



The Diary of Petr Ginz 1941–1942

Edited by Chava Pressburger

Translated from the Czech by Elena Lappin

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The translator wishes to thank David Curzon for his help translating Petr Ginz's poem "Remembering Prague" and the poem that appears on page 59.

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What We Say We Are

Jonathan Safran Foer

Petr Ginz's parents met at an Esperanto conference. That detail jumped out at me from the introduction to Petr's diary, written by his sister, Chava Pressburger. A failed language—a bad idea born out of a good instinct—Esperanto held the promise of universal communication. Everyone would understand everyone all the time: a new Eden would grow out of the rubble of Babel. Petr was, quite literally, the product of that dream.

How much suffering is due to not having the right word? Foreign words are unknown, familiar words are misunderstood or misinterpreted. Words are perverted by our histories (personal and global), by context and tone of voice. Words are bad approximations. There is evil in the world. Evil took young Petr from his parents and shuffled him into the gas chambers of Auschwitz. But evil is not the only thing to fear or struggle against.

I read Petr's diary as the grandson of survivors, as a first-generation American, as a Jew, and as a writer. Unexpectedly, it was this last identity that most informed my experience. While the diary in your hands is a resoundingly *good* book—by just about every imaginable definition—what it stands in opposition to isn't evil, but speechlessness.

* * *

Giving a word to a thing is to give it life. “Let there be light,” God said, “and there was light.” No magic. No raised hands and thunder. The *articulation* made it possible. It is the most powerful of all Jewish ideas: words are generative. Jews are people *of the book*: their parents are words.

It’s the same with marriage. You say “I do” and you do. What is it, *really*, to be married? To be married is to say you are married. To say it not only in front of your spouse, but in front of your community, and in front of God. I don’t believe in God, but I believe in saying things to God. I believe in prayer. Or I believe in saying aloud what you would pray for if you believed in God. Saying it brings it into an existence that it didn’t have in silence.

I once read an essay by a linguist about the continued creation of modern Hebrew. Until the mid-1970s, he wrote, there wasn’t a word for frustrated. And so until the mid-seventies, no Hebrew speaker experienced frustration. Should his wife turn to him in the car and ask why he’d fallen so quiet, he would search his incomplete dictionary of emotions and say, “I’m upset.” Or, “I’m annoyed.” Or, “I’m irritated.” This might have been, itself, merely frustrating, were it not for the problem of our words being self-fulfilling prophecies: we become what we say we are. The man in the car says he is upset, annoyed, or irritated and becomes upset, annoyed, or irritated.

Exactly a year ago today, my first child was born. After much debate—the single word was the most difficult piece of writing I have ever done—we named him Sasha, after his grandmother. He is not only identified as Sasha, he *is* Sasha. My son would not exist with another name.

To name the unnamed. To bring the unnamed into existence. There are writers who hold mirrors to the world. “This is what it’s really like,” they say. “Exactly what it’s like. Down to the most exacting detail.” That’s fine. Such books are often nice to read, and at their best can give us clear and focused pictures of ourselves. But there’s something more to which writing can aspire.

I’m not a religious person, but writing for me is religious in this sense: to write is to participate in the creation that began with that first naming, and will continue until someone or something finds an adequate word for “end.” To write is to bring into being things whose existences depend on their articulation. Our emotional dictionaries are incomplete, and so are our historical dictionaries, and ideological dictionaries, and our dictionaries of physical experiences, and memories, hopes, and regrets. The dictionaries of our lives are more empty than full. And so our lives are more empty than full. Until we have the words, we cannot be what we really are.

The most powerful passage of Petr’s diary comes when he receives notification of his imminent transport to Theresienstadt concentration camp. His specificity, his unwillingness to become sentimental—the passage was written from memory in Theresienstadt—is overwhelming. But even more powerful, to me—maybe because I am a Jew, maybe because I am a novelist, or new father—is the simple fact of a fourteen-year-old writing in such a place. Surrounded by death, and facing his own, Petr put words on paper. Given his unprecedented situation, his words were unprecedented. He was creating new language. He was creating life.

It can be dangerous to treat a diary like this as literature—to find beauty in it, and symbolism, and structure. But how can one not? Here is the beginning of the passage in which Petr recounts learning that he would soon be parted from his family:

Don’t think that cleaning a typewriter is easy. There is cleaning and there is “cleaning.” If you want the typewriter to shine on the inside and on the outside, you have to remove the carriage and wipe the most invisible corners with a small brush. Then you have to use a blowpipe to clear it out. The most difficult part are the spaces between the typebars.

When Adorno speculated about the possibility of literature after the Holocaust, he wasn't asking something about art (as is commonly misunderstood), but about language itself. What meaning can words have in the light of such destruction? Can "loss" have any use? Can "war"? Can "love," for that matter? Will we ever again be able to find the right word?

The answer is yes—it was built into the question—but language must be reconstructed with an energy greater than that of its destruction. This is what we—as readers, writers, and speakers—do. We participate in *tikkun olam*, the repairing of the world, which began only moments after the world's creation. Adam, the first man, was given the task of gathering the divine light—the *goodness*—that escaped the vessels broken by creation. Young Petr, another first man, had a preternatural knowledge of this. Why else, in the shadow of his death, would he have crafted these words as he did? How else could such an effort have been possible? By repairing the dictionary, he was repairing the world.

The diary in your hands did not save Petr. But it did save us.

Translator's Note

At fourteen, Petr Ginz wrote the equivalent of a captain's log on a sinking ship: daily reports about the weather and accounts of the general situation and everyone's activities. He does not mention feelings of fear, powerlessness, sadness, or pain. But they are heavily present in what is left unsaid. Translation usually means to render, faithfully and convincingly, all the nuances of an author's voice—the words, the tone, the rhythm. In the case of Petr Ginz's diaries, it was equally important to capture, or at least hint at, the grave silence surrounding his brief entries.

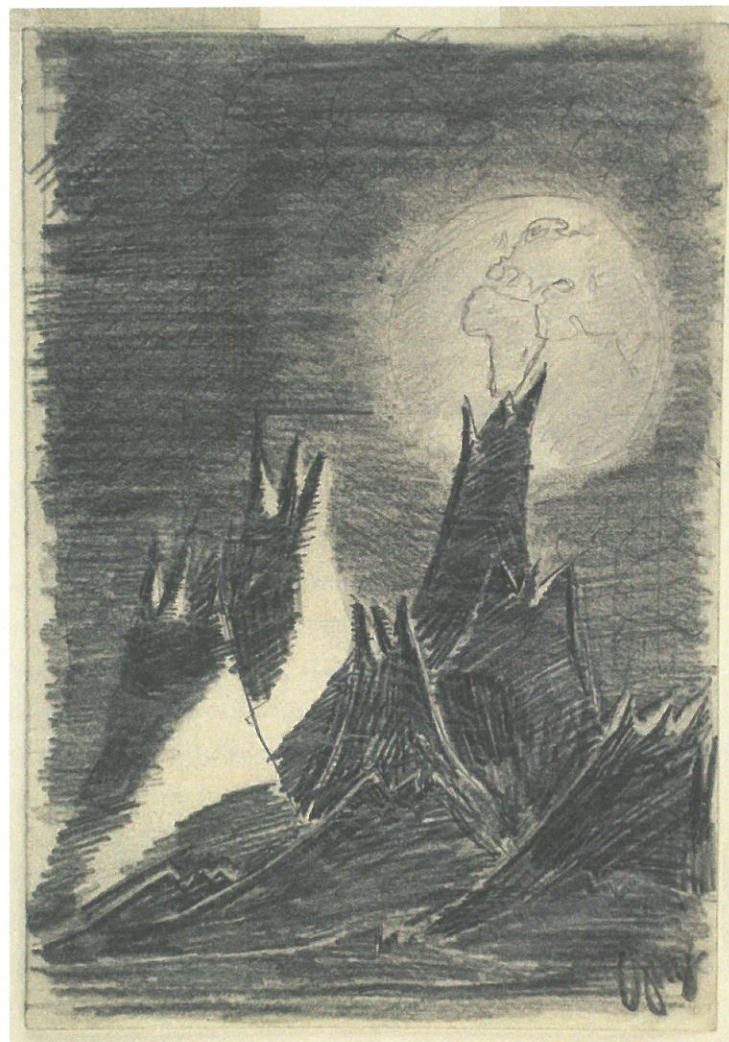
But not all his writing in this book is of the same succinct quality. Petr Ginz was an extraordinary boy—artistic, inventive, creative, observant, very mischievous, and witty. He was extremely well informed about what was going on in the world at large and in his own environment, and, like the real writer he might have grown into, from time to time broke out of his concise style and allowed his feelings and opinions to find expression in a poem, story, or essay. There is a long poem about the humiliating Nazi laws Jews were forced to accept, which satirizes in the sharpest manner not only the absurdity of the rules themselves but also the Jews' ability to live with them. There is a heart-breaking poem, written as an adolescent in Theresienstadt, about his feelings for the home and life he has lost in Prague. His articles and stories, written for the magazine he edited in Theresienstadt, reflect a unique ability to transcend the environment of a concentration camp and to focus instead on a rich inner

world of spiritual and moral values. Everything he wrote was pointing to a future full of excitement and discovery.

The most difficult passage to translate was his description of the day he found out about his own transport, written in Theresienstadt, from memory. Characteristically, it consists not of an emotional outpouring but mostly of a precise description of the work involved in cleaning typewriters, a job he was doing at the time. As I searched for all the right technical terms and even laughed at the pranks he teased his managers with, I understood and felt the acute necessity to concentrate on mundane reality even as it was crumbling all around him, and under his own feet. But the fourteen-year-old Petr Ginz had no illusions: "So I went home. While walking, I tried to absorb, for the last time, the street noise I would not hear again for a long time (in my opinion; Father and Mother were counting on just a few months)."

As a translator, I felt I was watching this boy grow from a child (whose daily life in Prague went on in places so familiar to me from my own Jewish childhood there, many decades later) into a young man, his writing style changing accordingly. But not his voice, which never wavered in its maturity and astonishing self-control. I hope this translation also captures the man in the boy, the extraordinary man he would have become had he been allowed to live.

—Elena Lappin
London



Petr Ginz (1928–1944), *Moon Landscape*, 1942–1944, pencil on paper, 14.5 × 21 cm; Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem.



Introduction

Chava Pressburger

1 They were two small exercise books: one had soft black covers cut out from an old school notebook, the other was bound in stronger cardboard with black and yellow stripes, which had probably been removed from a notepad our parents had once used to write down daily household expenses. Petr had made the two exercise books himself from old paper, and used them as diaries. Things were scarce during the war years, and for Jewish children, a nice new exercise book from a stationery shop was completely out of reach.

But Petr enjoyed making those notebooks, as he enjoyed any opportunity to be creative. He used the hand-bound books not only as diaries, but also for his literary writing, for his manuscripts. In his childish imagination he saw himself as a bookbinder, novelist, publisher, reporter, or scientist. He began writing the diary at the age of thirteen, and stopped shortly before he was deported to Theresienstadt, as a fourteen-year-old. The two diaries published here resurfaced in 2003, sixty years after they were written, under very unusual circumstances.

When the American space shuttle *Columbia* was preparing for its takeoff in 2003, the crew included Ilan Ramon from Israel, whose mother had survived the Auschwitz extermination camp. Ilan wanted to take along into space a symbol of the tragedy of the Holocaust. He turned to the Holocaust Museum

in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, which, aside from many other documents and testaments, stored most of Petr's preserved drawings.

My brother was a very talented, creative, hardworking, and curious boy with very varied interests. He wrote articles, stories, and several short novels, and he also loved to draw and paint. His drawing *Moon Landscape* is evidence of Petr's unusual imagination—and it was this drawing that had been selected by Yad Vashem and by Ilan Ramon to accompany him on his space flight.

