

Ghost writing

by Roberto C. Garcia

"Menachem Schwartzman, Diary of 1940-42." She reads the name aloud. Flips through the diaries pages and watches paper particles fall out like dust. 'Damn this name is tough. At least he writes nice in cursive. Penmanship and shit.' She found the diary on a step in the subway. 'This dude's whole life must be in this book. It's like, a man diary.' The thought makes her laugh. 'My diary's prettier. Hello Kitty's on the cover. This one is depressing ass brown but his life is mad juicy.' She sits up on her bed and opens it. 'Way better than that stuff we read at school.'

Wednesday, August 12, 1942

As I write this my wife is in the hospital. My Frieda suffered a breakdown. There has been no news of her parents. She is afraid the Nazis killed them. There is a rumor that something terrible is at hand. Our only hope for news is a former business associate of her fathers, a guy. But it is difficult at best. There's nothing I can do to lift her spirits. The doctors gave her sleeping pills, she wouldn't stop crying. I am sad and grateful. All my family is here in New York but Frieda.... I suppose things could always be worse.

I feel like walking. Tomorrow after I leave Frieda in the hospital I'll go to the George Washington Bridge and watch the boats.

'Damn. My aunt Lori had a breakdown when the cops shot my cousin Tito. The cops got away with it too. They said he looked like someone they were after. Me and my cousins played Double-Dutch in front of our building that night. A block away from where Tito got shot. Our families were crying and screaming.' She looks at her diary, sitting on the dresser. 'When I'm done reading this I should write something about that.'

Friday August 14, 1942

Last night I noticed how stagnant the Hudson River can be. Even from that height it pretends to move more than it actually does. It reminds me of my Frieda's eyes. She required so many pills to calm her nerves. She couldn't hear me, she saw right past me.

My world is completely upside down. I should jump from this bridge and end this madness. Where is my God? Where is my God to end this madness?

'I used to pray.' She closes the diary, goes to the closet and grabs her jacket. 'I'll meet you at the GW Bridge, Menachem.' She walks out the door and down to the subways.

