

Bill wrote this play

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Bill Waggoner

ESCAPE FROM WARSAW

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Cast

Jan - Mark Mahan
Edek - Paul Scarce
Narrator - Bill Wilson
Ruth - Janet Weinert
Bronia - Phyllicia Carlson
4 Guards - Stan Lockhart
Mr. Wolff - Lance Beaver
Burgomaster - Bill Waggoner

Narrator: The book starts out that Joseph Balicki, the father of Ruth 14, Edek 11, and Bronia 5, and the husband of Margaret Balicki, is captured by the Nazis.

Joseph was a prisoner of the prison camp, Zackyna. His only thought was of escape and his children. Here is his plan: On the day of inspection, he flipped two paper wads at the guard. The guard immediately put him in "the cooler", an unheated hut. Twice a day a guard brought him his food.

On the third day in the evening, Joe could hear footsteps of the guard. Joe crouched down in the far end of the hut. When the guard opened the door, Joe fired his first stone. He fired it from a homemade catapult, and his shot was good. He got the guard's keys, traded clothes, and went on out like a regular guard. Joe had studied this procedure very closely. After the last meal was given, the guards were dismissed, and usually went to a tiny bar outside of camp. Without looking, Joe went out of the camp so easily that he thought it was a dream, but it wasn't.

Joe slowly trudged back to the city of Warsaw to find his family. When he got there, he received food from the Polish Council for protection and also shelter. Joe hopelessly moped around looking for his children. Joe already knew that his wife had been captured and was probably under the Germans, so his only hope was to look for his kids.

He spent his day looking through the rubble for his home. He had about given up when he saw a small silver sword he had given his wife. In a pile of rubble that was his home, he had sat down to bring back his memories of his children. They were probably dead.

Joe sat down when he noticed he was not alone. He turned around and saw a boy about Edek's size, but it was not Edek.

Joe "What's your name?"

Jan (Jan shrugged, not telling him) Jan looked at the sword.
"Let me have it"

Joe "But it's mine."

- Jan "You found it on my pitch, and it's mine!"
(Joe explained about his house and out of this rubble, this was all that was left of it.)
- Jan "I'll give you food for it."
- Joe "I have plenty thanks." (He reached for his pocket but only found nothing) "You little pickpocket!" (However, before he could grab it, Jan had eaten part of it and given the other part of it to his eat.)
- Joe "I'm looking for my family. Ruth is the eldest -- she'd be 15 now. Edek is 12 and Bronia 6." (He explained what they looked like). "Have you seen them?"
- Jan "Warsaw is full of lost children. They're dirty and starving and they all look alike."
- Joe "I'll give you the sword on one condition. I'm not sure my children are dead. If you ever see any of them, tell them about our meeting place. Tell them I've gone to find their mother. Tell them to go to Switzerland to their grandparents' home. Tell them to follow as soon as they can."
- (Jan takes the sword and runs off as Joe yells at him)
- Joe "I'll tell you more about them tomorrow. Meet you here in the morning and don't let me down!"

End Scene One

Narrator: In the morning, Jan and Joe discussed how Joe would catch the slowest train, the goods train. Jan told him to watch for the guards on the train, and where to ride. Jan said it would be best to ride on the underside of the train, and he would be least likely seen. Joe fully trusted Jan by now and he had begun to eat one of the bread loaves that Jan had brought in his little box that he always carried with the silver sword in it. Jan told him that the goods train would stop for 5 minutes, for fuel, and then leave again somewhere close to the border of Switzerland, and that it was due any minute now. They said their goodbyes and Jan went off on his own way. Joe was all alone.

About 5 minutes later the goods train did as Jan said it would, and Joe caught his train. Now Joe was on his way to Switzerland!

Meanwhile the three children had to escape from their house, because some Nazi soldiers had come to search the house. However, their mother had not been so lucky and she was captured. Edek had tried desperately to retrieve his mother by firing at the guard, hitting him in the arm, and by blowing out the tire by his gun.

The three had made their home at the other end of town because the Nazis had burned down the house. Their home was at a cellar, but Edek was taken prisoner. After a long, hard fight, the Russians had taken over the Nazis and Warsaw was under their own sides ruling. The three were free to play in the street and do anything they wanted to.

For two years Edek had been taken away. One day while the three were playing, Bronia spotted a newcomer. They all came and saw him and asked him questions galore. Jan was smart and let them blow off steam, while he just sat there. All this time he was summing up the three. He felt that they seemed familiar. Then suddenly he remembered - Joe. They were Joe's children. When they ended their say, he asked them if they knew a man named Joseph Balicki.

Ruth "How did you know him? He's our father!" (Jan explained where he had met Joe to them)

Jan "He gave me a message to give you, if I ever found you."

Bronia "What was it? Huh! Huh!"

Jan "Slow down and I might tell you. Now, he said to tell you that he had gone to Switzerland to find your mother. He said to come as soon as possible. In case you don't believe me, he gave me a token." (Pulls out a sword)

Ruth "Why, that's Mom's silver sword! But we have nobody to lead us there. Will you?"

Jan "I personally will lead you there. We can ride in the trucks going there. I know the way. Where do you live?"

Bronia "We live in a cellar. Come on, I'll show you. (She took him to the cellar)

Jan "Kind of small quarters, isn't it?"

Ruth "If it keeps you warm it's all right. What next?"

Jan "Gather all of your stuff and let's leave before two days from now, or we'll miss the train. You don't have much stuff, do you?"

Ruth "Only our clothes and this little bit of paper we have left. May we have the silver sword now?"

