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## CHAPTER ONE

We had survived another day, one day closer to the capitulation of the mighty German Reich.

Mum had traded *Genesis* to *The Songs of Solomon* for a quantity of dried apple slices. The thin pages of her small bible were a perfect substitute for unobtainable cigarette papers.

The apple slices were now the only food in the house. 'Everyone take four each.'

After we had all put a hand into the bowl, she covered it with a tea towel.

We heard trucks and Mum sighed, 'Not again,' as Dad disappeared.

Ten or so German soldiers were jumping out of the trucks at the end of our street. They always did this when staging a razzia. The first thing would be to set up a machine gun at each end of the street and we could hear the truck going past our house and stopping again. Escape routes blocked, we waited our turn as the Germans entered each house. If your door was not opened promptly when they knocked with their rifle butts, they kicked it in.

Why had they come to our little street? Had someone been betrayed or were they looking for able-bodied men to send to Germany for slave-labour, Jews, members of the Resistance or did they merely want blankets or food?

Dad was arrested during one of the periodic round-ups of men. His arthritic hip which normally he could cope with, became his possible means of escape. He began to limp and his face showed such pain that the doctor who checked the prisoners gave him papers attesting that Mr van Land was unfit for all work. However, papers can be and often were torn up. To avoid being re-arrested he had dug himself a hiding place under the floor of the back room.

The makeshift cellar had a trap door usually covered by a rug. Below it was a space of about one by two and a half metres wide