<b>D33</b>
<b>G09</b>	<b>P57</b>	<b>D47</b>	<b>J45</b>	<b>A93</b>
<b>K67</b>	<b>Q26</b>	<b>Y95</b>	<b>S34</b>	<b>A56</b>
<b>X41</b>	<b>E50</b>	<b>M92</b>	<b>Q51</b>	<b>T65</b>
<b>Y83</b>	<b>O32</b>	<b>X52</b>	<b>Y55</b>	<b>K47</b>
<b>M52</b>	<b>L90</b>	<b>Q28</b>	<b>P51</b>	<b>T20</b>
<b>O64</b>	<b>D72</b>	<b>R53</b>	<b>Z40</b>	<b>H17</b>
<b>N78</b>	<b>Z16</b>	<b>V96</b>	<b>O26</b>	<b>E23</b>
<b>L32</b>	<b>G12</b>	<b>X07</b>	<b>M18</b>	<b>I37</b>
<b>K75</b>	<b>A82</b>	<b>B78</b>	<b>C45</b>	<b>T47</b>
<b>B63</b>	<b>D20</b>	<b>C84</b>	<b>A15</b>	<b>E15</b>
<b>S89</b>	<b>H91</b>	<b>M76</b>	<b>J92</b>	<b>P47</b>
<b>F51</b>	<b>Z61</b>	<b>E44</b>	<b>N91</b>	<b>D56</b>
<b>E72</b>	<b>U84</b>	<b>V76</b>	<b>S59</b>	<b>I23</b>
<b>A76</b>	<b>D89</b>	<b>J98</b>	<b>U09</b>	<b>J84</b>
<b>A24</b>	<b>F33</b>	<b>N67</b>	<b>K39</b>	<b>C25</b>
<b>S73</b>	<b>Y98</b>	<b>R31</b>	<b>H78</b>	
<b>N70</b>	<b>G02</b>	<b>Q94</b>	<b>E37</b>	
<b>X88</b>	<b>V92</b>	<b>P70</b>	<b>M47</b>	

THESE AWKWARD POSITIONS WERE HORRIBLE. FOR THE FIRST FEW MINUTES YOU'RE FINE BUT THEN IT SLOWLY BECOMES MORE AND MORE UNCOMFORTABLE. I THOUGHT THE WORST THING WAS THAT YOU HAD NO IDEA OF HOW LONG YOU WERE GOING TO BE STANDING/KNEELING/ BALANCING IN THE SAME POSITION.

WHEN IT REALLY REALLY HURTS YOU REALISE THAT EVEN IF IT CAN'T BECOME ANY MORE UNCOMFORTABLE IT WILL KEEP FEELING JUST AS UNCOMFORTABLE UNTIL THEY DECIDE THAT YOU'RE DONE.

THAT WAS, FOR ME, THE ULTIMATE FEELING OF RESIGNATION TO THE SYSTEMS CONTROL OVER THE SIMPLEST OF ACTIONS, LIKE MOVING ONES HANDS.

AND TO THE GUARD WHO KEPT CONCENTRATING TO GET MY FINGER JOINTS IN THE RIGHT POSITION WHEN MY WHOLE ARMS WERE SHAKING FROM EXHAUSTION: THAT WAS GENIOUS, GENIOUS AND EVIL. EVIL IN THE "REALLY-AWFUL-BUT-WONDERFUL-EXPERIENCE" WAY.

- CHRISTINA BODLING



# The story of Max

By Alma Elofsson [Max/L41]

At KAPO, I played Max, and I've realized after the game was over that she was very similar to myself in many ways. We'd been briefed about what KAPO would be, we'd had workshops for two days, I thought I knew kind of what was going on, and I was both excited and scared at the same time.

Now, I truly believe nothing could have prepared me for what would actually happen, no matter how cliché that sounds, and it took me a long time to get over everything that happened there — even though we all just "played pretend".