The tragic fate of space shuttle *Columbia* shook the world. The shuttle exploded upon reentering Earth's atmosphere on February 1, 2003—what would have been Petr's seventy-fifth birthday. Neither Ilan nor the other crew members survived the exploratory flight. A young life that could have made a vast contribution to the progress of all mankind ended in just one moment. The death of the Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon reawakened the memory of hundreds of thousands of young people who had also stood at the threshold of lives that had been cut short by the Holocaust. Petr Ginz represents and symbolizes these young people.

In the end, it was this drawing by Petr, carried into space by Ilan Ramon, that brought from darkness into the light of day the pages of Petr's diary, written by him from February 24, 1941, until August 1942. Several weeks after the tragic end of space shuttle *Columbia*, someone from Prague contacted the Yad Vashem Museum and offered to sell six exercise books full of Petr's writings, and his drawings. He found these remnants in an old house in Praha Modrany, which he bought some years ago. Although he threw away most of the junk that had filled that old house, he kept these notebooks and drawings, for some inexplicable reason. He was reminded of his "discovery" when Czech television described, in connection with the tragedy of

space shuttle *Columbia*, the fate of Prague boy Petr Ginz. Shortly thereafter, he e-mailed to Israel samples of the texts and drawings he had found.

When I saw them, I felt as if Petr hadn't actually died. It seemed to me that he was alive somewhere in eternity and was letting me know by sending this particular message. The newly found items contained two small diaries where Petr had recorded the events from the years 1941–1942, the period before his deportation to Theresienstadt, while we were all still living together at home in Prague. As soon as I saw the pages of the diary and Petr's drawings, I knew instantly that they were genuine. I recognized my brother's handwriting and I also remembered the events he was describing there. Petr's handwriting gradually changes in the diary pages—it becomes nervous and less legible as the date of his call-up to the transport to Theresienstadt approaches. My own distress grew equally, as I read each new page. Petr does not write explicitly about his fear of the future; nevertheless, his notes reflect the black clouds that were gathering upon him and were soon to engulf him.

Together with the diaries, the find also contained Petr's linocuts, especially illustrations to novels of Jules Verne, who was my brother's favourite author at the time. There was also the first part of one of Petr's novels, two more exercise books containing his articles, and finally a list of all his literary writings.

My husband and I decided to travel to Prague to find the owner of Petr's newly found bequest. I had hoped that I would have a legal right to this inheritance from Petr. But after consulting a lawyer, I was told that I had no legal rights whatsoever, because the house where the items were found had belonged to a new owner for more than three years. However, in the end, I succeeded in obtaining the bequest, so that I now own Petr's two diaries and some linocuts. The remainder has become the property of the Yad Vashem Museum in Jerusalem.

2 Petr's diary is very dear to me, as dear as the happy childhood we shared. Yet it had lasted a short time, ending with the beginning of the persecution of Jews by the Nazis. Until then we had lived as a happy family.

According to Nazi Nuremberg laws, children from mixed marriages, where one partner was a Jew and the other an Aryan, were considered "First Degree Mischlings (mixed-breeds)." This meant that we had to submit to the same laws and restrictions as all other Jews (we wore a yellow star, we were thrown out of public schools, at the end of 1941 the Jewish school was closed too, in street cars we were allowed only in the last car if at all, etc.), with only one exception: we were deported to concentration camps only upon reaching the age of fourteen.

This is why our parents had to give Petr away to the Germans when he turned fourteen in 1942. They waited with horror and tension and hope that the end of the war would come before I was taken away as well. But their hope was for naught, and my time to leave came in 1944, a year before the end of the war. In the end, Father was also deported to Theresienstadt (until then, he had been protected by his Aryan wife, according to Nuremberg laws) and Mother stayed home alone. After the liberation, I returned to Prague with my father.

Petr and I were both born in Prague. Father spoke several languages and worked as a manager of the export department of a textile company. He met our mother at an Esperanto conference. Both our parents were progressive people; they looked after our education and healthy lifestyle. We all took up many sports, skiing and ice skating in the winter, swimming and walking in the summer, especially during the holidays.

Mother was from Hradec Kralove; her father was a village teacher. Our frequent visits to relatives in Hradec, especially for Christmas, are among some of my most beautiful memories. Mother loved music; she had a beautiful voice

and loved to sing arias to us at home from operas and operettas. This was when we were little. After the war, the Holocaust, and Petr's tragic fate, she never sang again.

Our father was born in Zdanice near Prague; his family came from the Kourim area. Later, they lived in Prague. My grandfather had an antique shop in Jungmanovo Square. Grandfather Ginz was a very educated and wise man. His shop specialized mainly in old, rare books. He was also a talented artist, as witnessed by his small bequest, and he also had literary talents—his business correspondence with clients was often conducted in verse. He died prematurely, at the age of fifty-five, but he took good care of his wife and five children. In the end, everyone from the Jewish side of our family, except for my father, myself, and one cousin, was killed during the Holocaust, so that it could be said that Grandfather's early death saved him from terrible suffering.

I remember our relatives from Hradec and our aunts and uncles in Prague, cousin Pavel Ginz, and Grandmother Ginz, with love and pleasure, but also with pain in my heart.

3 Our parents raised Petr and me to have good manners, discipline, and education. They taught us to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad.

The Holocaust convinced us that there are evil people in the world, often led by fanaticism, who are capable of murder and merciless torture. But there are also others, those who try to help under any circumstances, and for whom love is all-important. Such people avoid hate, even against the evil they disagree with.

Petr's young spirit was fully directed toward the good. The essence of his interests and desires had its source in the richness of his soul. He belonged to that important category of people endowed with the gift of positive thinking.

My brother wanted to see; not just to glimpse but to really immerse himself in the things he thought about and investigated. He wanted to get to know the essence of the subject of his research and to test the results of his understanding. His great need to perceive things in depth is evidenced by the large number of his drawings that have survived—the Yad Vashem Museum has over 120 of them in storage.

Every child has a number of interests as part of his or her natural development, one of which begins to dominate over time and later determines whether the child becomes a painter, scientist, writer, or leads to some other profession. Petr was interested in almost everything. Today, we can only guess where Petr's life journey would have led and which of the wide spectrum of his interests would have gained preference.

I remember the time when Petr and I were still children. Petr's hair was dark blond, his eyes were serious and blue, but often playfully happy due to some boyish mischief. I remember how during our joint outings Petr walked with his eyes firmly on the ground, and therefore often found some "treasure"—a special veined stone, a bead, or even a coin. I don't remember ever seeing him cry. This would have been beneath his sense of dignity. I, however, cried often and he teased me about it, calling me "sissy missy," which made me cry even more. In 1942 my brother left for Theresienstadt, where we met again two years later: suddenly, Petr had become a tall, thin, and pale young man; his child's face was gone.

From very early youth, Petr was hungry for knowledge. Not even the Nazis succeeded in stifling his desire to learn, when they forced him, like all Jewish children, to leave school. In spite of all obstacles he realized his need for education, almost compulsively. He often planned his activities a month ahead, and then analyzed in detailed summaries how much of what he had intended had been successfully executed. In a report titled "September 1944"

we read what he wrote in Theresienstadt before being sent with the transport of September 28, 1944, to Auschwitz, to his death.

May 1944

*Eva arrived.*¹

I finished the notes from Ceylon and bound them. Ceylon has been returned. I haven't read all the notes yet, but I did complete the preparatory work for the study of general education: I have read The System of Sociology by Chalupny, which contains a classification of sciences, and in this framework I have made a plan to learn a little about each science.

*I have read: Gwen Bristow: Deep Summer. Franck: Without a Penny Around the World, the detective novel The Silky Face, Chalupny: The System of Sociology, Wells: A Short History of the World, Pedagogical newsletter, Jiri Valja: The Storytellers.*²

I have drawn: The Brewery.

June 1944

I am working in lithography. I have made a physical map of Asia and I have started a world map according to Mercator's projection.

I have read: Otahalova-Popelova: Seneca in Letters, Arbes: Crazy Job, My Friend the Murderer, The Devil, London: Lost Face, Musil: Desert and Oasis, Cosmos, 2 Selections, H. G. Wells: Christina Alberta's Father, part of Descartes' Discourse on Method.

1. As a child in Prague, Chava Pressburger was called Eva Ginzova.

2. There was an extensive library in Theresienstadt, consisting of books confiscated from new arrivals. Petr had access to it.

I have learned: The Antiquity (Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Indians, Phoenicians, Israelites, Greeks, Persians, etc.), the geography of Arabia, Holland, and the Moon.

I have drawn: Behind the Lambing Pen and Vrchlabi.

In my head and on paper, I have organized the subject of zoology. I attend evening lectures (on Rembrandt, Mastickar³).

I don't visit the cookš any more.

July 1944

I have read: Honoré de Balzac: Eugenie Grandet, Gor'ky: Stories, Fairy Tales and Complaints, André Theuriet: The Last Refuge, Valenta: Uncle Eskimo.

I have drawn: Behind the Brewery, Buildings.

I am still employed in lithography, but next month I'll work only half a day and take part in the programme for half a day.

I am learning more English. Eleven-twelfths of the map of the world is now traced in ink. I still have to colour it and fill in the towns.

August 1944

I have read: Dickens: A Christmas Carol, Hloucha: The Sun Carriage, Alexander Niklitschek: Miracles Everywhere, Flammarion and Schemer: Is There Life on Stars?, Lidman: The House of Old Maids, Stolba: From the West of India and Mexico, I, II, Tomek: Prague Jewish Tales and Legends, The Science of Man.

September 1944

I have read: Schweitzer: From My Life and Work, Din'ko Simonovic: The Family Vincic, Thein de Vries: Rembrandt, Thomas Mann: Mario and the Magician, Dickens: A Christmas Carol, Danes: The Origins and Extinction of Aborigines

3. Medieval Czech theatre.

in Australia and Oceania, *Milli Dandolo: The Angel Spoke*, *K. May: The Bear Hunter's Son*, *Oscar Wilde: De profundis* and other novellas.

Petr left these notes, titled "Plans and Reports," in the Theresienstadt dormitory, where in spite of everything he managed to spend two years full of creative work. They fill me with very sad feelings. Petr's life was cut short the day he was ordered to join the transport to Auschwitz, beginning his painful journey leading to death. They forced him into a cattle car and took him away to a mass grave.

4 The fact that Petr was a boy with a rich imagination is also documented by his literary works and experiments. Between the ages of eight and fourteen he wrote altogether five novels: *From Prague to China*, *The Wizard from Altay Mountains*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, *Around the World in One Second*, and *A Visit from Prehistory*. As these titles suggest, Petr was a great admirer of the French novelist Jules Verne. He was such a dedicated reader of Verne that he wrote one of his novels pretending that Verne was its author: this was *A Visit from Prehistory*, the only of his titles that has survived complete. In its introduction he writes that he found an unknown manuscript in the attic of the house where Verne used to live, and he, Petr Ginz, is presenting it to the reader for the first time.

A Visit from Prehistory is about a huge dinosaur Ka-du, born, as scientists assume, in the depths of an African lake from a prehistoric egg. The monster Ka-du is horrible—it destroys and kills everything in its way—so that in the end it takes over most of the African continent. But it turns out that the prehistoric lizard is in fact a robot, a massive mechanical monster created by a man who wants to use it to control the entire world. Ultimately, the monster is destroyed thanks to the efforts and courage of European scientists Dupont and Baker, and the world is saved.

In a short afterword, Petr (speaking as the writer Jules Verne) formulates a warning that is remarkably topical in view of his own reality:

Belgian Congo was thus freed from a tyrant and the world was liberated from a supposedly prehistoric monster. But it has to be added, is it not possible that a new monster may appear on the surface of this Earth, worse than this one—a monster that, controlled by an evil will and equipped with the most advanced technical means, will torture mankind in a terrible manner? In the progressive nineteenth century it is entirely possible. Who knows?

Several years after writing these sentences, Petr himself became not a symbolic but a real victim of the monster that was Nazism.

