The Kid

by

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Eli comes back in and sits at the table. Miriam sits as well.

ELI
I'd like to propose a toast.

Liron spits out the ice cube into his glass.

Eli momentarily looks at Liron. He then raises his glass. Everyone else does.

ELI (CONT'D)
To Miriam on this special day. Still cooking us a meal. Might not be your famous filet mignon, but is just as good. Every night. Over and over and over. You have been a wonderful wife and mother and I want you to know -

A vehicle with a speaker mounted on the top of the car drives by playing the Horst-Wessel song. It is very loud and causes Eli to stop talking until the car passes.

There's a moment of silence. Eli lowers his glass.

ELI (cont'd)
I bought the plot. Happy birthday.

LIRON
L'chaem.

Liron drinks. Miriam doesn't say anything.

LIRON (CONT'D)
The music will stop tomorrow. After the vote.

ELI
I wouldn't call that a vote. Hitler has nothing to worry about.

And then Charlie Chaplin bursts through the door. He walks by the table and out into the next room.
Doron is the only one that notices him walk by. Eli, Liron, and Miriam just continue eating.

After Chaplin is out of sight, Doron gets up from the table.

MIRIAM
Doron. Sit down. Doron. Help me out, Eli.

LIRON
It's like he saw something.

ELI
Doron.

LIRON
I hope it wasn't a rat.

ELI
Doron.

Doron goes into the next room out of sight.

Eli gets up.

ELI (cont'd)
I got him.

LIRON
I hate rats.

Eli has left the room. Miriam puts her spoon down in the bowl and has stopped eating.

MIRIAM
We should've had brisket.

LIRON
Yeah.

Liron puts another ice cube in his mouth.

Eli comes back in.

ELI
He ran out. And I don't know which way he went.

All three of them stand up.

Chaplin is seen walking along the street.

LIRON
Stay here. In case he comes back.

The Horst-Wessel song is heard a little closer.

Doron is walking behind Chaplin at a distance. Trying not to be noticed.

Chaplin stops walking, thinking he might be being followed. He turns around.

Doron ducks behind a tree.

The Horst-Wessel song has faded away into the live music from the Piano Player - still the score from The Kid.

Chaplin walks back towards the tree. Looks around, doesn't see anything, and continues on his way.

Doron comes out from behind the tree. Chaplin starts walking. Doron walks behind Chaplin and in stride with him. Timing the footsteps.

Chaplin stops walking. Doron stops walking and looks for a place to hide again but there isn't one. Chaplin starts walking backwards and Doron again times his steps to walk backwards with Chaplin.

Chaplin then starts walking forward again. Doron continues following and timing his steps.
Chaplin once again thinks he's being followed so he stops. Doron stops. He then sneezes.

In a moment of quick thinking, Doron runs up to Chaplin's back and as Chaplin turns around Doron does as well.

Chaplin turns in a circle - Doron keeping to Chaplin's back.

Chaplin - a bit perplexed - continues walking. Doron follows, but Chaplin stops right away and Doron bumps right into Chaplin. Doron falls down.

Chaplin turns around and is startled to see Doron. He points for Doron to leave. Chaplin then starts to walk away.

Doron gets up and follows. Chaplin continues shooing Doron away. Doron keeps following. Chaplin starts running. And Doron runs with him.

Chaplin is not focusing on where he is going and runs right into an SA MAN.

The Piano Player stops playing.

The SA Man turns around.

Chaplin has stopped and stood at attention. Doron stands next to him also at attention. Chaplin raises his hand in the Nazis salute. Chaplin then elbows Doron with his other arm to do the same. Doron does.

The SA MAN looks at Doron.

SA MAN

Watch where you're going.

Doron doesn't say anything.

SA MAN (cont'd)
You hear me?

Doron just stands there with his arm raised.

SA MAN (cont'd)

Where're your parents?

Doron still doesn't say anything.

SA MAN (cont'd)

Go on. Get home with you.

Chaplin tips his hat to the SA Man and Doron does the same with his hat. Doron again follows Chaplin.

Eli comes across Doron.

ELI

Doron. Come back here.

Doron is running following Chaplin. Eli catches up with Doron and grabs him.

ELI (cont'd)

You can't run off like that.

Chaplin stops. Sees he's not being followed. He looks at Eli holding and talking to Doron.

Doron is not focusing on Eli but trying to see Chaplin.

ELI (cont'd)

Especially at night. Doron. Look at me.

Eli turns Doron's head back to facing him.

ELI (cont'd)

You look at people when they talk to you. You got us so worried.

Chaplin turns and walks away. Doron doesn't see him leave.
The SA Man comes up to Eli.

SA MAN

This your kid?

ELI

Yes. Everything okay?

SA MAN

He just needs to watch where he's going. You voting tomorrow?

ELI

Of course.

SA MAN

Good. Good. The world needs to see a unified Germany.

ELI

Absolutely.

SA MAN (cont'd)
(to Doron)
Let me see your salute again, son.

