

Candidate 5 evidence

Scarred

Erich

The metal machine beeped, slowly and steadily. On the plain white death bed lay the scarred and wasted body of an elderly man.

I was 18. Young, fit and ready to serve my country.

Men were needed: men to eradicate the plague which had manifested itself in our poor country. The plague that had stolen, blamed and wrecked the innocent but begged for forgiveness when it was too late. Something had to be done. We had no money, no defences, and little food. Something had to be done to restore our country to its former health.

Then they came.

Like an engine of development, a bank of promises. Promises of a cure.

The machine picked up speed.

There was little opposition, we needed them and they needed us in order to make our country great again. Who would deny an answer to their problems? All we had to do was give them the chance. The results were immediate. I signed up; I had to be a part of this, a part of history. We wanted the illness which had attacked our poor country removed.

And I was grateful. I was proud. I took from them what they had stolen from us.

Freedom.

I threw them into pits, made them work, and made them suffer. They would repent for what they had done. And we would ensure it would never happen again.

Justice.

Justice for those who wanted harmony in our country.

A hacking sound echoed throughout the white, cold room

But one of them, one of the vermin thought that he could outsmart us. Thought he could escape. But he was wrong. He left a scar on my face; I shot him immediately. I did what I wanted to them. We were brave. Their death was good. Revenge felt right.

I helped restore justice to our country, if only for a brief time. I was part of the parade of doctors who saw our country through the worst of its sorrows.

I served my country. The ones who regret their actions, who deny their involvement are weak. They are part of the problem. I watched many of the strong men quiver in their seats when interrogated. But not me, I was quick. Intelligent. I got away. Got away only to reside in a weak country that I was ashamed of.

I had watched the birth of the movement and witnessed its death. I fled. Not out of weakness, but by force. I couldn't be in my great country and watch it slowly die.

The day the war finished marked the condemnation of our once great nation. I bided my time, hoping for a revival of our work. I pretended to be an ordinary citizen, a refugee. I hid but the war was never over in my mind.

The machine sped on

Our job is not finished.

The inferior races, prospering while we, the strong willed and highly advanced people suffered. I had to flee, hide, but my hatred and resentment grew stronger every day.

And lying here, with death approaching...

Beep

Do I regret my choices?

Beep

The people I killed?

Beep

Do I wish to apologise to the race I wanted eliminated from existence?

No.

The machine stopped.

Esther

Papa had been taken first.

The wind had roared on that devastating night. In they marched. No warning. No remorse. They had beaten him to within an inch of his life outside of our house. He had been left out there, to die alone.

They came for us next.

The blue eyed monsters. They blamed us for the fall of the country and blamed us for problems that we too suffered. The majority were being attacked for acts of the minority.

They had been brainwashed.

We were thrown onto the trains. The smell of fear was overpowering. We had heard the threats. We knew what was coming.

My yellow star blazed from my arm. The only comfort I had was that I had been strong. I had stood by my family, my beliefs and did not hide. I was proud of who I was. These soldiers surely could not have that. Could not have pride. Not after the deeds they had carried out.

So many people suffered with us: old and young; men and women; children and babies.

No one deserved to be there.

Mama squeezed my hand on that night. She whispered that everything would be good. We would soon be free. She had always been that way, comforting and warm. However, we had known that her words were lies.

We would be trapped. Shaved. Stripped. Silenced...

I lost count of the many people who had died on that first night.

Lined up and shot.

Mama and I were separated that night. I never saw her again. Hundreds of us were thrown into rooms with the capacity to hold only a few. I knew I had to survive. For her. For my father. I worked, and I suffered immense pain. I do remember one of them, one of the soldiers more clearly than the rest. He was completely ruthless. One of us had tried to escape, had clawed the face of this soldier before he was shot in front of us. While his death had been in vain, he had left a mark on the soldier. One act of rebellion that would hopefully remind the soldier for all he had done. The soldier had a scar, but he would heal. What we suffered would leave an everlasting mark on not just us, but on humanity.

The pain of the starvation, the pain of the workload and the pain of watching others die was indescribable. I brushed arms with death a number of times. I felt it wrap me in a tight embrace, but I rose and I lived. I saw things I cannot speak of but these horrors must be shared to ensure that history does not repeat itself.

Everything I fought for led me to this day, days where I can speak of the horrors, educate others, and prevent another atrocity like this from happening again.

We can choose to dwell on the past, or we can choose to ignore it. But what we cannot do, what we cannot allow to happen is let the past repeat itself.

I have the power of words. The power of being on the right side of an unjust war. Those soldiers do not have that. Some have regret and some have remorse. But the only regret some have is regret that more of us were not killed. What defines them is who wishes they had killed more of us and who wishes they had no part in any of it. Seeing many of the soldiers being imprisoned gives a sense of relief. However, many are still free.

But I can say, from a girl who lost so much to a woman who has gained so much wisdom, when asked if I could ever forgive what was done to my people. My answer is simple. There is no choice

I must.

Word count - 1184