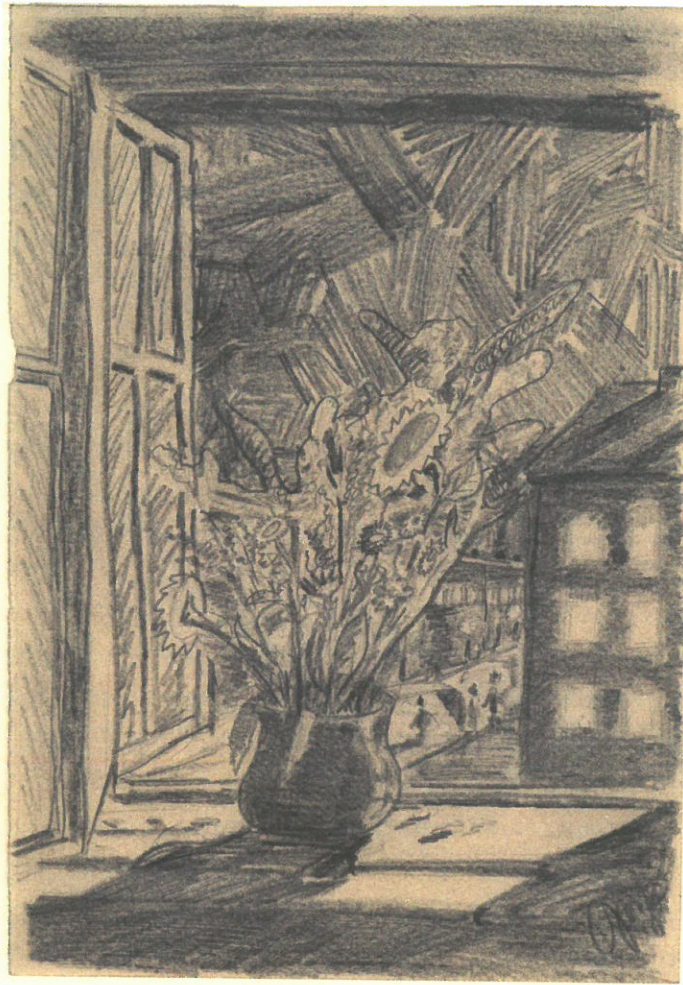
5 Petr arrived in Theresienstadt in October 1942, aged fourteen. He stayed there for two years. From all his activities in Theresienstadt it is clear that he believed he would return to the world from which he had been torn, and that he expected to fulfill a certain task in it, a mission for which he had to prepare. He believed that the world was waiting for his contribution.

In Theresienstadt he found out about the horrors that can happen in human history, but it didn't change his direction at all, as illustrated by this quote from an article he wrote there:

They tore us unjustly away from the fertile ground of work, joy, and culture, which was supposed to nourish our youth. They do this for only one purpose—to destroy us not physically, but spiritually and morally. Will they succeed? Never! Deprived of our former sources of culture, we shall create new ones. Separated from the sources of our old happiness, we shall create a new and joyfully radiant life!

These sentences express Petr's spiritual strength, which propelled him even in Theresienstadt to great creativity. Only a small remnant of its expressions has survived.

One of the fruits of his unusual energy was the magazine *Vedem* ("We Lead"), a weekly written by a group of young boys who inhabited House 1 in L 417 in the Theresienstadt ghetto. Petr founded this review, edited it, commissioned articles for it, and if there weren't enough, he wrote them himself under a pseudonym. The magazine *Vedem* published opinion pieces, poems, reflections about the past and the future, thoughts that expressed not only helplessness about the situation at the time, but also faith and hope—often supported by black humour—that it will improve. We find here also poems full of sadness, poems about the world that had been destroyed and demolished. One of these is Petr's poem about Prague, which he loved so much, but which he was never to see again.



Petr Ginz (1928–1944), *Sunflower*, 1944. Watercolour on paper, Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem.

REMEMBERING PRAGUE

*How long has it already been
since last the sun was seen by me
behind the Petrin hill, dropping out of sight?
I kissed Prague with a teary glance when she
wrapped herself in the shadows of the night.*

*How long since in Vltava I could hear
the pleasant murmur of the weir?
Long ago the buzz of Wenceslas Square
was forgotten. When did it disappear?*

*How are those hidden corners of my city
in the shadow of the slaughterhouse? I fear
they are not sad, they don't miss me
as I miss them. It's been a year.*

*For a year I've been stuck in an ugly hole;
instead of your beauties, I've a few streets alone.
Like a wild animal trapped in a cage
I remember you, my Prague, a fairy tale of stone.*

6 This book consists mainly of two diaries written by my brother, Petr. I would like to preface them with a few words. The first one of Petr's diaries contains brief entries about his daily life between September 19, 1941, and February 24, 1942, continuing in the second one from February 24 until August 9, 1942—the time before his transport to Theresienstadt.

It is clear that Petr wrote his journals only for himself and that it never occurred to him that they could be read by someone else. And this is why we find here absolutely truthful accounts about Petr's family life, about his friends and acquaintances, about the environment in which he grew up—and all this at a time when this environment is being destroyed, day after day, by Nazi abuse.

Petr presents all the facts in a dry manner, without expressing emotions, without demonstrating worry, fear, or hate. Thus, the fact that he was thrown off a streetcar because he was a Jew is mentioned next to his report card consisting of all A's.

Petr's diaries are also testimonies of the method used by the Nazis during the Holocaust. Everything appears to be functioning as usual: the Jewish religious community, Jewish hospitals and schools. The Jews' freedom is being restricted only gradually, with new laws being announced with increasing regularity, listing items Jews have to give up, places they are not allowed to frequent, everything they are forbidden to do. More and more people are being called up for transports. Suddenly, a relative is leaving, one pupil or another, or a teacher is missing at school. People help each other pack suitcases for the journey, there is organized assistance for carrying luggage. But those who remain continue to live their seemingly normal lives. A teacher assigns the copying of one hundred nouns as a punishment.

People do not understand. When Mr. Mautner is called up for his transport, he goes to ask at the Jewish Community whether it isn't a mistake. Can this be possible? I am fifty years old, and I have a heart defect! Those who are

leaving for Poland have no idea that their carefully packed suitcases are loaded onto a special train car and they will never see them again. They do not suspect that maybe in as little as a week they will be gassed or burned or murdered in some other way.

My brother's diary is written in a calm style, although it changes, together with his handwriting, in the last weeks and days, when he is expecting to be assigned to a transport. His notes are nervous, as if he didn't know what was happening to him and was unable to describe those days. Only in Theresienstadt does he reveal the circumstances of his departure, after the fact, thus completing the diary in which he had not captured this fateful moment.

I am presenting these notes even before the diaries from the years 1941–1942. Although this disturbs the chronology of events, I am of the opinion that it was precisely Petr's assignment to the Theresienstadt transport and his portrayal of the preparations for his departure that throw a light on and a shadow over his earlier diaries, where he writes about his everyday existence in the midst of a threatening situation, but nevertheless pulsating with regular life and without interruption. Incomprehensibly to us today, there was a sense of harmony, and a hope that the future would not bring a tragic end.

I. How I found out about the transport

On the morning of September 22, 1942, I left at seven o'clock, as usual, for my work in 7 Josefovská Street, in a typewriter repair shop. The manager, Mr. Bruck (whom I had nicknamed Wolf), was already there, so was Mr. Fuchs. Mr. Bondy and Mr. Lampl arrived later. The work began immediately after. I cleaned the typewriters and others disassembled them. Don't think that cleaning a typewriter is easy. There is cleaning and there is "cleaning." If you want the typewriter to shine on the inside and on the outside, you have to remove the carriage and wipe the most invisible corners with a small brush. Then you have to use a blowpipe to clear it out.

The most difficult part are the spaces between the typebars. Of course, this varies from one model to another. Cleaning the "Demontable" is no problem at all, you can take it apart completely, but the L. C. Smith is much harder. There, you can only remove the platen.

After I finished cleaning a couple of typewriters (I wrote down the numbers conscientiously. Old Fuchs later copied them and collected payment for the cleaning. Of course, I didn't get paid.), I was sent to inspect typewriters. Every fourteen days there was an inspection of typewriters in all the departments of the Jewish community, to see if any needed cleaning. That day, it was the Legal Department's turn, at 21 Norimberska Street. I was sent there with a small case, in which I carried gasoline for cleaning the platen, alcohol for cleaning the keys, and for the same purpose a wire brush and a cloth. My case also contained several replacement ribbons (13, 14, and 14.5 mm), a notepad for recording the replaced ribbons, a couple of chisels, and an oil can. On the way, I had collected a few cigarette butts. But I found most of them on the stairs of the Jewish religious community center.

I sat down in front of a typewriter in the legal department and began cleaning it. Suddenly, the phone rang. It was the typewriter repair shop, telling me to go to the workshop immediately. I was very surprised, because it was normally I who phoned them (that's when I tore a string somewhere) rather than the other way around. But I kept my surprise to myself, collected my things, and walked to the workshop. As soon as I entered, Wolf said calmly: "You're in it, don't worry about it."

II. Preparations

When Wolf said this memorable sentence to me, I remained surprisingly calm. I said good-bye to them, in case I didn't see them again. I remembered all the mischief I had caused them (for example, I filled the spray for spraying typewriters half with gasoline and half with air, lit a match, placed it in the window, and then blew gasoline fumes into it. The resulting flame was so huge—about three metres long

and one metre wide—that it could be seen in the next room. They came running right away, confiscated the matches, and I was told that if I ever did anything like that again, I would get kicked out. This was a case when things turned out well; but another time, while spraying a typewriter, I noticed rings of gas fumes rising in the air, and I wanted to make them burn. I should add that the typewriter was placed in a bowl full of gasoline, with another half of a can next to it. If I had lit those fumes back then, I wouldn't be sitting here writing this.) and I thought they might be pleased I'm leaving. But they looked as if they really were sorry.

So I went home. While walking, I tried to absorb, for the last time, the street noise I would not hear again for a long time (in my opinion; Father and Mother were counting on just a few months). I arrived at home (I hid my star on the way from the corner to the entrance to our building, till I reached the apartment, so that it would not be noticed that Jews still lived in our house). All the way to the third floor there were only offices, on the fourth floor lived the Kohners (they left for Poland three months ago, people say all their luggage was confiscated), the Mautners (they left for Theresienstadt), Ichas (Aryans, railway employees), and us. We had been saved from moving out because the apartment was registered in Mother's name.

Finally, I arrived home and knocked on the door. "Who is it?" Mummy asked from inside. "Me." Mummy opened, surprised that I was home so early. "Mancinka, don't get frightened, I'm in a transport." Mummy was immediately beside herself; she started crying, she didn't know what to do. I comforted her. Suddenly the doorbell rang. Auntie Nada arrived to tell us I was in a transport, but we already knew it. Auntie Nada is a practical soul; she went straight into action. First, we hurried to the community centre to pick up the forms that were about to be distributed. Otherwise we would have heard about the transport only at noon. We were to board at 6 P.M., at Veletzrni Palace. Afterward we ran quickly back home; my good friend, Harry Popper was already waiting to say good-bye to me, which he had succeeded in doing. There was a lot of action; we were packing; some women helpers from the

Sie wurden in den Transport Ca eingereiht und haben weisungsgemäss heute, den 22. Oktober 1942 spätestens um 18 Uhr am Messagelände Prag VII., Eingang gegenüber Winerstrasse, reisebereit mit allen Dokumenten und Ihrem Handgepäck, das nicht 10 kg überschreiten darf, anzutreten. Das Hauptgepäck wird unser Sammeldienst im Laufe des morgigen Vormittags abholen. Geben Sie dem Ueberbringer dieses Schreibens an, wo Ihr Gepäck hinterlegt sein wird. In der Bellage übersenden wir Ihnen die notwendigen Transportdokumente und Formulare, welche Sie durchlesen und ausgefüllt auf den Sammelplatz mitbringen wollen. Gleichzeitig bemerken wir, dass Sie alle Lebensmittelkarten für die nächste Versorgungsperiode, welche Sie in diesen Tagen erhalten haben, abgeben müssen. Wir haben veranlasst, dass Ihnen unser Hilfsdienst bei der Vorbereitung zum Transportantritt behilflich ist.

