

RED ORCHESTRA

Based on a true story

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FADE IN:

EXT. NOWI-TARG, GALICIA, POLAND -- FEBRUARY 23, 1904

The village of Nowi-Targ is under heavy blizzard. The streets are nearly empty. Children play in the snow building a snowman and throw snowballs at each other.

INT. 5 PULASKI STREET -- TREPPER'S HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

The ground floor at the TREPPER residence is used as a small general store. Large canvas sacks, filled with seeds, lie on the floor with other farming supplies. Household products are displayed on improvised shelves.

Mr. TREPPER, a man with a well-groomed beard, is in his late thirties but looks much older than his age. He's nervously pacing the floor.

Upstairs, a woman's moan is replaced by cries of a newly born baby. A MIDWIFE puts the baby in his mother's arms.

INT. UPSTAIRS BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mr. Trepper enters the room.

MIDWIFE

Mazel Tov, It's a boy!

Trepper leans over and kisses his wife and the baby. He beams with pride.

INT. EIGHT DAYS LATER -- DAY

The ground floor is rearranged. Tables with food and wine are centered in the room. The house is filled with guests. The crowd is mixed - men and women, Jews and Gentiles. Playful children chase each other around and under the tables.

The MOHEL sets up his circumcision equipment. A middle-aged woman hands the baby to the Godfather who stands next to Mr. Trepper and the Mohel. A circumcision ceremony takes place.

MR. TREPPER

(Praying quietly)

...Baruch ata Ado-noy, Elo-hainu
Melech ha-olam, asher kidishanu,
b'mitzvosav v'tzivanu l'hachniso
biv-riso, shel Avraham Avinu.

RABBI

...God of our mothers and fathers,
sustain this child through his
parents' loving care. Let him be
known in Israel by the name of
LEOPOLD Trepper. May his name be a
source of joy for him and inspire
him to serve our people and all
humankind. Amen!

GUESTS

Amen!

The ceremony ends, the crowd gathers around the tables to
celebrate life with food and wine.

INT. LEOPOLD TREPPER'S STUDY WARSAW -- 1968 -- DAY

Leopold Trepper's study in Warsaw is a well-lit room with
wide windows. Contemporary furniture is scattered in a
spacious room. Hundreds of books are shelved on two of the
study walls.

A typewriter, pictures of his wife, Luba, and his sons
(Michel, Edgar and Pierre) are placed on the desk.

The weathered, 64-year-old Leopold sits at his desk. His
appearance reflects pain but no bitterness.

LEOPOLD (V.O.)

It's a year now since I requested
to leave Poland. Separated from my
children and wife, who were allowed
to leave, I'm a prisoner in my own
home.

Leopold types:

"I was born in Nowi-Targ, Galicia on February 23, 1904. My
first..."

LEOPOLD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My first encounter with espionage
was in the last days of July 1914.
I was only ten years old.

INT. BUTCHER STORE -- NOWY-TARG -- MORNING

Mrs. Trepper is shopping; young Leopold is with her.

BUTCHER

(To a customer)

Did you hear? The Police caught a
Russian spy in Poronin. They are
bringing him here on the next
train.

Leopold, who overhears the conversation, runs out of the store without asking his mother.

MRS. TREPPER
(Assertive)
Leo! come back! Where're you going?

LEOPOLD
(Without stopping)
To the station, Mama -- I'll come back later.

EXT. THE VILLAGE OF NOWI-TARG -- 1914 -- DAY

Leopold joins a group of children who are playing on the street. The children form a ring around him when he tells them the news.

LEOPOLD
Follow me!

The children, with Leopold in front, run toward the railroad station.

EXT. RAILROAD STATION NOWI-TARG -- DAY

A sign: Nowi-Targ, a few telegraph poles and a couple of benches make up the small rural station. A crowd assembles at the station as a steam locomotive pulls the passenger train into the station.

The police take the prisoner, a short stocky man, with a little red beard and a big cap tilted over his forehead to the local jail.

INT. GROCERY SHOP IN PORONIN -- 1917 -- DAY

The SHOPKEEPER, a man in his 50's and his wife, 40's, serve their customers.

CUSTOMER
(Sarcastically)
So, Pan Wershavski, did you ever get your money back from that Russian spy?

The customers react with laughter to the question.

The MAILMAN arrives at the shop.

MAILMAN
I have a letter for you.

SHOPKEEPER
Where from?

MAILMAN

It's from Moscow.

