

ANNA'S PROMISE by D.G. Schulman

EXCERPT

“Rosen, get up!” A guard shook Ira roughly by the shoulder.

“What’s going on?” Ira squinted. It was still dark, and flashlight beams blinded him.

“There’s a medical emergency.” The guard pulled on Ira’s arm, and he rolled off the top bunk, staggering onto his feet.

“What the hell is this?” Ira backed away across the cold tile floor.

“There’s been an accident in the UNICOR factory. We need a doctor.”

“Get one of those Loretto fed doctors. I’m not supposed to be a doctor anymore.”

Groggy, Ira turned to climb up to his bunk, but a guard pulled him back.

“There’s nobody else. The ambulance is twenty minutes out. There isn’t time to put on your shoes. We’re going to the satellite.”

Two guards spun Ira around and drove him through the barracks, down the corridors, and out into the raw night air. Large snowflakes blew against his face, and he fully awoke, shivering. He was alone in the yard with the guards, and adrenaline rushed into his system.

The satellite door was unlocked, like Sam said it would be, and they shoved him through. They led Ira down a long green corridor to a sterile room that looked like an infirmary, and a patient lay wheezing in a bed with rails. Ira became alert at the scent of fresh blood. A red stain spread across the white sheet over the patient’s chest. He lifted the sheet and layers of gauze and saw the chest puncture. It was a normal sight in the downtown Detroit ER where he’d done his training. Detroit Medical Center was one of the best places to learn trauma.

“Rosen, get up!” A guard shook Ira roughly by the shoulder.

“What’s going on?” Ira squinted. It was still dark, and flashlight beams blinded him.

“There’s a medical emergency.” The guard pulled on Ira’s arm, and he rolled off the top bunk, staggering onto his feet.

“What the hell is this?” Ira backed away across the cold tile floor.

“There’s been an accident in the UNICOR factory. We need a doctor.”

“Get one of those Loretto fed doctors. I’m not supposed to be a doctor anymore.”

Groggy, Ira turned to climb up to his bunk, but a guard pulled him back.

“There’s nobody else. The ambulance is twenty minutes out. There isn’t time to put on your shoes. We’re going to the satellite.”

Two guards spun Ira around and drove him through the barracks, down the corridors, and out into the raw night air. Large snowflakes blew against his face, and he fully awoke, shivering. He was alone in the yard with the guards, and adrenaline rushed into his system.

The satellite door was unlocked, like Sam said it would be, and they shoved him through. They led Ira down a long green corridor to a sterile room that looked like an infirmary, and a patient lay wheezing in a bed with rails. Ira became alert at the scent of fresh blood. A red stain

spread across the white sheet over the patient's chest. He lifted the sheet and layers of gauze and saw the chest puncture. It was a normal sight in the downtown Detroit ER where he'd done his training. Detroit Medical Center was one of the best places to learn trauma.