22.10.1942

Jüdische Kultusgemeinde in Prag
Židovská náboženská obec v Praze

The official letter sent to Petr on October 22, 1942, informing him that he has to report for a transport on the same day. Private archive, Chava Pressburger.

TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENT

You have been assigned to transport Ca and are ordered to report today, on 22/10/1942, at 6 P.M. at the latest to the assembly grounds Veletrh in Prague VII, entrance opposite Vinarska Street, with all your documents and your hand luggage, which must not exceed the weight of 10kg. Large suitcases will be picked up by our collection service tomorrow morning. Inform the person delivering this letter where these main suitcases will be stored. We are enclosing all the printed information and questionnaires; read through them, fill them out, and bring them with you to the Exhibition Grounds. At the same time we are informing you that you must hand in all food-ration coupons for the next supply period, which you have recently received. We have arranged for our service to help you with your preparations for joining the transport.

Byl jste zařazen do transportu Ca a musíte se dle příkazu dostavití dnes, dne 22.10.1942, nejpozději do 18 hodin na shromaždiště veletrh v Praze VII., vchod proti ulici Vinarské se všemi doklady a se svými při ručními zavazadly, jež nesmí přesahovati 10 kg. Velká zavazadla odveze naše sběrná služba během zítřejšího dopoledne. Udejte doručiteli tohoto přípisu, kde tato hlavní zavazadla budou uložena. Přiloženo Vám posíláme všechny tiskopisy a formuláře; pročtete je a přinesete vyplněné a sebou na veletrh. Současně upozorňujeme, že musíte odvézati všechny potravinové lístky na příští zásobovací období, které Vám tyto dny byly vydány. Zařídili jsme, aby Vám naše pomocná služba byla nápomocna při přípravě k nástupu do transportu.

Jewish Community arrived to help us pack. In the meantime we somehow managed to eat lunch. I no longer remember what we had for lunch that day, although I would really like to know it; I believe it was hamburgers.

After lunch I was told to choose which of my toys I wanted to take along. I took a supply of paper (including this notebook), linoleum, small knives for cutting it, the unfinished novel The Wizard of Altay Mountains, which at the time consisted of about 260 pages. I wanted to finish writing it in Theresienstadt, but in the end nothing came of it. I will speak later about laziness in Theresienstadt. I also took thin leather for binding, and a few sheets of endpaper. That was all. Sorry, also a few broken watercolour paints; the rest were left at home. And that was definitely all from my own drawer in the wardrobe, and the big case from Macesky. I packed these items lovingly with the other luggage, and it will probably be seen as bad that I was more worried about losing them than anything else.

In the middle of the room, on the table the Mautners had hidden with us, there was a huge pile of things that were meant to be packed—the couch and the ottoman were also full. Pavel and Hanka came and helped where possible, and where not. Now that I'm writing this, I'm doing it in a humorous style, but at the time we didn't feel like laughing. Daddy gave me his best shirts and a thick jacket, his ski boots and all sorts of things. I even reminded him jokingly that his own protection wasn't certain. (Protection applied to those married to an Aryan man or woman and their children under the age of fourteen.) At the time, the protection was unreliable. One day you could be protected and the next day deported.

However, we had been prepared for my transport. Because during the last registration in Stresovice, the SS-man said to Daddy about me: "Der fährt mit [dem] nächsten Transport."⁴ My parents didn't tell me about it; I just found out about it. I didn't go with the next transport, but the one after.

4. "He is going with the next transport."

III. Departure

The entire afternoon passed away in confusion. My parents were packing my blanket. It was actually a quilted duvet. Auntie Nada was helping with this. I also remember Daddy saying: "Let Petr do it, now we are doing it all together but when he's at Veletrh he'll have to do it by himself." So I took the blanket and packed into it a few loaves of bread, a pillow, a sheet, and a pair of pajamas. I closed the blanket and rolled it together by pressing on it with my knees. Then I slipped a sack over it, which Mummy pulled off the sink. I still remember saying that she won't have anything to cover the sink with. Mummy just waved her hand.

Soon, it was evening. We darkened the room (on other days we rarely did this) using the ottoman covers. This darkening always involved wild acrobatics. Mummy used to open the inside window; then she'd stand in the space between both windows and attach the rings on the corners of the blanket to prepared (or sometimes unprepared) nails or hooks. I was in favor of the closed-window principle. I moved along the inside window sill and, holding on to the window bolts, darkened the room. Then I jumped down, making the windows rattle.

We continued packing. Auntie Nada called me into the bedroom and implored me to be sensible, to stay away from big boys and bad girls.⁵ Then she untied the cuffs on my coat and inside each cuff near the sleeve she put a hundred-mark bill. In addition, Daddy gave me a kitchen knife with a hollowed-out handle hiding another hundred-mark bill.

We had to do it all quickly, because I had to be there at 6 o'clock. That's why there were the last feverish preparations. They filled one of my pockets with sausage

5. From here Petr continues to write using a secret code he invented himself but which I succeeded in deciphering. He also uses Cyrillic letters, Hebrew letters (but writes Czech text in both), and shorthand. In spite of my attempts to decipher the entire coded text a few bits remain illegible: they are marked with three dots [...].

sandwiches; my other pockets were also filled with food but now I don't know what they put in there. I'm sure it was something good.

I was to leave at eight o'clock in the evening. We took the tram to Veletrh. This was because Jews who were called up for a transport received a permit for traveling by streetcar from the Jewish Community. You had to show the card and a personal identification document, pay, and only then could you travel. I still remember how Daddy appealed to the other passengers and explained to them how difficult it was. Our transport was in fact the beginning of the Mischling transports. [We] arrived at Veletrh, it was [...] dark. Daddy said good-bye to me. He kissed me several times and Auntie Nada gave me the last kiss. [...] took [...] from the office. I was given a new number, 446. What was actually the name of our transport? They didn't know yet. I handed over my suitcases in the optimistic hope that I would see them again someday.

So this is how Petr described his departure. I am also adding here what our father, Otto Ginz, wrote a few years later about saying good-bye to Petr:

Near the exhibition area there were large sheds, where the victims, selected for transport to Theresienstadt, were told to assemble. The Prague Jewish Community covered the soil with old mattresses. On October 22, 1942, I accompanied our Petr there. We had an earnest talk, but I avoided triggering sad thoughts in him, and we comforted each other by saying that we would both meet at home soon. On the basis of examples I knew I warned Petr in the last moment before his departure to be careful when dealing with German guards, with whom he would soon be confronted. We reached the point beyond which those accompanying the victims were not allowed to go, I pressed our Petr to me, we kissed, and Petr went inside. He turned around a few times, we waved to each other, and Petr disappeared in the gate. I turned away and at that moment a loud cry escaped my insides, more like a scream of pain. I controlled myself and forced myself to calm down. I don't know how I

Editor's Note

Chava Pressburger

Petr Ginz's diaries and other texts have been copied without changes as closely as possible, while adhering to orthographic rules of the time. The diary headings have been given a unified form, according to the one used most frequently by Petr in his diaries: the days as Arabic numerals, the months as Roman numerals, followed by the year and in brackets the day of the week. Inconsistencies have been corrected during the copying of the entries. To facilitate the understanding of the text some details referred to as numerals have been rewritten as words, e.g., 4 children—four children. We also detail irregular abbreviations. A small number of grammatical and spelling errors have been corrected. In a few exceptional cases the syntax has also been corrected. Words that have been added are placed in square brackets.

Petr Ginz's Diary

from 19th September

of the year nineteen hundred and forty-one

(Friday)

till 23rd February

of the year nineteen hundred and forty-two

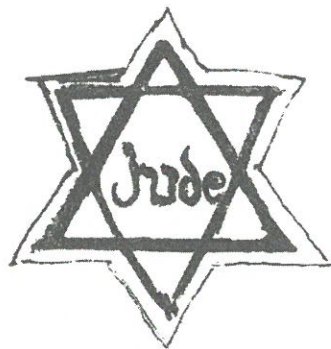
(Monday)

Material donated as a birthday gift by Eva Ginzova.⁶

6. Petr used to make and bind his own notebooks for his novels and diaries, because new exercise books from a shop were not available to Jews at that time. This diary was made from old paper I had obtained for him.

19. IX. 1941 (Friday)

The weather is foggy. Jews were told to wear a badge, which looks approximately like this:



When I went to school,⁷ I counted sixty-nine "sheriffs," Mummy counted more than a hundred of them.

Dlouha avenue is now called "The Milky Way."

In the afternoon I went with Eva to Troja; we went on a ride on a tethered boat.

20. IX. 1941 (Saturday)

Cold in the morning, nice in the afternoon.

In the morning I had to study. In the afternoon I went (to Troja) with Popper,⁸ from whom I bought a tank for 270 crowns. Mummy, Daddy, and Eva were at Grandma's.

7. Petr attended a Jewish school on Jachymova Street; the language of instruction was Czech.

8. Harry Popper, Petr's friend.

21. IX. 1941 (Sunday)

Very nice weather all day.

I wrote my homework all morning, in the afternoon till three.

The Miloses⁹ will come here around four and we'll go to Troja.

(Eva II¹⁰ arrived as well, and the Blochs, from whom I received photographs.)

22. IX. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning there was a terrible fog, in the afternoon it was nice.

In the morning I went to wish Grandma "Le Shanah Tovah,"¹¹ then I accompanied her to the Smichov synagogue.

In the afternoon, because it's Rosh Hashanah, we have no school.

We all went for a walk near the slaughterhouse; we rode on rafts until the evening.

23. IX. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning there was fog; at noon and in the afternoon it was very nice.

Popper and I went to the slaughterhouse in the morning.

It is the autumn equinox, the beginning of autumn, but I have already seen fallen leaves somewhere.

I spent the afternoon at home.

9. "Miloses" is how we referred to the family of Milos Ginz, an uncle on Father's side. Similarly, we referred to the Jirins, the Miluskas, the grandmas, and so on. Uncle Milos and his wife Nada had a son called Pavel, my and Petr's first cousin.

10. Petr referred to Eva Sklenckova, our cousin on Mother's side whose married name later became Simkova, as Eva II.

11. Wishes for the Jewish New Year.

24. IX. 1941 (Wednesday)

Fog in the morning, afternoon nice.

In the morning in school, in the afternoon with Popper in Troja.

25. IX. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning chilly, in the afternoon nice.

In the morning in the library, in the afternoon at school.

At Denis train station there was a fire engine; smoke was blowing from there.

Mummy heard a terrible bang, then many smaller ones.

Probably another sabotage.

27. IX. 1941 (Saturday)

Quite nice all day. In the morning at home, in the afternoon with Popper and Martin in Troja. Martin became a member of SPVL, which made Popper very angry, because M. is not allowed to give up a membership that forbids him to sign contracts, without my permission. M. invited me to his house for his birthday. So on Sunday I'll go to him.

I arranged a boycott against Popper.

They announced a so-called civil state of emergency (martial law) valid from 28. IX. 1941, 12 o'clock.

Signed by Heydrich instead of Neurath.

28. IX. 1941 (Sunday)

Nice weather all day, especially in the afternoon.

In the morning I was at home, did my homework; in the afternoon I went to Turna's house for a snack; we also went to the Atlantic, where we tried out ships.

I cancelled the boycott against Popper, who was threatening me with war. I



Petr Ginz (1928–1944), *Ex Libris Harry Popper*, 1941. Linocut; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem.

made a pact with Martin, according to which I will supply him with ships in case of war.

Then we played Mill (Nine Men's Morris) and checkers.

I am writing this in the evening by candlelight, my parents and Eva II went to the Levituses¹² with spoiled sausages. Now it's almost eight o'clock and they're not back yet.

P.S. I gave Turna "Mother Bear Brumka and Her Son" as a present.