Jan "No! It's mine. It will bring good luck to us. We must never lose it or we'll get mixed up. It is sentimental and is - - -"

Ruth "Okay, Okay! You don't have to give us a lecture on it!"
(Two days later they left for the truck)

Narrator: When the truck for the city of Bavarian farmers came to refuel, the three jumped into the back of the truck. In a minute or two they could feel the truck start to move. They were on their way. At the end of the first 100 miles they felt the truck stopping. They watched the children outside go into a huge building and not come out. They figured that this was a Polish Council for protection like the one in Warsaw. The three got out and ventured into the building, only to find that it was a lunchroom, which was a very happy sight to see. When Jan got his bowl of soup and bread, he accidentally tripped and fell. There were so many hungry children there, almost all of them got on the floor and tried to get their share of the food. But Jan was right in the middle of it trying to get his food back. By now, it was a regular brawl. Ruth, looking out for Jan, had got in the fight too. She had got right in the middle and had gotten pushed and shoved till she was in the middle of it too. She had grabbed

a hand in the fight and had held it tightly till the cook had gone in the fight and had to break it up. Ruth still had a hold of someone's hand. When she got up, she turned to see who it was when it was Edek she had held on to: (She hugged him with all she was worth)

Ruth "Oh, Edek, we had almost given up hope for you. I'm so happy, I think I'm gonna cry."

Edek "Me, too". (They kept on talking)

Narrator Edek rode in back with the three, making it four. Edek told them of his experiences. He was very tired now and they all went to sleep. When the morning sun had arisen, Jan awoke and woke up the others. They were at a farmer's field. They got out and went to look around, when the truck sped off. Now, they would have to find a home for shelter. They wandered off and found a barn about 50 yards from a house. They hid in the barn, because it might have been a house of a Nazi or a German. They noisily scuffled up into the attic, but Bronia was scared, so she hid in a pile of straw. Unfortunately, Ruth slipped on the ladder, making a heck of a lot of noise. When finally she got up, the barn door began to open. They silently hid in a good spot.

Mr. W. "Come out of there, you little devils! I heard you! Can't you immitate a rat better than that? (Waits for a minute) Come out, or do I smoke you out or fetch the prong? (Gets the prong)

Ruth "Put that horrible thing down before it goes right through Bronia. (Jan throws the turnip) We haven't done any harm. (Mr. W. acts like he doesn't understand)

Edek "Look, we haven't done any harm."

Mr. W. "No harm! What do you call this, a birthday present? One - two - three - four. Is this all of you, or do you have another betch lurking around?"

Ruth "This is all of us." (Jan fires another turnip. Jan gets down)

Ruth "Oh, Jan, can't you act your age? I should have left you back at Jarsaw."

Narrator (Talks over Jan talking to Mr. Wolff.) Jan tells Mr. Wolff why the three are in his barn. He tells him that they are on their way to Switzerland to find their mother and father. He told him that they had been separated during the war, and asked him if he would hide them.

Mr. W. "Have you ever heard of the Burgomaster?"

Edek "No. What is a Burgomaster?"

Mr. W. "He is a mean, dirty, old German, who takes escaping enemies and puts them on the rock pile. However, if you're not so big, you are more lucky. They'll just take you back to Poland.

Narrator After Jan and the others had finished lunch, they went to explore the farm. Mr. Wolff had told them to watch out for the Burgomaster and told them that he drove in a jeep and was rather reckless.

(Waits for a second) The four were about 50 ft. from the road when they heard a jeep. He had lost control and seemed to have a flat tire. Without thinking, Edek ran to help, not knowing that it was the Burgomaster.

Edek "Have a flat tire, hun? Could I help you?"

Burg. "Why, of course. You working for Kurt Wolff?"

Edek "Yes, he takes on extra help this time of season."

Burg. "I thought all the refugees had gone. Where do you come from?"

Edek "The North".

Burg. "Oh. I took you for a refugee. Will you give me a hand with this wheel? (Struggles and gets the tire on) Thanks, boy."

Narrator The next morning the Burgomaster came to Mr. Wolff's house and told him what had happened to him the other day.

Burg. "Are you hiding Polish refugees here?"

Mr. W. "And if I do, what will you do about it?"

Burg. "I have orders to take all Polish refugees to Germany, and they are going tomorrow.

Mr. W. "But they are going to Switzerland to find their parents. They have gone a long way."

Burg. "That's what they all say. Besides, orders are orders."

Mr. W. "Here's a sword that their Dad gave them. That's proof enough."

Burg. "Only a fool would accept that as proof." (Edek enters)

Edek "Couldn't you let us go, just this once...?"

Burg. "Sorry, but it's quite hopeless. A lorry will pick you up here at twelve midday, and don't try to escape, because there is only one road and it is fully guarded. The woods are patrolled and the Americans may shoot on sight." (Starts to leave)

Jan "Ruth, shall we let Ludwig go, or what?"

Ruth "Let him go!" (Ludwig chases him away)

Narrator Finally, Mr. Wolff got an idea. He called the four and got down 2 canoes. He gave them to them and told them to go down the river and they would find an American Camp. So the three did this and turned out Okay, except that after a while, one of the boats leaked. But they were lucky to find that they had ended near a road. But Edek had gotten ill and could not go any further, so Bronia

watched the road to look for a truck. Finally an American soldier, Joe Wolski, driving a truck stopped and then picked up the four. At the end of the ride, they found that they were at an American base. The base was located on a lake on the other side of Switzerland.

Joe "Sarge, these are Polish children that are trying to find their parents in Switzerland."

Narrator The Sarge traced their parents and found that their parents were as they had said.

So, after a long, hard night at sea, the three reached their parents waiting at the other side of the river, and Jan went with them.

(All come out and take a bow)

The End