I've learned a lot about myself as a person and about myself as a LARPer from Kapo, so I've never regretted going, though.

---

On a side-note, to non-LARPers and/or non-KAPOers; Emma and Softy were played by friends of mine, and we're all okay.

She was the first one in the band to be pulled out and dragged away. They had opened the cage from the outside. She hadn't dared take a closer look at the lock, hadn't dared to be that close to them, so she never noticed that there hadn't been a lock at all.

She knew that she screamed when they opened the door, tried to move further back, but they grabbed her and yelled at her to go with them. When she tried to turn around, they pulled harder. She heard screams behind her when others were dragged out, and she remembers hoping that it would be Emma, Kim, all the others, so that they wouldn't be separated again.

She remembered their eyes especially, the eyes of those who pulled her out. It's strange, how such a detail can get stuck in one's mind. All their eyes were the same — just as hard, ruthless, cold. But what really scared her was how dead they seemed.

She couldn't find any reason as to why they did this, because they were like dead — they didn't find pleasure in it, no joy, and no anger either. They just... did it.

Their efficiency scared her as well, as they put her in a narrow corner and placed themselves in front of her so she could neither see nor get out. It said that this had happened many times before.

It said that she couldn't stop it. And that it would happen again.

\*\*\*



They pushed her down on her knees and forced her head down.

"Get down!"

For a second, the anger pushed its way past the fear, and she glared at the dark-haired danish woman who had yelled at her. She was on her way, couldn't she see that... The floor was cold, and she shivered as they were forcing her to lay down on the concrete.

They had understood that she neither spoke nor understood Danish almost immediately. A mixture of English, Danish and even a few words of Swedish now echoed between the walls. The hall was big and very poorly lit — it was barely possible to make out the ceiling high above, and all colours blended into a brownish grey blur in the filthy light.

The most frightening part was how incredibly many they seemed to be, those who... lived there. They were everywhere now; almost stepping on her where she lay at the feet of three or four who were staring at her, guarding her, and their faces were either empty or filled with some kind of.. loathing.

A new yell - "Get down!" - from somewhere to her left, and then suddenly someone was on her knees next to her on the floor. Emma.

Immediate relief — at least now they were two — and then, right after that, extreme worry. Where were the others? What happened to them?

Max got up on her hands and knees and her and Emma's eyes met, but it was too dark for Max to see Emma's expression — and then someone's legs were in the way, someone grabbed her, pulled her forwards, she lost her balance but caught herself with one hand, and then she suddenly found herself staring down into a bucket, half filled with something... brown, gooey, impossible to make out, and her brain must have shut down.

"Wash!"

"Wash!"

"Wash in it!"

Someone took her wrist and pushed her hand down into the bucket — disgusted, she pulled it back up. Something oily and smelly covered her fingers, and she started to feel sick.

"No way!" she exclaimed, beginning to pull back. A nightmare, a sick, sick nightmare...

As if paralyzed she saw someone do the same with Emma's hand.

A hand behind her neck, and she was pushed forwards again, face almost pressed down into the bucket.

"I said wash...!"

I... no. No. Never.

She looked up helplessly, trying to see something, anything, which could help her, or suggest that they weren't serious. There was no point to it, why would they want her to do it...

She shook her head. "No."

"Max, just do it..."

She quickly turned her head. Emma sat on the other side of the bucket. Looking at her. Urging. Pleading.

"What?"

"Just... do it."

Max could read her voice. It's not worth it. Not now. Be careful. We don't know what they might do.

She couldn't risk Emma too. Slowly, she reached out her hand, towards the bucket, swallowed her nausea, and closed her eyes when her fingers once again came into contact with the indeterminate contents.

"Now wash in it."

Even slower she pulled up her hand again — and then quickly, before she could change her mind, she swept her hand over her temple. She had never felt more humiliated.

They laughed, and that awoke her anger again. She would show them. She'd show them, that this couldn't break her. She put her hand back into the bucket, saw Emma do the same, and angrily began to mud her cheek, forehead, throat.