The tower clock is striking eight right now.

29. IX. 1941 (Monday)

Morning quite cold, afternoon fair.

I was in school this morning, now I'm at home and soon I'll go to my orthopedic exercise and school exercise class.

I've been to the gym, then wasted time in school, where we were supposed to have handicrafts, and this because of the "Nine-tailed cat with eighteen iron balls" from Bardach.¹³

30. IX. 1941 (Tuesday)

Quite cold all day.

Morning at home, afternoon in school.

12. Our father, Otto Ginz, had four siblings: two brothers, Milos and Slava, and two sisters, Herma and Anda. Aunt Herma married Karl Levitus.

13. Felix Bardach, Petr's classmate.

1. X. 1941 (Wednesday)

It has been raining all day. It is Yom Kippur,¹⁴ I fasted from Tuesday evening until Wednesday evening. But in the evening I ate a lot.

Lots of people were executed for preparing the sabotage, illegal possession of weapons, and so on.

2. X. 1941 (Thursday)

Quite cold. Nothing special.

3. X. 1941 (Friday)

Cold in the morning, decent weather in the afternoon.

In the afternoon I went to my orthopedic exercise class, afterward went for a walk near the slaughterhouse. I met Popper there.

There was terrible shellfire at night and shots in the direction of Letna. Sirens were wailing like mad. The Turnas were in the shelter. Mummy and Daddy heard the whirring of a motor. But not me. Daddy saw shrapnel bursting into pieces a few times.

4. X. 1941 (Saturday)

Fair weather all day.

In the afternoon I visited the Turnas, and I went to Troja. We were supposed to have a race, but it didn't happen, because some boy (age 14–15) kept throwing stones at us. On the way, Turna was stopped by a small, about eleven-year-old boy, telling him that he shouldn't talk to Jews.

14. The Day of Atonement, a Jewish holiday and fast day.

He also said that he knows the law very well and that he will find out Turna's name.

From Popper I got as two prizes for the boat race a small English textbook. In Troja I met my parents.

5. X. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning bad fog, in the afternoon quite chilly.

Did homework all morning. In the afternoon we went for a walk in Maniny,¹⁵ where we met the Hirschs; with them we walked far beyond the Liben bridge. I borrowed "The Mysterious Dune."

6. X. 1941 (Monday)

Quite nice weather.

It is Sukkot¹⁶ and so there is no school. In the morning I was at home, in the afternoon at my orthopedic exercise class and I also went to hand in the solution of the competition in "Paradise Garden," where I met a lady who looked more like death than a human being.

15. Maniny was where Petr probably spent most of his free time. It's not a location in Prague Holesovice, as the name would seem to suggest, but dead-end river branches and canals framing Rohansky Island—the word "manina" (from the Czech "chodit mani"—indicated a landscape without roads, which one could criss-cross freely, i.e., however one chose). One of the local canals was filled during the war with city rubbish. Gradually, the river branch and all the canals were filled, so that Rohansky Island is in reality no longer an island.

16. Sukkot is the Feast of Tabernacles, a Jewish holiday commemorating the forty years the Jews spent wandering in the desert during which time they dwelled in huts.

There is a new inventory of Jewish linen, furniture, sewing machines, and other things. The Milos family came to visit us this afternoon (only Uncle and Pavel) and Eva II. Mr. Fried came back recently (he had been arrested by the Gestapo) and immediately got married.

7. X. 1941 (Tuesday)

Weather quite good in the morning, nice in the afternoon.

In the afternoon I was with Eva in Maniny; we rode a trolley cycle.

In the morning I borrowed from Slavek "In a Sailboat across Two Oceans."

8. X. 1941 (Wednesday)

Quite nice weather all day.

In the morning at school, in the afternoon at Maniny. I picked goldenrod there.

In the evening Lianka came to look at Eva's drawings.

9. X. 1941 (Thursday)

Quite nice weather.—Morning at home, afternoon at school, wrote Czech composition essay.

10. X. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at school, Ehrlich from the parallel class is leaving with the first transport of five thousand Jews to Poland.

Everyone is allowed to take along 50 kg luggage, money, blankets, food, and insurance policies.

In the afternoon (evening) Eva II and Hanka Steiner came to visit.

11. X. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning I was at home; in the afternoon we visited Grandma. I received a police summons; Eva thought we were already going to Poland.

It was about a finder's fee. Because three weeks ago, I found latchkeys, which I handed in to the police. I gave them my address, to send me a finder's reward, in case there was one.

In the evening Eva II was here; she is expecting Otik's arrival.¹⁷

12. X. 1941 (Sunday)

Finally, after a telephone call and a cable, Otik arrived at about 9 A.M. Uncle Jarka D. is also supposed to come soon.

13. X. 1941 (Monday)

There is no school, because it's Sukkot on Monday and Tuesday.

I received notice to go to school and fill sacks with sawdust. In the morning I filled sixty sacks with a group that also included Pavel G. In the afternoon we stuffed over eighty sacks. They reached the ceiling. Two cars delivered the sawdust. The full sacks are sent to Veletrzni Palace, where Jews are supposed to stay for five days before the journey to Poland. I guess they'll sleep on the sacks.

Uncle Jarka D. arrived from Hradec; in the evening he went to Horalka's.

Eva II was here, too.

17. Ota Sklencka, brother of Eva II, our cousin on Mother's side. Later a well-known Prague actor.

14. X. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning I went to the police and to Grandma's. At the police station I received 9.90 crowns for the keys. In the afternoon I went for a walk with Eva at Maniny, where I met Fabian from IV.C.

15. X. 1941 (Wednesday)

In the morning I was in school; Kaufman and Hayek will be leaving for Poland.

In the afternoon I was with Popper at Maniny and near the slaughterhouse. Uncle Jarka D. left in the evening. Eva II is here.

16. X. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning I went for a walk at Maniny and near the slaughterhouse. At Maniny I was invited to ride on a train, by a railway worker. He chatted with me very nicely, said he was from Sudeten Germany, where he left a house. He asked me whether Daddy couldn't sell him an overcoat, since we have to leave everything to the Germans.

In the afternoon at school, a maths exam.

D. Storzova was here; she is leaving with a new transport for Poland.

17. X. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning I went to school, from where I was sent with three others to help put together desks in a new Jewish school in Vinohrady.

We made it back to school just for the last lesson.

In the afternoon I went for a walk near the slaughterhouse and at Maniny. Auntie Anda visited us.

18. X. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning I was helping out at home.

I scraped out Daddy's sticker albums and glued in new stickers. I did the same work for part of the afternoon. Uncle Milos and Pavel came. In the evening Lianka came to show us her new dress, which she made herself. Mr. Pokorny came, too.

19. X. 1941 (Sunday)

I spent the morning at home; I started a fire in the stove for the first time by myself, now it's burning like crazy. I stayed home in the afternoon as well, just toward the evening I went with Eva to Maniny.

20. X. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning at school, in the afternoon at Maniny. Pavel came in the evening.

21. X. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at school.

We now have Miss Lauscherova as our class teacher, right away she gave four children after school detentions and five written punishments (5x a certain fairly long article). Promising beginning!

22. X. 1941 (Wednesday)

Morning at school. Uncle Milos came at noon.

Mr. Pitter and Eva II came in the evening.

23. X. 1941 (Thursday)

This morning I was in town; in the afternoon I went for a walk.

24. X. 1941 (Friday)

Morning at home, afternoon [incomplete]

25. X. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning in town and on a walk. In the afternoon I went to visit Popper; Martin was there, too; we played "Business" and "Bell and Hammer." Afterward I was outdoors.

26. X. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning at home; in the afternoon I visited the Hanzls with the Miloses. Neither Pavlicek nor Jozka or Jirina was at home. Only Miluska¹⁸ was there, who had a visit from Mr. Karpeles. She showed us sleeping bags. This year's first snow fell today, of course mixed with rain. We and the Milos family received a summons to register.

27. X. 1941 (Monday)

Morning in school; in the afternoon went to Zizkov.

We got a big punishment from Miss Lauscherova for talking: to decline twenty-five words in German.

We've already had a proper snowstorm.

28. X. 1941 (Tuesday)

Afternoon in school, morning in town.

18. Miluska and Jirina—our father's cousins—married two brothers, Otta and Pavel Hansel. Petr writes about them as "the Jirinas" and "the Miluskas." Both families, including the four-year-old Pavlicek, were assigned to one of the first transports of the year 1941. They were sent to Lodz in Poland, all to be killed.

29. X. 1941 (Wednesday)

Morning in school; I got paid 100 crowns for helping out in school. It's enough! On Friday, the Miluskas and the Jirinas have to report to the exhibition grounds. They are leaving for Poland.

On Sunday they weren't yet registered, on Tuesday they registered, and on Wednesday they were called up (at night, as usual).

In the afternoon we visited the family Levitus; Aunt Anda was there too.

30. X. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning at the Levituses; they have everything ready for the journey to Poland.—Afternoon in school.

(ON LOOSE LEAF WITH SECRET WRITING)

1. in the afternoon there was
 2. at our house one
 3. lady from Kotrovice (Kotovice?) near Pilsen
 4. and she talked about a big
 5. attack by the English. One
 6. bomb fell about ten feet
 7. from the train station and made
 8. there an enormous ditch, which
 9. they then had to cover for a long
 10. time. That sort of attack
1. happened there three times, but they never
 2. hit the train station, which
 3. is used to transport goods from

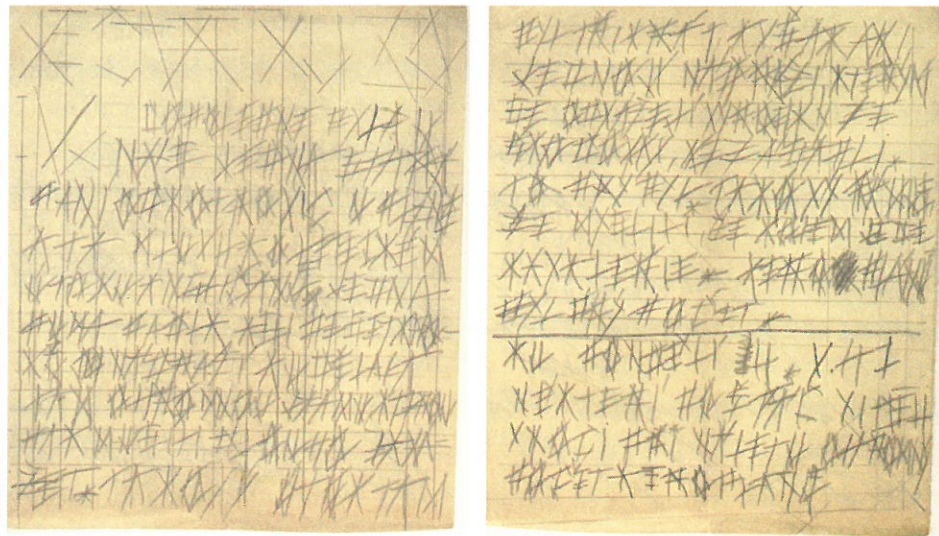
4. the Skoda factory.
5. The noise was so terrible,
6. that they thought they were surrounded by
7. cavalry. There was a large number
8. of aeroplanes
9. about Monday 4.V.42
10. some postmen saw
11. at night during the air attack a huge
12. number of aeroplanes.

31. X. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning I was supposed to go to school, but instead I went to say goodbye to the Miluskas and the Jirinas. I brought little Pavlicek something to play with while traveling: a tank and a monkey that jumped and turned somersaults, but which scared him terribly. There was an awful mess, they are preparing for the journey. Afterward I went to school. The snow stayed a while on the streets for the first time, the roofs are covered.
Afternoon at home.

1. XI. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning a walk near the slaughterhouse at Maniny, in the afternoon at Grandma's. It's really freezing already, the Maninsky canal is almost completely frozen, the ice is about 1 cm thick. Of course, you can't yet walk on it. In several places there are ice patches you can slide on.
Daddy was called up for work by the Jewish Community (probably at the exhibition center).