The shopkeeper opens the envelope. Curious customers watch him pull out a letter and a few bills. The shopkeeper reads the letter with a triumphant smile.

LENIN (O.S.)

"My apologies for leaving three
years ago without paying you.
Please accept this late payment."
Signed - Vladimir Ilyich LENIN.

He proudly passes the letter to his customers who applaud him.

EXT. NOWY-TARG JEWISH CEMETERY 1917 -- DAY

The Trepper family, Mrs. Trepper, her three children and a small crowd attend Mr. Trepper's funeral. A woman supports mourning Mrs. Trepper who is about to collapse.

In front of the open grave -

RABBI 2

(Chanting)

El male Rachamim H'ashochen
ba'mromim --

With tears in his eyes and a choking voice, Leopold, reads a prayer.

LEOPOLD

It-Gadal ve It-kadash shmey raba.
B'alma di-vra k'reuta. V'yamlich
malchuta b'cheichon uh b'yomeichon
uh b'chaieye d' kal beith Israel
ba'agla uh bizman kariv v'imru
Amen.

The body is lowered into the grave. Family members are crying as the grave is covered.

LEOPOLD (CONT'D)

(Crying)

Papa, Papa --

Mourners places stones on the fresh grave as they leave.

INT. TREPPER'S HOUSE -- DAY

The house is poverty-stricken. The shelves in the ground floor store are empty. With great pain, Mrs. Trepper addresses her three children who wear tattered clothing.

MRS. TREPPER

Children, we can no longer stay here. I sold the house to pay for food.

LEOPOLD

Oh no, where will we live?

MRS. TREPPER

We are moving to Dombrova. We will stay with your uncle.

INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP, DOMBROVA COAL MINE -- 1923 -- DAY

We see Leopold working in a blacksmith shop.

EXT. DOMBROVA STREET -- LATE AFTERNOON

Dozens of workers assemble on the street. Carrying red flags and banners calling for a strike as they march toward the coal mine. Leopold, in his blue work clothes and a blue cotton cap, leads the parade.

Foot and horse mounted police armed with clubs, brutally attack the demonstrators.

Leopold is caught. While resisting arrest, he is ruthlessly beaten. His captors overpower him and take him to jail.

EXT. TURKISH FREIGHTER MEDITERRANEAN SEA -- EARLY MORNING

Leopold stands at the bow of the ship, caresses by the wind.

LEOPOLD (V.O.)

With nothing but a gloomy future in Poland, I left for Palestine.

A storm begins. The small freighter sails through the stormy sea

LATER

The storm subsides and the sky clears, revealing the shores of Palestine.

There is a commotion on board the vessel. The passengers anxiously gather on deck gazing at the Promised Land. Leopold is overcome by emotions.

LEOPOLD

This year in Jerusalem!

A picturesque view of the exotic port of Jaffa is seen as the vessel approaches the shore.

The vessel weighs an anchor outside the port. A British Police boat arrives. Two policemen board the ship.

The passengers line up for passport control that is conducted by the British policemen.

It is Leopold's turn. He is anxious.

POLICEMAN
Your passport, Sir.

Leopold extends his passport to the policeman who checks it against Leopold's face.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)
Polish, ehi? (Beat)
What brings you to Palestine?

Leopold hands a document to the policeman.

LEOPOLD
Immigration Sir, I am here to stay.

POLICEMAN
(Sarcastic)
For heaven's sake! Why would any sane person come here?

LEOPOLD
With all respect Sir, I don't think you'll understand.

The policeman grins, then stamps Leopold's passport.

POLICEMAN
Next ...

EXT. PORT OF JAFFA -- MORNING

Barges bring the passengers ashore.

EXT. JAFFA STREET -- CONTINUOUS

We see Leopold and another PASSENGER walk through a market. They move through a crowd, mostly Arab, in traditional clothing. Veiled women walk with lowered eyes. Fresh produce is offered on makeshift tables. Merchants are loudly hawking their merchandise.

Leopold notices a group of men, engaged in an animated discussion. They use intense hand gestures as they talk.

Leopold talks to the Passenger:

LEOPOLD
 (Whispers with a
 smile)
 Look -- they are just like us!

PASSENGER
 (Puzzled)
 What do you mean?

LEOPOLD
 (Triumphant)
 They talk with their hands!

EXT. JAFFA CLOCK SQUARE -- CONTINUOUS

Next to the crowded Clock Square, Leopold boards a bus. Luggage, canvas sacks and chickens in cages are piled on a metal rack on the bus's roof. The driver, an Arab with a big mustache, honks a hand-operated horn as they leave the square.