One of them put her hand in the bucket, and with her other hand holding Max's shoulder in a firm grip, she poured the muck from her hand into her hair.

"Shit", she said, almost tenderly.

The others picked up the word.

"Look at them now..."

"Filthy."

"Shits."

"Lort." Danish, grating, harsh.



"Shit."

"Shit."

"Lort."

Hands grabbed her, held her tight, still on her knees, and someone pulled the bucket away. As she looked up she saw it being held right above her, and on instinct she quickly turned her face to the floor again.

She took a sharp breath when the first of it hit her head. Her hair became wet and heavy, sticking to her face and neck.

They laughed again.

Something buzzed in the background. Some roared with anger, others screamed. They pulled her out of the light from the spotlight over the cage. Placed her by some kind of wall, pushed her down once again until she lay flat on the ground. Someone stood over her. She didn't know where Emma was, and strangely enough... it didn't seem that important.

It was a weird realization to make, to suddenly figure out that she probably was in some kind of chock. The light seemed sharper, but it was blurry and black in the edges of her vision. All sounds became stronger, her reactions slower.

...what... was going on...? And... why? And... why... was she there?

Someone turned her around on her back. Black eyes stared at her for a moment, before he grabbed her arm, pulled her to her feet, and began pushing her in front of him. Him from the cage. She tried to look behind her, but he took a firm grip of her shoulders and pushed on, and she had to watch her steps to not trip on anything. He said something, but it didn't register.

They walked fast, through streets and past stretched tent canvases with bright Christmas lights, broken concrete walls and large piles of trash, past a high tower and some kind of square, under a tunnel, away to what seemed to be the far end of the camp — and he took her around a corner, over a part of the floor which was flooded by grey, dirty water, in under a canvas ceiling, through a hole in the wall, through a room with a ceiling so low she was forced again to her hands and knees, herded her in front of him into a tunnel, crooked, winding, slanting...

He chased after her. She heard his voice behind her in the narrow tunnel, and it made her panic. She looked over her shoulder, crawled faster, tried to get away from him now when he'd let go, crawled faster, breathed quicker...

And then the tunnel opened up, and Max hurried out into the open, stood up, frantically looking around, panic in her chest — the exit should be to her left, out to the rest of the camp —

...but there was no exit. She spun around, heard him laugh in the tunnel, drew back towards the wall, tried to see what she had missed — but no, she hadn't missed anything. The room was square-shaped, without a ceiling except for the one high above her and with grey solid plaster-board walls. The only thing in the room was a big steel bed on wheels with a lot of bags and scrap plastic covering it.

The only way out was through the tunnel from which she had just come.

She heard the rustling of his clothes when he rose. He knew it, of course. He had chased her into a corner. She was alone, no one knew where she was, and he was between her and the exit.

\*\*\*

"We can do this the easy way or the hard way. It doesn't matter to me."

\*\*\*

"Don't touch her! Max! Max!"

\*\*\*

"Shut up and do as I say, or I'll do the same to her. Do you want that?"

\*\*\*

"Yes... you want this, don't you, little shit. Don't you?"

\*\*\*

"You're not clean."

"You'll never be clean."

"You're shit."

"Lort."

"Tell us what you are!"

"Say it!"

"I am Shit'... say it!"



\*\*\*

Rule number one — do what the Rats tell you. Why? Because you're Shit. It doesn't matter who gives the order. You obey. Because you're Shit.

Rule number two — don't talk to people from other groups. Why? Because it's forbidden. The System doesn't like it. And because Shit do what Rats tell them to.

Rule number three — never go anywhere alone. Why? Because you're Shit. And because you're with the Rats, and everyone hates the Rats.

It's dangerous to walk around by yourself. And anyone can do anything to you if you're Shit, and no one will care. The Rats won't avenge you. So don't go anywhere alone.

