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Dachau was cold, but not as cold I remember it to be during the days I chose not to recall. It may have been cold, but nothing would have ever compared to the chill I had felt before the liberation. It seemed like only yesterday that an American soldier named Felix plucked me from that hell. *Vatti* had recently told me that Felix would be returning to Germany to visit those he helped escape. As I waited in the nipping April winds, I found my eyes locked, staring into the colorless camp that held me eighteen years ago. I'm twenty-six and yet my trauma still clings parasitically to my mind, a painful headache blooming behind my eyes. Before I completely relapsed into an episode, a warm hand was placed on my shoulder and I turned to see its owner.

"Dieter! You are little Dieter, right? I'm Felix. Felix O'Connell. Do you remember me?" His voice yanked me out of my thoughts and calmed my nerves, a smile taking over my face.

"How could I forget the man who gave me the chance to live?" I gently outstretched my hand for a handshake which he reciprocated kindly. I cleared my throat, shoving my hands back into my coat pockets as I spoke. "I hope you know that my father and I are so very grateful, Felix."

"I know. Speaking of your father, how is he? I'm a bit sad that Otto couldn't come while I'm here to visit Germany and Dachau. I even brought- Hold on." He paused to reach into a bag that he had brought with him, producing what seemed like a bottle of alcohol from it. "I brought him some of my favorite American whiskey to try!" A laugh gently left my chest, surprising the other man standing next to me. "What's so funny, Dieter?" I took a moment to compose myself before answering his question.

"He would have greatly appreciated the sentiment if he were here with us, Felix. You see, *Vatti* is getting a bit too old for alcohol. I, however, will gladly accept this bottle of American

whiskey on his behalf." My plucky attitude drew a few laughs from him before the realization that I was old enough to drink had hit.

"It has really been eighteen years, hasn't it? Oh my god, you're twenty-six. It seemed like it was only yesterday that I was following the rest of the Forty-second Infantry Division in to free everyone in this camp, including an eight year-old Dieter Kopfhaus."

"And I have sworn to never forget that moment of my past, *mein Freund*. But hey, let's focus on the future! How does having a drink to celebrate this occasion sound? I can treat you to this very nice cognac I found recently." He smiled and focused on the bag on his shoulder, putting the whiskey back inside it for safekeeping.

"That sounds wonderful, Dieter. I would like that very much."

Bibliography

"Dachau Concentration Camp: History & Overview." *Suleyman*,

www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/history-and-overview-of-dachau.