In a self-invented cryptograph, Petr recorded news from the BBC transmitter, which he secretly listened to even though such activity was severely punished.

2. XI. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning I wrote my homework and my punishment, in the afternoon we were with the Miloses at the Masaryk station, expecting the arrival of Auntie Nada from Budyne. Auntie arrived, and we all went to our house, where we (us children) played "Sorry."
Mr. Pokorny was here in the evening.

3. XI. 1941 (Monday)

School in the morning. We received a letter from the Jewish Community, ordering us to go to Regnart Street and sign that we will not sell or give anything to Aryans. At home in the afternoon.
Daddy worked from 10 till 5 at the exhibition ground. This is the work he had been called up for on Saturday.

4. XI. 1941 (Tuesday)

We have no school till next Monday, probably because people will be going there to sign declarations (see Monday).

I spent the morning at Grandma's where I was working on engravings. Grandma then gave me two. I coloured¹⁹ them in the afternoon.

5. XI. 1941 (Wednesday)

Morning at home, afternoon at the Levituses.

6. IX. 1941 (Thursday)

I spent the morning at Grandma's, where I got more engravings (altogether eighty-three) for colouring. In the afternoon I started on them and finished colouring three of them: Eva also did one.—Went to Maniny in the early evening.

7. XI. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at Maniny.

8. XI. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning with Popper near the slaughterhouse and at Maniny, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

9. XI. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning at home, we have a punishment (from Miss Lauscherova) to decline one hundred nouns with adjectives, so I had to write it. Spent the afternoon with the Milos family.

19. Our grandmother had many old engravings—Grandfather used to own an antique shop—which Petr and I often coloured with watercolours.

10. XI. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning at school, in the afternoon went for a walk.

11. XI. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon in school.

12. XI. 1941 (Wednesday)

In the morning in school, in the afternoon with Popper.

The Mautners gave me engravings. Eva II was here.

Aunt Herma gave us a kind of bowl that chirps when the milk is about to spill out. We tried it out today; it works.

13. XI. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning at the outpatients hospital, in the eye department they gave me a prescription for glasses.

Afternoon in school.

14. XI. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at school, in the afternoon in town and at Grandma's. We also stopped off at Mr. Repa's on Hybernska Street for those glasses, which we're supposed to receive tomorrow.

15. XI. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning we borrowed a small heater from the Mautners.

In the afternoon at Grandma's, the Hornsteins (Grandma's tenants) have been called up to report to the exhibition grounds, to go to Poland.

16. XI. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at the Levituses; the Milos family was there too. I played chess with Pavel for the first time. Afterward we boys and the girls chased one another through the rooms.

17. XI. 1941 (Monday)

Morning at school, I was tested in natural history and geography (B and A).
In the afternoon [incomplete]

18. XI. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at school; I was elected class president.

19. XI. 1941 (Wednesday)

In the morning at school I was publicly named president of class IV.B.
In the afternoon I went to pick up the glasses from Repa's on Hybernska Street and afterward I wore them when I went for a walk with Popper in Troja.

20. XI. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at school.
We went to register on Letenska Avenue.

21. XI. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at school, in the afternoon in Troja.

22. XI. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning with Popper, in the afternoon at Grandma's, where I received a beautiful inlaid fountain pen.

23. XI. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon with the Miloses at Maniny.
Transports to Poland (five thousand people have already left in five transports) are stopped for the time being; now they are sending people to work in Theresienstadt.

24. XI. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning in school.
During recess at PE I locked the locker room with a wire with three trainers inside.

25. XI. 1941 (Tuesday)

Morning at home, afternoon in school.

26. XI. 1941 (Wednesday)

In the morning in school, I was called to help people who are going with the new transport to Poland on 27. [XI.]. I waited the entire afternoon just to receive the pass, because Jews are not allowed out on the street before 6 A.M., and I had to be at Mr. Emil Bondy's on Klimentaska Street at 5:30 A.M.
I also received a telephone token, so that I can call the Community in case I couldn't carry the luggage.

27. XI. 1941 (Thursday)

Daddy got up at five in the morning and went to those Bondys instead of me. They had a huge amount of luggage and I would definitely not have been able to carry that.—In the afternoon at school, a maths test.

28. XI. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at school. The Mautners, who live on our floor, have to leave for Theresienstadt, together with thousands of other people. Among others that are leaving is Reach, Ervin Mautner, and many others. Mr. Mautner went to the Community (Jewish) to ask if it wasn't a mistake (he is over fifty years old and ill). In the later afternoon we went for a walk through town over the Charles bridge, Klarov and Belcredi's Avenue (today's Letenska).

The geography teacher Mr. David got married (probably yesterday), so our class bought him a kerosene cooker, Primus. It cost 80 crowns, which amount was collected by our class (IV.B) (in fact we collected 120 crowns; 40 crowns went into the class fund). I wrote a poem to go with it and both were gift-wrapped, but Mr. David was at the registration so we can only give him the present on Monday.

29. XI. (Saturday)

In the morning with Popper near the slaughterhouse, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

Mr. Mautner has already been to the Community; they said it's not an error. So he has leave for the exhibition grounds already on Monday 1.XII. In a month the whole Mautner family will join him.

30. XI. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning at home, I had to write a punishment (to analyse fifty complex sentences). I spent the entire morning on it.

In the afternoon at the Levitus's; the Milos's and Aunt Anda were there, too. Mr. Mautner came to say good-bye to us. Soon after Mrs. Mautnerova came to get him. They say that from May 1 they've had nothing but trouble. Egon has been arrested, Karel was sent to work in Ceska Lipa, all of their relatives are either in Poland or in Theresienstadt.

1. XII. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning at school, Mr. David accepted that Primus with thanks.

2. XII. 1941 (Tuesday)

Morning at home, afternoon in school. At 11 o'clock the new wooden Pfitzner's bridge was festively opened by the deputy of Mayor Klapka (who was executed).

3. XII. 1941 (Wednesday)

Morning in school. A contest for the class magazine *Outlook* was announced, for the best solution to a certain question that was to be turned into a story. Afternoon at home.

4. XII. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning I was in town, in the afternoon at home.

They say that transports to Theresienstadt have been stopped at least until January 10.

5. XII. 1941 (Friday)

Morning in school, afternoon at home.

6. XII. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning I was with Popper near the slaughterhouse, in the afternoon at Martin's, where we played football with coins. I defeated Popper 12 to 1, Martin beat me 4 to 3. I borrowed the Verne books *City of Steel* and *In a Balloon around the World*. (Translator's note: the first book is probably what is known in English as *The Begum's Millions*, and the second could be either *Five Weeks in a Balloon* or *Around the World in 80 Days*—it's not clear which.)

7. XII. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning at home. The Mautners, now the entire family except for Karl, who is in Lipa, and Egon, who is their nephew, are leaving for Theresienstadt to join Mr. Mautner. Mrs. Mautnerova has been crying a lot; she wants to take Egon along with her. I was at their flat and they gave me all sorts of small things.

8. XII. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning at school. Mr. David has only just managed to read that poem (see 28.XI.) and publicly thanked me for it. I had gym. I was at home in the afternoon. Japan has officially declared war against the United States of North America.

9. XII. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning I did my homework. The Japanese attacked Singapore. School in the afternoon.

When, as usual, I walked home from school with Bardach, on Vezenska Street in front of a pub there was a "green anton" (i.e., a van for prisoners) and in front of it stood a line of policemen across the pavement. The Gestapo men then chased some people out of the pub (about eight of them), directly into the "green anton," which they then locked and drove away. I heard it has to do with the geese and chickens displayed in the pub.

10. XII. 1941 (Wednesday)

In the morning I was in school, in the afternoon shopping. In the evening Eva and I went to say good-bye to Mrs. Mautner and Egon, who volunteered to go to Theresienstadt. They are already leaving tomorrow morning.

We received a nice goose from Hradec, weighing seven kilo (3 kg of lard, 320 g livers).

11. XII. 1941 (Thursday)

The Mautners left in the morning, everyone was crying, they went away like galley-slaves with a number on their coats. Workers from the community (the Jewish religious) carried their luggage.

Karel was supposed to arrive from Lipa, but so far hasn't come.

Mrs. Mautnerova, crying hard, asked us to give him her regards. The apartment keys have to be handed in to the Germans.

Mrs. Mautnerova was having crying attacks.

The hanging Stefanik Bridge (now called the Leos Janacek Bridge) has been closed to pedestrians for quite some time.

In the afternoon at school. Germany declared war on America.

South American states have joined in against Japan (already on Monday the 8th, I heard). Daddy was in the emergency clinic in the afternoon.

12. XII. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at school. On the way I saw six moving vans, they were moving the equipment from Dusni synagogue; about twenty Jews in working clothes (among them Uncle Milos) were carrying furniture. We had to hand in Eva's ski boots, because the Germans ordered it.

In the afternoon at home. In the evening Daddy was with the emergency service, see 13. XII. 1941.

13. XII. 1941 (Saturday)

Spent the morning with Popper. I bought two books from him (one small German one, the other one *Little Lord*). Karel Mautner arrived from Lipa, but he will have to leave again soon. He got stronger there.

In the afternoon at Grandma's, I received a hat and several clay coins. Daddy had overnight duty at the emergency service at the police office, from seven in the evening until a quarter to seven, same as on Friday.

14. XII. 1941 (Sunday)

It is the first day of Chanukah,²⁰ so I went to see the performance of the parallel class (IV. C). The teacher, Mr. Glanzberg, played the violin; there was singing and theatre. I was invited as class representative of IV. B and I brought a gift for their class representative, Petr Heim, a Young Reader calendar. There were about two hundred gifts that children gave one another (two full laundry baskets). In the evening Daddy went again to the overnight emergency service, in case the police needed something. But so far nothing like that happened, so Daddy sleeps there. He is disturbed by old men playing cards there.

After the school performance Slavek Stein, who hasn't visited us in a long time, walked me home. Afterward I walked him home. On the way we found out that (so they say) people get slapped (Jews, of course), so we tried to hide our stars. Daddy was with the emergency service again, a Jew sang beautifully there, they said he performed in Holland and England as a professional singer.

I heard Jews didn't just get slapped, but terribly beaten up, and some had their entire faces broken by the Vlajkari (Translator's note: name of Czech fascist movement).

20. Chanukah is the eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the successful revolt of the Maccabees against religious oppression during the reign of Antiochus IV in the second century C.E. The main ritual of the holiday is the lighting of candles.

15. XII. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning at school, many teachers were absent, because they had to write some documents overnight at the Jewish religious community.

A walk in the afternoon. Eva performed in a Chanukah play, she got lots of presents, among them also books and a beautiful jewelry case. In the show she played a grandfather as the prophet Elijah.

16. XII. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning at home, around noon at Popper's, where I again bought two books, *The Treasures of Princess Fairy Tale* and *Andersen's Fairy Tales*.

In the afternoon at school, our show, which was supposed to be today, has been moved to Friday.

Today Daddy is not going to the emergency service because instead of ten they are always twelve people there.

We have already lit three Chanukah candles.

17. XII. 1941 (Wednesday)

In the morning at school, the schedule was again all mixed up, because some teachers had to write documents again at the community, all night.

Some German minister arrived in Prague, there was a general street car traffic jam, in some places you couldn't cross the road. This minister's car had the license number ND1.

In the afternoon I had a handicrafts workshop; we are making a bowl for stationery from masking tape. In the early evening I went for a walk near the slaughterhouse. Eva II and Aunt Anda were here.

18. XII. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning I did my homework, in the afternoon I was at school. We didn't have any classes at all, just a show. First only for small children, afterward for ourselves. In the children's show there was a magician, a speech, a melodrama, and a game called "In the Toyshop at Midnight." Everything turned out brilliantly; the children received gifts that we (IV. B) had brought them.