\*\*\*

"How are you, really? What's happened?" Her sister got closer, her voice tentative, hesitant, and she reached out to touch Max's arm.

Don't touch me.

"Nothing." Harsh. She pulled her arm away from Kim's reach.

Couldn't tell. No one must touch her. No one. Not even Kim. She couldn't handle it. And she couldn't explain. Everything was spinning, turning, twisting, everything was chaos, nothing was as it should.

\*\*\*

The Swede with the black hair who had given her the dry clothes stood by the barrels. He gave her a small, almost unnoticeable nod when he saw her, before he turned to the woman next to him. They spoke quietly in Swedish, but Max couldn't make out more than a few words. Some other Rats with masks and gloves were arguing in Danish on the path by the water. Their voices mixed with the buzzing noise always in the background, and the hard sound of metal meeting metal.

The redheaded Danish girl from outside the cage sat by the wall and met Max's eye. Max looked away when she smiled, an uncomfortably sly smile, looked to the left — and suddenly the air got stuck in her throat.

He was sitting right there. He had seen her.

She forced herself to start breathing again, forced her heart to beat. And when she stared into his eyes, paralyzed, stuck, frozen, he leaned his head back, carefree, unconcerned, turned it a little to its side and said something to the person sitting next to him —

— Emma.

Emma was sitting just below his old camping chair on a bucket or a small stool. Sitting close. Looking up in his face when he spoke to her. Answering him. Letting him rest his hand on her shoulder.

The buzz in the background grew to a roar, a murdering noise, killing out all else around it.

Emma. Sat next to him. Like a pet.

And Emma looked up. Saw Max standing there.

For one second they stared at each other — Max didn't know what her face said and couldn't interpret Emma's either — and then Emma turned her gaze towards Softy again. As if it didn't matter that Max was there. That she had seen. As if it didn't make any difference what Emma had done.

Max couldn't stop looking at her. Something was building up inside of her — anger, tears or hysterical laughter, she couldn't decide what, but she couldn't let any of it out, because she was petrified, forced to look, forced to see Emma ingratiate herself, suck up to him, deliberately letting someone like him be close to her, when she knew what he was like, had even tried to stop him, did it not matter...?!

Like a punch to the face. No, worse, so much worse than that — like she was mocking her, laughing at what she'd been through. Humiliated her.

\*\*\*

"What the... fuck do you think you're doing?!"

Emma put a hand on Max's shoulder. A second of silence.

"I'm kind of doing what's necessary right now."

"Necessary? That didn't look like what was necessary."

"You don't understand..."

"No, I don't." So explain it to me.

And Emma went back. To the camp. To him.

\*\*\*



"Make her cry."

\*\*\*

"Shit..." His voice was calm, low, a warning. "She's not crying."

"...no." Emma sounded shaken.

"Then you're not trying hard enough."

"I... I don't know how."

"You don't know how?"

\*\*\*

"I'll give you one minute to start crying. If you don't..."

\*\*\*

"Please..."

\*\*\*

"Please, no, I'm crying... I'm crying...!"

"You're faking!"

"No, I promise...!"

"You're too late!"

\*\*\*

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

The water made a splashing sound when it fell into the barrel. Some of it fell outside each time she poured, but Max didn't care. No one was watching her that closely anyway.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

Softy wasn't in the camp, as far as Max could tell. She had been able to breathe a little easier after making sure of that.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

Neither was Emma. She had looked for her. That seemed a bit more ominous, however. Did that mean that he still had Emma somewhere..? How was Emma? Did she even care anymore about how Emma was? Maybe. Maybe not.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

She didn't have to feel that much now. Focus on the work.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

There wasn't much water left on the floor by now. Hard to get the last up, with the rounded edge of the plastic bin she was using. Stubbornly she used her other hand to push as much water as possible in the bin.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

"Max."

She turned around.

Emma stood in the middle of the street, a few meters away. Shifted her weight from one foot to the other. Looked... insecure. But unharmed. Uncomfortable.

