

KALF-KANT

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Shanghai - China.

*Book material*

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Dear Madam,

This is the story of a young Jewish Refuzee, who went through seven terrible years of hardships and uncertain; I don't know whether you are interested in reading this little book, but since I have no one in the States to whom I could open my heart and since you are, dear Madam of the same religion as I am, you might be able to understand my position and perhaps able to help me.

Born, I nearly regret it, on the 12th of March 1925 in Berlin, I spend my boyhood already in being hunted by organizations which would rather have liked it to see that I was'nt born at all. I attended the Jewish middle-school in Berlin, after being kicked out of my former place of study, "The High German Reall School" because of my being member of such criminal race as Jewish. I finished school in 1939 after eight years of study. Unable to find any kind of work to assist my parents during this hard times, I volunteered as a messenger boy for the Jewish Community. Soon afterwards, our family consisting of my father, mother, sister and me were given notice to move out of Germany within three weeks. One can't imagen what shock we got after receiving this notice. They kept my father in police custom till we were, with the help of the "Hicem" able, to emigrate to Shanghai. We left Germany on the 28th of June 1939 and I told myself that I would never set foot again on this part of the world. ( It looks liked I have to see it again, but will come to that later). After having relaxed a little from the Nazi hunt, we arrived in S'hai on the 31st of July 1939. Little money we had, we were forced to live in one of the camps the committee had set up. It was there that my mother was affected by a nervous breakdown. We finally decided to rent a small room, since mother would rather die than to live in the camp any longer. Poor dear, we did everything we could to make life easier for her. My father after being a designer and manufacturer for Ladies Coats for 30 years, shifted over to night watchman, Ruth my sister worked as a waitress and me just out of school found employment by the local Jewish newspaper. Everything seemed to be working alright, although we suffered much owing to the uncertain future and the change of climate. It was in winter that my mother had to go to hospital again as a result of heart trouble. Luck was against us, even in S'hai. Five weeks after mothers stay in Hospital, Dad followed her with a lung-desease. He went in a day before mother decided to come home; he did never come out again. Heart failure, result of an operations released him of the future struggle of building up a new life. We buried him on the 30th of January in a strange town of which he had never dreamed to die in. During Dad's and mother's stay in hospital, Ruth found understanding in a Hungarian Doctor. Dad, in the days before death always liked the young couple and use to make plans for a wedding as soon as he would get well. After a long time when we finally got over the shock, they were married the happiest man to see it, unfortunately not present. That left mother and me alone. Although my brother-in-law helped us as much as he could and although we had, thanks to God the relief from the "Joint", it was now my turn to take Dad's place. I did the best I could, worked as much as I could only looking for the welfare of my mother. But it was'nt enough. Mother this time 56 years old, had unfortunately assist me and went from office to office trying to sell all kinds of things. In 1942, after having saved a few dollars, which we had cut from our daily

meals, I could attend a course in a Business College to learn a profession. I finished the eight months course of Shorthand, Typing and Bookkeeping with a good result and hoped to find a better job. But again luck failed me. The Pacific War broke out, and the office where I had worked, had to close down. We were nearly at the end. Little money we had managed to save, was all gone for studies. Life was nothing for me. A young man I was, I was full of energy and hope to make good in life and what I found, only misery and setbacks. After weeks of try I was at last rewarded to become an apprentice in a Ladie's Handbag Factory. The owner, an Austrian refugee understood my position and with his kind help I was able to relief my mother from going vendoring. Besides knowing a profession already, I was glad to learn this trade and did so for the past three years to the full satisfaction of my employer. Dark clouds were hanging over the Jewish Community, when finally on the 18th Febr. 1943 the long talked proclamation of separating all Jewish refugees into the Hongkew Ghetto, went into force. My employer's factory, situated outside the area had to remove too. Emigen all those refugee's who after long and hard struggles had succeeded in re-building their businesses; all gone again. Faces went darker as the deadline for the removal into the District came nearer. It was the blackest day for the Jewish Community in S'hai; the day one will never forget in his life. With the help of a Chinese friend we were able to change our room against a still smaller one, but were happy to have it. It has probably come to your notice, dear Madam, how this Japanese officer in charge of giving out passes, in order to go to town, has treated us. I don't like to refresh my memory about this time, it's so horrible every time I think of it I feel like loosing trust in civilization. But life during this hard times, despite being restricted to the area, know as "Designated area", was'nt to bad. My mother was feeling better and looked as everybody did, forward to a quick peace. It all came over night. Receiving the news, everyone was so happy and gratefull; we just could'nt hold our feelings. Happiness at last was with everyone again. Besides the great joy of seeing the American troops marching in, we enjoyed much in seeing Mr. Ghoya, The Japanese officer in charge of the District, receiving the beating we had in our hearts promised him. Luck at last was with me, when I found employment by the S'hai Base Command, as a Technical Supply Clerk, ATC. Before changing my position, I finished the examination of being a Handbag worker with the best result. I am now coming to the point of a forced return to Germany. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all Jewish refugees who came to S'hai without the permission of the Chinese Government, will be repatriated back to Germany. That means, all those, and most of the refugees have'nt, who came here without a visa will have to go back. What that means to me dear Madam, I think you can guess. Living again with those people who gased and killed millions of Jews; who killed my last relations is something I can't get into my mind. In my opinion I rather commit suicide than going back to those people who once spit on me and called me a "Saujud". My chances of going to the States are null, since I have no one who could grant me an Affidavit and going elsewhere, although UNRRA takes up registration, I doubt if anything comes out of that. Well, I guess the young capable Lothar who really wanted to make good in life will have to wait till repatriation and then, well, He will finish his life at the age of 20. I therefore beg of you dear Madam, if it would'nt be possible that you might help me in order that I don't have to end my life; honestly I would do it if I find no other way. There must still be a God who leads unfortunate people and I sincerely hope dear Madam, that God might have choosen you to help me so that I might start a new life with the spirit, that God still looks after people who nearly have lost faith in him.

Sincerely hoping that you might be able to help me, I remain,  
dear Madam,

Very Respectfully Yours,  
*Lothar Kallus*