Then we performed a show for ourselves; we read all sorts of Chanukah stories and played the accordion. Baum played (nicknamed Little Pasha, because of being fat), and he should be honoured for his talent, and so should Tomas Klein (nicknamed The Eucalyptus Sentence; during an oral exam he once called the Euclid sentence the Eucalyptus sentence), who played a magician and was excellent at it. I personally drew his moustache.

At the end we exchanged presents; I gave Dusner an exploding pencil that blows up when you remove the tip (there is a cap inside).

It was a big success; Miss Lauscherova saw it, too, and laughed very hard.

I got a notebook, pencils, a boat, a geometry set, and lots of other things.

Some time ago they introduced new crown coins (Protectorate ones).



19. XII. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at school. It's the last day of school, the Christmas break is about to begin. On the way to school my whole heel fell off, so I got to school late because I had to walk slowly. In the afternoon in town; at Orlicky (who sells glass) the workers dropped a big case with glass (about 2 m x 1.5 m x 20 cm) and broke it all. I was watching them carry it outside, but a Jew walked by and told me I'd better go away, because it's a German shop and they could beat me up. It used to be called Ohrenstein & Orlicky (who is a German), but the Germans took the shop away from the Jew Ohrenstein and now it's called just Orlicky.

In the morning Mummy left for Hradec (Kralove) and left us unfortunately a not very precise description of what we should cook.

But we'll manage somehow!

20. XII. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning I was at Popper's, he's got something wrong with his eyes again and can't go out. (He had scarlet fever, without complications, but since then he's had some sort of eye disease. He used to have a Jewish doctor, but he left for Poland. He has to rub some yellow ointment into his eyes.) That's why I was at his house; we played all kinds of games.

Afterward I walked home, over Maniny under the slaughterhouse.

In the afternoon I visited Grandma.

21. XII. 1941 (Sunday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at Grandma's. We were supposed to meet with the Miloses, but they took a different route (I went to meet [them] to bring them to Grandma's), so we missed each other, and afterward I raced all the way to Perstyn, but it was all in vain. Later we went looking for them in Maniny. We received a wire from Mummy, saying that she's only coming back on Monday morning.

22. XII. 1941 (Monday)

In the morning at home. In the afternoon we started the preparations for Mancinka's²¹ arrival. It's Mancini's birthday, but we couldn't get anything, so the presents were quite poor. A quilted hood (so-called tee-pee²²), a brooch in an inlaid box, stockings, and a sewing kit. Afterward I wanted to cast Mummy's initials in lead, but I didn't succeed.

I made a positive linoleum cut, placed it at the bottom of a bark case, and poured lead into it.

The train was supposed to arrive at 7:15 P.M., but with a delay arrived only at 7:45.

Mancini was all upset, her fellow travellers were all thugs and criminals.

Mancini brought lots of sweets, pastries, and such. The goose, which M. also brought, weighs 6.60 kg.

I received from Auntie Bozka²³ a flannel shirt as a present; Eva got house slippers.

21. We called our mother Mancinka.

22. A separate hood with a pointed tip, tied under the chin.

23. Bozena Sklenckova, Mancinka's sister, Eva II's and Ota's mother.

Hitler is not doing well in Russia, so he removed a general and took his place himself.

23. XII. 1941 (Tuesday)

We just received an announcement from the Jewish Community that we have until December 31 to hand in mouth organs and other portable musical instruments, thermometers and such, cameras and accessories.

In addition we have to register nonportable musical instruments.

In the afternoon at Grandma's.

24. XII. 1941 (Wednesday)

Daddy, Uncle Milos, and Uncle Slava received notification to be prepared to clear away snow when it falls. In the morning at Grandma's, in the afternoon went for a walk with Popper and Eva.

25. XII. 1941 (Thursday)

In the morning at Grandma's; in the afternoon the whole family went to Maniny.

But there was an awful wind, so we had to come back.

In the evening Lianka Kohner came to invite us to come to them at night, as they are lighting their Christmas tree. They have gone completely Aryan.

Mr. Hula was there, the Kohners, the Fiskuses (newlyweds), and Mila Weisbach.

It is snowing; we are all afraid that [the snow] will stay down and Daddy will have to shovel it. Last year he had to do this too, but this time at the Kbelsky airport. The water was very high and Daddy (he was there about 5x) caught a cold there.

Jews will probably have to hand in sweaters again.

26. XII. 1941 (Friday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon we all went to visit the Levituses, with whom we took a walk on the heath. There we met the Milos family (but without Pavel). They received a new apartment above the Museum; they are incredibly happy. Now they are still subletting (for half a year already) from the Fleischners at 22 Podskalska Street. They have only one room, where there is an office, kitchen, store room, and bedroom, all in one. They sleep mostly on the floor and it is very wretched.—On the way we stopped off at Grandma's.

27. XII. 1941 (Saturday)

In the morning I went for a walk with Popper; it is very windy and cold. In the afternoon I stayed at home, but Mummy and Daddy went to Grandma's and Eva went for a walk with Renata Hirschova. I had a long enough walk in the morning and aside from that we are expecting a goose from Hradec. Mummy is very worried about the goose going bad on the way here.

28. XII. 1941 (Sunday)

Finally—and we got two geese at once. Mummy sent one to the Levitus family, and gutted the second. It weighed 6.5 kg, it had 420 g of livers, $2\frac{3}{4}$ kg of lard, and the thighs weighed 870 g. Mummy is all happy about it. In the afternoon we all went for a walk. In the evening there was a big air attack; the sirens wailed like crazy for half an hour.

29. XII. 1941 (Monday)

Miss Lauscherova invited us (or rather ordered us) to Hagibor, so I went, but it was no fun for me; there was skating and I didn't have any skates, so I just froze there. The whole area was filled with huge heaps of church benches, which had been brought from all the synagogues, and Jews working as forced laborers were breaking them up into firewood.

As I walked home from Hagibor, I saw lots of announcements put up everywhere, that you have to hand in skis longer than 180 cm (even Aryans), but Jews have to give it away for free and Aryans will get a compensation. But they also have to report for snow-clearing duty (for now they just have to be prepared).—At home in the afternoon.

30. XII. 1941 (Tuesday)

In the morning at Grandma's and in town.

Grandma received a goose and is therefore very happy.

In the afternoon I went for a walk.

31. XII. 1941 (Wednesday)

It is the last day of this year.

In the morning I did my homework; in the afternoon I went for a walk with Popper. The Vltava is partly frozen. At five o'clock Grandma's family came to visit and stayed until late at night. Afterward, when they left, Mummy and Daddy went next door to the Kohners and celebrated New Year's Eve until one thirty at night, then they came back and went to sleep. But in the morning they slept in until 10 o'clock. (Actually, this belongs to the next day.)

1. I. 1942 (Thursday)

I made myself a nice violin from bark, but I don't yet know how to play it, because so far it has only two (rubber) strings.

In the morning I did my homework. Otherwise nothing special. Actually, a lot is happening, but it is not even visible. What is quite ordinary now would certainly cause upset in a normal time. For example, Jews don't have fruit, geese, and any poultry, cheese, onions, garlic, and many other things. Tobacco ration cards are forbidden to prisoners, madmen, and Jews. They are not allowed to travel in the front section of trams, buses, trolleybuses; they are not allowed to take walks on riverbanks, etc., etc.

2. I. 1942 (Friday)

In the morning I did my homework, in the afternoon went for a walk.

3. I. 1942 (Saturday)

In the morning at Popper's; he has a runny nose again and is in bed. In the afternoon at Grandma's. I heard that the Germans suddenly entered Jepa (a department store), closed it, and whoever was wearing warm galoshes had their identity cards taken away and the galoshes stamped, so that they will have to go and hand them in. Then they'll get their identity cards back. They say that in Brno they were taking them away right there in the streets. So now everyone is afraid of it.

Petr GINZ

*Today it's clear to everyone
who is a Jew and who's an Aryan,
because you'll know Jews near and far
by their black and yellow star.
And Jews who are so demarcated
must live according to the rules dictated:*

*Always, after eight o'clock,
be at home and click the lock;
work only labouring with pick or hoe,
and do not listen to the radio.
You're not allowed to own a mutt;
barbers can't give your hair a cut;
a female Jew who once was rich
can't have a dog, even a bitch,
she cannot send her kids to school
must shop from three to five since that's the rule.*

*She can't have bracelets, garlic, wine,
or go to the theatre, out to dine;
she can't have cars or a gramophone,
fur coats or skis or a telephone;
she can't eat onions, pork, or cheese,
have instruments, or matrices;
she cannot own a clarinet*

or keep a canary for a pet,
rent bicycles or barometers,
have woollen socks or warm sweaters.

And especially the outcast Jew
must give up all habits he knew:
he can't buy clothes, can't buy a shoe,
since dressing well is not his due;
he can't have poultry, shaving soap,
or jam or anything to smoke;
can't get a license, buy some gin,
read magazines, a news bulletin,
buy sweets or a machine to sew;
to fields or shops he cannot go
even to buy a single pair
of winter woollen underwear,
or a sardine or a ripe pear.

And if this list is not complete
there's more, so you should be discreet;
don't buy a thing; accept defeat.

Walk everywhere you want to go
in rain or sleet or hail or snow.
Don't leave your house, don't push a pram,
don't take a bus or train or tram;
you're not allowed on a fast train;
don't hail a taxi, or complain;

no matter how thirsty you are
you must not enter any bar;
the riverbank is not for you,
or a museum or park or zoo
or swimming pool or stadium or
post office or department store,
or church, casino, or cathedral
or any public urinal.

And you be careful not to use
main streets, and keep off avenues!
And if you want to breathe some air
go to God's garden and walk there
among the graves in the cemetery
because no park to you is free.

And if you are a clever Jew
you'll close off bank accounts and you
will give up other habits too
like meeting Aryans you knew.

He used to be allowed a swag,
suitcase, rucksack, or carpetbag.
Now he has lost even those rights
but every Jew lowers his sights
and follows all the rules he's got
and doesn't care one little jot.

4. I. 1942 (Sunday)

In the morning homework, in the afternoon a walk.

5. I. 1942 (Monday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

6. I. 1942 (Tuesday)

In the morning with Popper, in the afternoon at Grandma's.
Uncle Milos has an inflammation of the periosteum.

7. I. 1942 (Wednesday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon went for a walk.

8. I. 1942 (Thursday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon a walk; the Miloses came to visit us, but without Aunt Nada.

9. I. 1942 (Friday)

In the morning in town. Mr. Weisbach came here for a visit and told us how he was locked in jail for ten days, because his identity card didn't say "J."
He said the director (former of course) from Kolben-Danek was there, and also many other Jews.

10. I. 1942 (Saturday)

In the morning went for a walk with Popper, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

11. I. 1942 (Sunday)

Homework in the morning, in the afternoon I went with Eva, Renata Hirschova (Eva's friend), sleigh-riding in Maniny.

We received an order to hand in fur coats, everything made of fur, wool undergarments, pullovers, etc. Only one set of underwear is allowed per person. There is a big collection to help soldiers on the front, they are collecting warm underwear, a special announcement is published about it every day. I heard that so far three thousand train carriages have been sent to the front.

12. I. 1942 (Monday)

Today we had to hand in one sweater; some Jews carried to the collection centres huge parcels with fur coats, underwear, and other things. There they are loaded into moving trucks and it's still not enough and there are mountains of parcels everywhere.

In the afternoon in town.

13. I. 1942 (Tuesday)

In the morning I went for a walk with Popper. It's terribly cold.

14. I. 1942 (Wednesday)

In the morning at home; in the afternoon I went with Daddy and Eva sleigh-riding in Maniny. They say that the Maniny sewer will soon be completely filled; now they are dumping rubbish from all of Prague into it. It's already half full.

Some boys found metal sawdust among the rubbish and also a bottle of carbide and in the evening (during blackout) they started such a big fire that you could see it all over Prague. When the bottles with carbide blew up it shook

all of Maniny. Then a policeman discovered them and when he reached them, a huge flash burst out of the fire, which annoyed the policeman to the highest degree.