"Are you... okay?"

["Show me that you mean it."

"...y-yes."

"Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"...please..."

"She's crying!"]

How... did she dare?

["If you don't do this, I'll rape you too. And her afterwards."]

So much inside of her. Wanting out. Absolutely not wanting out. Wanting to be screamed out. Things that couldn't be said. The blame was Emma's. The blame was her own. She was okay. [She was broken.]

"Yeah", and she barely recognized her voice. Hard. Emotionless. "I'm fine."

Emma looked disconcerted.

"It's fine, alright?" Let it go. Please. She... didn't want to talk about it. Wanted to forget it. Make it disappear. Never, never mention it again.

Emma took a step forwards, and her gaze was more intense than Max had ever seen it. "It's not. Fucking. Fine."

No. It wasn't. And even though she had decided not to feel anymore, not to care anymore, she once again felt the red, hot anger beginning to smolder somewhere deep down. She wanted to hurt. Wound, as she had been wounded.

Max met her eyes. "It's better this way. Right?" Defiant. Challenging her to disagree. Because surely, this had been the only way. Surely this was the best possible outcome, from those conditions. Wasn't it... Emma?

Emma flinched. Looked away. "...yeah."

Max nodded curtly. Once. "So. It's fine."

Emma looked up again. Her face was almost desperate. And a bit angry. "It's not like I had a choice, you know?"

Did she... try to defend herself? Explain herself? It was inexcusable. Max knew it. And she knew that Emma knew too.

So she nodded again. "Yeah, I know. I said it's fine." No audible emotions. She made sure of that. And the malicious part of her saw how uneasy it made Emma, and felt the bitter taste of victory.

After a short pause, when it became clear that neither of them would speak again, Max turned back towards the barrel.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

Down. Scoop. Rise. Pour.

She didn't even notice when Emma disappeared.

And she told herself that she didn't care.

\*\*\*

"Max, come with me..." Emma sounded calm, but something was... off. Out of tune.

"What? Why?" Suspicion. Something was wrong. Then worry. Had anything happened?

"Just... please, come with me..."

\*\*\*

"Go on, then." He leaned back.

"Get down", said Emma.

\*\*\*

"Scream!"

"No!"

\*\*\*

Footsteps.

Max slowly lifted her head — no quick movements, didn't want the person coming her way see anything move and find her.

UL 22775

He knew she was there; knew very well that she hadn't gone from where they'd left her. So he took his time looking for her, standing next to the table, scanning the shadows. Max made herself as small as possible.

Naturally he spotted her after a while. She flinched and pressed herself against the wall and cursed her fear and weakness which made her do it as he began walking towards her. Calm, as if he was on a stroll in the park, and slowly, as if not to scare her. As if she was a shy animal. When he was right in front of her he reached for her and put a hand on her shoulder, and she couldn't stop a second flinch.

"Come here." Softy almost sounded kind.

Empty of thoughts, but with a knot of wariness in her stomach, she rose, followed him, allowed him to lead her to the table. Let him persuade her to sit on it, on the far end, facing the cage, with her back against the outer wall and the place she'd been lying less than ten minutes ago - "go on, sit... I just want to talk to you."

He sat down next to her. Put an arm around her shoulders. If she didn't allow herself to think, it could be a friendly, innocent touch she desperately needed. So she didn't allow herself to think.

"I've just left her back in the camp", he began, sounding sincere, caring.

Max didn't answer. Felt his eyes watching her but stared straight ahead, into the empty cage.

"You see it now, don't you... she doesn't care about you."

"...I know." It was surprisingly easy to say.

His eyes glittered. "This will continue, as long as you let it. She won't stop now."

Yes. It would continue. On and on. Again and again. And Max couldn't stop it. Meaningless, useless, hopeless.

"Do you want me to stop her?"

Max looked up. His mask covered any facial expression he might have.

He could help her. He could stop Emma. He could be... her way up. [As Emma had realized long ago.] Did this mean... he wouldn't help Emma anymore? [He had started it.] Did it matter? Did she have any choice?