Doron looks over to where Chaplin was and sees Chaplin isn't there anymore.

ELI

Go on. Show him.

Doron raises his arm to the salute.

SA MAN

Strighter. Here.

SA Man fixes Doron's arm.

SA MAN (cont'd)
Feel that. Tense. Respectful.

SA Man salutes back to Doron.

SA MAN (cont'd)

Good. Good.

(to Eli)

How old is he?

ELI
Seven.

SA MAN
Not much of the talker.

ELI
No.

SA MAN
That's good. Knows when to talk. A few more years and he can join my son in having the honor of serving the Fuehrer as a Deutsches Jungvolk before becoming part of the Hitler-Jugend. What's your name, son?
(short pause)
What's his name?

Eli quickly reacts.

ELI
Adolf.

The SA Man looks at Doron.

SA MAN
Adolf. You're a lucky kid, Adolf. To be blessed with such a name.

ELI
We have to get back. Or my wife will be angry.

SA MAN
I know wives. Mine's a pisser. Fifteen years younger than me.

SA Man takes off his glove and sticks out his hand.

Eli takes it and they shake. SA Man takes his other hand and cups it on top of Eli's.

SA MAN (cont'd)
I don't like to shake hands with someone for the first time with a glove on. Touch is very important. The name's Werner.

ELI
Eli.
The SA Man stops shaking his hand. He then pulls his hand away from Eli's.

Eli realizes that he's been caught in his lie. Doesn't say anything. SA Man just looks at Eli and turns his attention to Doron.

SA MAN
What's your name boy? What's your name?

ELI
He's not going to answer you.

SA MAN
Course he will. What's your name?

ELI
Please.

SA Man looks at Eli and then spits in his face. Eli goes to wipe it off.

SA MAN
No.

Doron watches.

Eli leaves the spit on his face which slides down his cheek.

Eli waits for what the SA Man will do. SA Man just stares at them - now with an air of disgust.

SA MAN (CONT'D)
Get out of here.

ELI
Come on.

Eli takes Doron's hand.

ELI (cont'd)
Come on.

As they leave, Doron looks back trying to see if Chaplin is maybe hiding, but all he sees is the SA Man wiping his
bare hand with a handkerchief. The SA Man then puts his glove back on.

As Eli and Doron leave, the lights go dim, but not dark. The Piano Player begins to play again to a projection of Chaplin's *The Kid*. Chaplin has taken the small child home with him - the child is in a sheet hanging in the air like a hammock.

While the clip plays we see - all in silence - Eli and Doron come back. Miriam getting Doron to change into his night clothes. And then Eli and Miriam going off into the other room.

Doron reemerges from the bathroom in his night clothes and climbs into the hammock.

The clip continues to play. The child in *The Kid* is sucking on a homemade milk bottle using a tea-kettle. Chaplin is cutting a hole in a chair and places it underneath the child - it acts as a safety net between the child and the floor in case the hammock breaks.

As the clip ends, the Piano Player finishes. Then we hear voices from offstage for the first time. Eli and Miriam are whispering loudly, louder than they realize.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
Was there any trouble?

ELI (O.S.)
No. He was just wandering.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
He was just wandering around?

ELI (O.S.)
Yes.
MIRIAM
For two hours? That isn't like him.

ELI (O.S.)
Neither is getting up from the dinner table.

Doron stirs in the hammock.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
He needs to know he can't do that.

ELI (O.S.)
He knows.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
Liron is still out there looking for him.

ELI (O.S.)
He'll come back soon. I'm sure.

Keep your voice down.

ELI (O.S.)
He's asleep.

Miriam enters. Checks on Doron - who appears asleep - and then exits back out.

Pause.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
You shouldn't have bought that plot.

Doron sits up in the hammock.

ELI (O.S.)
Don't worry about it.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
Where're you getting the money?

Doron gets out of the hammock.

ELI (O.S.)
The reserves.
Doron goes to the radio. He turns it on. We hear Beethoven. Doron turns the knob and gets static. He cycles past and lands on swing music. He stops on it. And listens.

We still here Miriam and Eli over the music.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
You shouldn't be taking from our reserves.

ELI (O.S.)
Let me worry about the finances.

Doron turns up the music which fully now drowns out Eli and Miriam. Doron moves close to the radio. Places his hand on it. Feels the vibration.

Doron then goes to the kitchen drawers. He searches through a few drawers and finds what he is looking for: a pair of scissors.

Doron goes over to one of the kitchen chairs and he starts to cut a hole - just as Chaplin did in the film. He gets about halfway through. Doron is having trouble cutting through the chair.

And he starts to feel tired - having trouble keeping his eyes open and yawning. So Doron gives up. Places the scissors on the table and leaves the chair out. Doron goes back to the hammock. Gets back in and goes to sleep.

The radio swings open - still playing the music and Chaplin emerges. He stands up. He closes the radio. Adjusts his hat. And brushes himself off.