15. I. 1942 (Thursday)

In the morning at home. In the afternoon with Popper; they just took away Mrs. Popperova's registered sewing machine, which makes her very unhappy.

16. I. 1942 (Friday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon went for a walk in town.

17. I. 1942 (Saturday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

18. I. 1942 (Sunday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at Grandma's with the Miloses. All mixed marriages received questionnaires to fill out.

19. I. 1942 (Monday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at home.

20. I. 1942 (Tuesday)

I heard they've formed a new government, and Moravec, who writes agitating articles, is the minister for education.

In the morning at Popper's; Turna was there, too.

In the afternoon went walking in Troja, it's awfully cold (at least -19°C for sure); Eva cried all the way home because she was freezing.

21. I. 1942 (Wednesday)

In the morning at home and in town, in the afternoon at home.

Slavek Stein came to visit.

22. I. 1942 (Thursday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon in town and on a walk.

There are new transports to Theresienstadt; Mrs. Traub is going too. That's why I was at the Poppers, to check if they were going as well, because many people whose names start with P were called up.

There are notices up everywhere in the streets saying the new Czech government believes in the victory of the Reich, etc., etc.

23. I. 1942 (Friday)

From two o'clock in the afternoon until six there is no electricity or gas, trams usually have only one car. Our lift is not working.

In the afternoon at the Levituses. Uncle is writing lots of documents for Mrs. Traubova for the move to Theresienstadt. I heard that in Theresienstadt they have also interned Frenchmen, Poles, and other foreigners (non-Jews). Supposedly eight people were executed there for trying to escape.

24. I. 1942 (Saturday)

In the morning I went for a walk with Popper; in the afternoon I stayed home.

25. I. 1942 (Sunday)

In the morning at home; in the afternoon we all went for a walk in Maniny.

26. I. 1942 (Monday)

In the morning in town. Today from three in the afternoon Jews are not allowed to travel by tram. The only exceptions are people older than sixty, Jewish Community employees, and so on.

The Miloses are moving into their new apartment in Vinohrady.

27. I. 1942 (Tuesday)

The Milos family slept in their new apartment for the first time.

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at home; trams get stuck in snowdrifts.

28. I. 1942 (Wednesday)

In the morning in town, Mr. Tausig was here. In the afternoon at home.

The Goldmanns from Budyne are leaving for Theresienstadt.

29. I. 1942 (Thursday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon as well. Uncle Slava has been forced to shovel snow for many days already; he doesn't even have proper shoes and he's freezing.

30. I. 1942 (Friday)

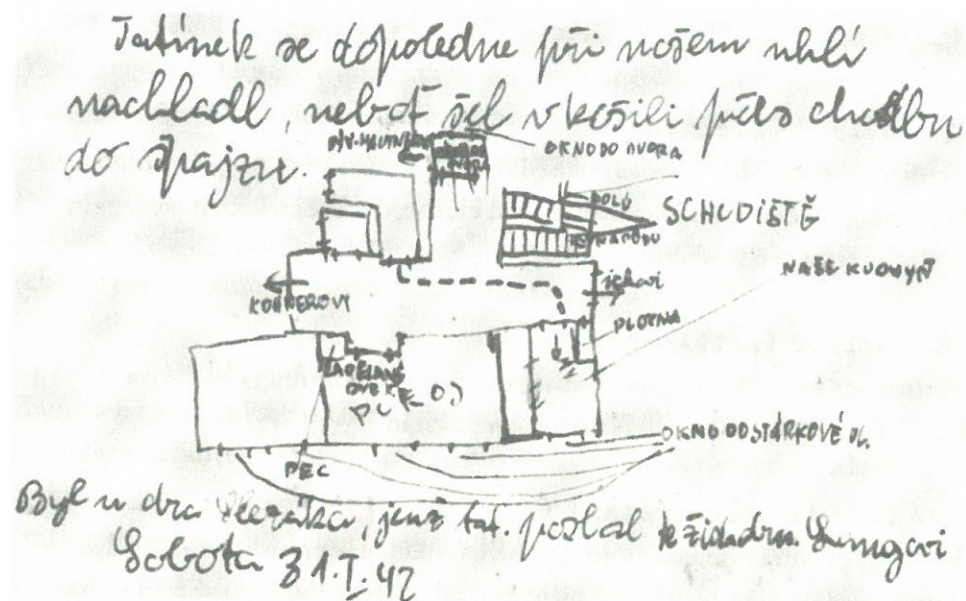
Daddy caught a cold this morning while carrying coal, because he went in his shirt across the hall to the storage room. He saw Dr. Slezak, who sent him to the Jewish Dr. Lang.

31. I. 1942 (Saturday)

Daddy is feeling very ill, he can't breathe out, on the way to the doctor he almost fainted, so for the way back he had to give Daddy an injection.

He's got pleuritis.

In the afternoon at Grandma's, it's her name-day. Daddy couldn't go there (12 Vojteska Street), because he has to lie down in a warm bed. Grandma gave us excellent cakes baked by Aunt Anda.



1. II. 1942 (Sunday)

Today is my birthday, I got lots of things:

1. a Christmas cake from Mummy
2. an empty book for writing in from Ota
3. wrist warmers from Eva
4. figs from Mummy
5. marbles (sweets, made by Mummy)
6. oranges
7. sweets
8. borrowed books: Verne—*Big Chaos*, Nekola—*The Thirteenth Governor*, Stevenson—*Treasure Island*
9. a small notebook from Eva
10. five Ex-fizzy sweets from Mancí
11. a packet of sweets from Eva Sklenckova
12. gingerbreads from Mummy (ox eyes)
13. a handkerchief
14. orange peel
15. 100 crowns from Grandma
16. fine tea biscuits from Grandma
17. a packet of biscuits from the Miloses

Daddy is feeling a bit better.—The Miloses were here in the afternoon.

2. II. 1942 (Monday)

In the morning at home, and in the afternoon, too.

3. II. 1942 (Tuesday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at home.

At half past eleven at night a messenger from the Community came to tell us that Daddy has to report to the exhibition ground on Thursday morning. He was registered as a car mechanic, and that's why they chose Daddy, in spite of the mixed marriage. There was a terrible rush, we were preparing everything for the journey, the Kohners were helping us. Fortunately, Daddy got a fever and Dr. Lang, who was called in by the Community, sent a message to the Community that Daddy is unable to join the transport. Of course we were very pleased.

4. II. 1942 (Wednesday)

Daddy is fine, he just wheezes from time to time.

5. II. 1942 (Thursday)

A huge number of our friends have been called up for the new transport: Bardach, Mr. Mautner (an acquaintance of Uncle Karel), Hirschova, who used to go for walks with Eva, and many others.

6. II. 1942 (Friday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at home.

7. II. 1942 (Saturday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon with Popper.

8. II. 1942 (Sunday)

Bardach came to say goodbye to me, he and his whole family are going on Monday to the exhibition grounds (leaving for Theresienstadt).
In the afternoon the Miloses were here, they brought me a packet of sweets, it's still for my birthday.

9. II. 1942 (Monday)

In the morning in town; W. Adler was here and brought an invitation to come to school, because we've had no classes since December 19 and the holidays have been extended.

10. II. 1942 (Tuesday)

In the morning I was in school, where I found out that I have been assigned to study group B.

11. II. 1942 (Wednesday)

Daddy is feeling a little worse. In the morning my group met at the Goldsteins; we were given a huge amount of homework; in the afternoon I went for a walk.

12. II. 1942 (Thursday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

13. II. 1942 (Friday)

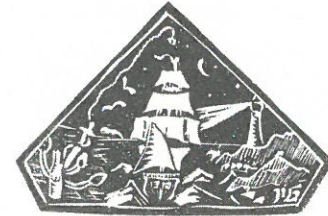
In the morning I was with Popper, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

14. II. 1942 (Saturday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon at Grandma's.

15. II. 1942 (Sunday)

In the morning at home; I made a new linocut.



16. II. 1942 (Monday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at the Miloses to see their apartment for the first time. It is cold there. Pavel and Uncle were in the middle of re-doing the kitchen; it was an awful mess. They divided the kitchen into two parts and turned one into a bathroom.

17. II. 1942 (Tuesday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon went for a walk.

18. II. 1942 (Wednesday)

In the morning with Popper. Daddy is feeling somewhat better.

19. II. 1942 (Thursday)

In the morning at home, in the afternoon on a walk.

For a long time now, groups of Jews can be seen clearing the snow off the streets; Uncle Slava goes to shovel it every single day and the skin on his hands is cracked from frost.

20. II. 1942 (Friday)

In the morning I met with my study group at the Adlers at 13 Krakovska Street. We had Dr. Reich, who was once slapped by a German.

I heard that some local people wanted to kill a turkey, but they felt sorry for it and didn't want to just cut its throat, so they gave it Veronal, plucked it, and put it in water. But then the dear turkey woke up and because it was cold without feathers, they knitted a sweater for it, and so it now walks around in a sweater. In the afternoon I went for a walk. In the afternoon Eva II came to visit us.

21. II. 1942 (Saturday)

It's Eva's birthday. She got lots of stuff:

1. a cake
2. pastry cigars
3. sweets (toffees, jelly sweets, raspberries—3 bags)
4. a box with Odkolek sweets
5. sweets with a red rose
6. a piece of Turkish delight
7. a packet of fizzy sweets
8. a box of biscuits from Eva II
9. a hood
10. an empty book for writing
11. ex libris
12. a photo album
13. a comb
14. a chain
15. three borrowed books: *Black India*, *Spicka Wants to Be a Reporter*,
Mila Vetroplach
16. 100 crowns

22. II. 1942 (Sunday)

In the morning I was at the Miloses, in the afternoon I stayed home and also went for a walk.

23. II. 1942 (Monday)

In the morning in town, in the afternoon at home. Dr. Slezak was here. He recommended that we put Daddy in the hospital, because he is worse.

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16. 100 crowns

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Family Photos



The antique shop in Prague's Jungmann Square that belonged to Petr and Eva's grandfather, Josef Ginz.



Marie Dolanska (Mancinka) and Otto Ginz in their wedding photo, March 8, 1927.



The Ginz family near their summer apartment in Strasin, August 1931.



Eva and Petr Ginz, 1934.



The Ginz family in February 1933—Eva and Petr in foreground, Mancinka and Otto behind them.



Petr and Eva Ginz on the embankment, Prague, spring 1936.



The Ginz family on Prikopy Street, spring 1938.



The Ginz family in 1939.



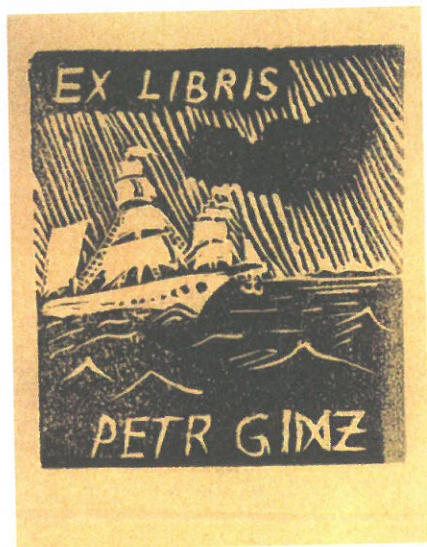
Petr's identification for the streetcar from 1939, when he attended the first year of a general school in Nusle; because of his Jewish origins, he had to leave this school.



Winter in Podoli (from left: Petr, Eva, Mancinka, Mrs. Traubova and Herma Levitusova).



Sitting, from left: Milos Ginz, his wife Nada, Mancinka, Eva Sklenckova; behind them: Petr Ginz and Pavel Ginz (Milos and Nada's son).



Petr Ginz's Diary

*from the twenty-fourth of February
of the year nineteen hundred and forty-two
(Tuesday)
until _____²⁴*

24. The diary ends with the entry of August 8, 1942, a month before Petr's transport to Theresienstadt.