What had he asked? Did she want him to stop Emma...?

"...yes." Anything.

"Okay." He nodded, encouraging her, and Max felt a tiny ray of hope for the first time since she'd come to the camp. A way out of it. "Will you do as I say?"

"Yes." She didn't hesitate this time. Yes. Anything.

"Okay." His hand pressed her shoulder, comforting, supporting. "She won't touch you again."

It sounded like a promise, and that was the way she interpreted it.

She wouldn't be allowed to touch her again. Never again.

"Come. Let's go back."

She jumped off the table, and walked half a step behind him on the way back to the Rat's camp, and she felt safer than she'd done for a long time.

\*\*\*

"Come here."

A gesture towards the bucket beneath his chair.

"Sit."

Hesitation. Obedience.

"Good."

Staring straight ahead. Not flinching away from him, close enough to feel his body warmth. Not thinking.

Grim determination. Not being such an idiot anymore.

Then he was closer.

"Touch me."

Biting the inside of her lip so it wouldn't show.

["Will you do as I say?"]

Obey.

Pushing down the protests from within. Pushing down the loathing and nausea.

A calculating look.

"Are you in control of your feelings?"

Taking a second to steady her voice.

"Yes."

Liar.

A hand on her hand. Moving on.

Closing her eyes hard. Open them again.

Withstanding the impulse to move. To react.

"How about now?"

Swallowing. Taking a shallow breath.

"...yes."

"Good."

Not showing anything.

Look up. Freeze.

Meeting Emma's gaze.

Whirlwind of emotions. Deciding to feel one thing alone. Triumph.  
[She finally had a chance to beat her.]

Emma smirked.

The triumph became empty and hollow.

\*\*\*

"What was that, Shit?"

"You promised..."

\*\*\*

"You can't run away. It's a closed area."

\*\*\*

"Won't you scream, Shit?"

"No? Won't you speak with us, Shit?"

"What does Shit say?"

"You know what to say."

\*\*\*

And she was nothing, nothing, nothing but the black emptiness, the panic, the humiliation, the pain.

And they destroyed... everything. [Even her.]

\*\*\*

Emma. Softy. Emma. Alone. Betrayed. Empty. Emma. Softy. Pain. Empty. [Scared.]

Wanting to cry, but not able to. Stumbling past the Rats' camp, over the cartons on the floor which now were soaked and useless, over the metal threshold and in to the dirty restroom.

Watching herself in the mirror.

Not managing it for more than a few seconds. Was this the way she always had looked? Or was what had happened visible in her face? —

Someone came in and she flinched when he came too close on his way to the toilet booth.

She had to get out. [Claustrophobic.]

Tripping on her way out. Hurrying past the Rats' camp, not wanting to go there, not wanting to see whether they were there, not wanting to be recognized, out to the square —

- stopping.

Looking around, slowly. The way to the Rats' camp. The dump. The way past the Normalized, to the cage. [To the corner.] The way to the Builders and the Painters. Empty faces she didn't recognize.

Emptiness giving way to hopelessness, and growing for each second.

She had nowhere to run. Nowhere to hide. Nowhere to go.

Nowhere.

[She didn't know what to do.]

The loud gong over the speakers of someone being called out for interrogation echoed over the square and pulled Max out of her own thoughts and emotions. She looked up automatically. It wasn't her number that had turned red. A scream was heard from the Painters' camp while she, just in case, checked the rest of the list, those who were up next —

- and turned cold when she came to the end of the list. Second to last. There it was.

L4I. Room 3.

L4I. She was L4I. She was summoned to an interrogation. In Room three.

She couldn't make the thought make sense. Interrogate her? About what? Why? She tried to get a hold of the memories how she'd got there, make everything that had happened logical, tried to understand why they wanted to interrogate her, but it was impossible. She hadn't done anything.

Surely she hadn't done anything?

