

# Torn

*Carrie Newell*

INT. BASEMENT APARTMENT—GERMANY, 1937—NIGHT

A barren one room basement apartment. A cathedral wood tube radio sits on the kitchen counter. A wooden truck is discarded on the floor. A child's coat hangs over a hook.

Wartime stole all other signs of a home.

ALICE, 13, pale and underfed, stuffs clothes into a tattered suitcase on a fold out bed. Her practiced movements make no sound. Half empty, she shuts it. Out of time.

Her words quiet, earnest.

ALICE

Now.

DAVE, 8 scrawny and nearly see-through from lack of sun, huddles nearby.

They speak only in whispers.

DAVE

It's our home.

ALICE

Put on your coat.

He WRINGS the corner of his shirt.

DAVE

They're coming back.

She grabs the case, sees him frozen and yanks his coat off a hook.

ALICE

Come on.

She reaches for his hand, but he steps back.

DAVE

Don't go.

ALICE

Here.

She holds his coat out for him. He slips his hands into his pockets.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Dave.

Her eyes dart to the clock. 6:45.

ALICE (CONT'D)

(Pleading) Davey...

He stares at his feet, swallows hard.

DAVE

No.

She sets down the suitcase and kneels before him.

ALICE

Do you remember what they said?

He won't look at her.

ALICE (CONT'D)

"If we aren't back by Wednesday , you leave." Right?

He can't look at her.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Davey, it's Thursday.

She takes his hand in hers and lifts his chin.

ALICE (CONT'D)

We have to.

He stares at her, betrayed.

DAVE

Stay.

ALICE

Come with me. Please.

He pulls his hand back. Her eyes start to swim, then harden. She snatches him up, and, for a blessed moment, he's too stunned to protest.

ALICE (CONT'D)

(A firm whisper)

We have to go.

He comes to, kicking and hitting her, oddly silent. He struggles to break free.

She lugs him toward the door, fumbling with the suitcase. Her fingers wrap around the doorknob and

He SHRIEKS

Piercing their bubble.

She drops him. Clasps her hand over his mouth. His hands shoot to his mouth too. Terrified, they huddle on the floor.

They listen.

Nothing.

He opens his mouth, but she shakes her head, "No."

Gravel CRUNCHES outside.

They tense, holding their breath. Alice looks at the window. It's empty.

She frantically glances around the room for something, anything. Bed, table, closet, sink—

Her eyes jump back to the closet door across the room.

She slips off her shoes. Dave follows suit.

Another CRUNCH outside.

She lifts Dave. Her socked feet sneak across the deadly terrain. She opens the closet door and deposits him inside. Shoes in his hands.

Her eyes search the room. She grabs up his coat and the WOODEN TOY TRUCK. She pushes them into his arms.

Heavy boots SHIFT on the gravel outside.

She reaches around Dave, behind the few hanging items, an old dress, a jacket, and pushes on the wall.

CLICK, the wall opens—

She turns, eyes boring a hole into the front door, did they hear?

She looks back, revealing a crawl space big enough for *ONE*.

A shadow falls on them. She turns, a figure passes the small window. Terror in uniform.

ALICE (CONT'D)

(all but mouthing)

When we're gone, you leave.

His head frantically swings back and forth, the motion screams no.

She shoves him into the hidey-hole, firm but gentle.

ALICE (CONT'D)

When we're gone, you leave.

His fingers grip the toy truck.

Her pale hand pushes against the faux wall closing him inside. She mouths "I love you."

POUNDING at the front door.

Davey's wide eyes disappear into the dark as the secret door CLICKS SHUT.