They hadn't done anything, none of them — well, Sarah might have said something stupid one time or another, but never officially, and she and Thomas was on their way out of Denmark either way... And Max had never said or done anything, she hadn't...?

[Would they keep her here if she was entirely innocent? She wouldn't be held in a place like this in an European democracy if she was innocent... would she?]

She had to tell someone.

Whom?

Kim? She didn't know where Kim was. And she didn't want to talk to her anyway. Kim saw too much. [And sometimes too little.] Mia was lost. Sarah was gone. Thomas was silent and cold. Emma...

...she would be careful. Emma couldn't know anything. Emma could... abuse it. Her weakness. Her worry. Her fear. No. It was more important that Emma didn't know than it was for Max to tell anyone. Maybe better not to say anything at all... in case the news reached Emma.

She turned and left, hesitatingly, for the camp again.

Someone to ask what she could expect. The second best.

\*\*\*

"Hey. Sit down for a bit."

"I — I'm up for interrogation."

"Which room?"

"Three."

"Then you'll come back."

"I will?"

"Yup. Those who go to room five, however... They disappear. No one knows what happens to them."

"What will happen?"

"Dunno. They do different things to everyone. But yeah, it will be horrible."

"Can I — escape it?"

"No. And don't even try to. You'll go to the cage when your number turns red, and you'll go willingly, or else we'll have to find you and bring you there, and you won't like that."

"If someone doesn't come when called, the guards have to come inside the camp to find him. And then the System won't be happy, which means we won't either. Last time it happened, they cut our food. So you'll go."

"Why... what will they ask?" I'm innocent.

"It's not important what they ask. But you won't tell them anything about us. Don't say a word about the Rats. No matter what. Trust me, we'll know if you do."

A tense silence.

"Other than that, it's easier just to play along. Tell them what they want to hear, do what they want you to do and all that. Just don't admit to anything."

"What?"

"You know, whatever they accuse you for. Don't admit to anything. Those who do disappear."

A slow nod.

"Good. Come here afterwards. We'll fix you up."

The echoing sound. Someone being called.

"Go."



"It's not me, I'm further down on the list... but maybe... I should go anyway."

"Do what you want." Shrug.

She began crawling out.

"One more thing."

She looked over her shoulder.

Ballade's face was calm, almost kind, almost smiling. Not really, but almost. "Don't panic. If you breathe too hard inside of the hood, the air can run out and you'll faint."

Max stared at him for a moment. Then she nodded again. She'd be strong. She'd survived worse things than a stupid interrogation.

She'd make it. [She had to.]



13 GDS-1

13 GDS-1



IT WAS AMAZING THAT WE MANAGED TO KEEP OUR FEAR OF THE SYSTEM.

THERE WAS NEVER EVEN A STIR OF REBELLION AND NO MATTER WHAT THE SYSTEM DID TO US, WE JUST TRIED EVEN HARDER TO PLEASE IT.

- NINA RUNA ESSENDROP

THANK YOU FOR READING  
THANK YOU FOR CARING



**FIRST THEY CAME FOR THE COMMUNISTS  
AND I DIDN'T SPEAK OUT BECAUSE I WAS NOT A COMMUNIST.**

**THEN THEY CAME FOR THE SOCIALISTS  
AND I DIDN'T SPEAK OUT BECAUSE I WAS NOT A SOCIALIST.**

**THEN THEY CAME FOR THE TRADE UNIONISTS  
AND I DIDN'T SPEAK OUT BECAUSE I WAS NOT A TRADE UNIONIST.**

**THEN THEY CAME FOR THE JEWS  
AND I DIDN'T SPEAK OUT BECAUSE I WAS NOT A JEW.**

**THEN THEY CAME FOR ME  
AND THERE WAS NO ONE LEFT TO SPEAK OUT FOR ME.**

**- MARTIN NIEMOLLER (1892-1984)**

**- KAPO INTRO TRAILER (2011)**

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