INT. MOVING BUS -- CONTINUOUS

The bus travels through the streets of old Jaffa. The scenery changes as the bus enters Tel Aviv.

EXT. TEL AVIV STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Tel Aviv is a small town surrounded by sand dunes. Most of the buildings are one or two stories high. Newly planted trees enhance the sidewalks and the yards

EXT. MOVING PICK-UP TRUCK -- MORNING

Leopold and 3 other men sit on the back of a pick-up truck that travels on a dirt road. The land is barren. Occasionally, the truck passes through small Arab villages surrounded by cactus fences.

The scenery changes to newly planted orange groves and almond orchards.

The truck arrives at a campsite, consisting of four tents.

EXT. HADERA CAMPSITE -- LATE AFTERNOON

The SUPERVISOR, a tough man in his sixties, approaches the stopped truck. The men get off the truck and face the supervisor.

SUPERVISOR
 (With a heavy
 Russian accent)
 Welcome to Hadera, where Malaria
 thrives.

(MORE)

SUPERVISOR (CONT'D)

I will show you to your tent. The guards will wake you at 5 o'clock in the morning.

Leopold is astonished.

LEOPOLD

Five o'clock?

SUPERVISOR

That's right! We start work at five thirty here.

EXT. ORANGE GROVE -- EARLY MORNING

In an cleared lot by the orange grove, hand pick oranges from a large pile. Selected oranges are wrapped in thin wax paper and placed in wooden boxes marked JAFFA ORANGES.

In the background, a group of men make boxes.

A group of men and women, Leopold among them, harvest oranges.

Leopold notices LUBA, a pretty woman in her early twenties. The two exchange a curious look.

EXT. OUTSIDE AN ORANGE GROVE -- NIGHT

Young men and women sit on wooden boxes around a bonfire. They are enthusiastically involved in singing a patriotic song.

A few steps away, Leopold and Luba boil water in a large tin can over an open fire.

Leopold dispenses coffee with an improvised ladle. When coffee is ready, Luba serves it to the crowd.

LATER

Leopold and Luba walk alone on a sandy path. They are both shy and innocent. Luba is initiating a conversation.

LUBA

Why is everybody calling you Domb?

LEOPOLD

It's short for Dombrova, the town I lived in Poland.

LUBA

Is it true that you're moving to Tel Aviv?

LEOPOLD

Yes, I am leaving in a few days.

Luba is disappointed.

LUBA

I feel so sad. We've just met.

LEOPOLD

This is something I must do. The exploitation of workers, Arab workers in particular, convinced me to join the Communist Party.

LUBA

Will I see you again?

LEOPOLD

Why wont you join me in Tel Aviv?

INT. HALLWAY COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICE -- TEL AVIV -- DAY

Leopold walks through the hallway. He notices Luba, who sits on the floor and reads a book.

LEOPOLD

What a surprise! I so glad to see you?

Luba gets up. The two exchange a friendly hug.

LUBA

I missed you Domb. Thanks to the Communist Party, you are easy to find.

LEOPOLD

I missed you too. Can we meet anytime soon?

LUBA

Sure.

LEOPOLD

I have a meeting now. I will talk to you later.

INT. COMMUNIST PARTY CONFERENCE ROOM - TEL AVIV -- DAY

The large table in the center of the room is covered with newspapers, books and flyers. Pictures of Karl Marx and Lenin hang on the wall. Two Soviet flags are placed at the head of the table. A few people assemble in the room.

CLOSE UP: LENIN'S PICTURE

HILLEL KATZ, a man in his twenties, skinny with a pair of thick glasses, reads the Communist Manifesto when he notices Leopold enter the room. He gets up to greet Leopold. The two men shake hands firmly.

KATZ

(Warmly)

My name is Hillel Katz. I heard about your militant activities in Poland. We need people like you.

LEO GROSSVOGEL, in his twenties, wearing khaki shorts and a white short sleeve shirt, enters the room. Katz introduces him to Leopold.

KATZ (CONT'D)

(To Leopold)

I would like to introduce you to Leo Grossvogel. He's a fine communist.

KATZ (CONT'D)

(To Grossvogel)

This is Leopold Trepper; his friends call him Domb.

Grossvogel and Leopold shake hands.

GROSSVOGEL

Another troublemaker?

The meeting is in session. The SECRETARY GENERAL, a sixty years old man, is standing up.

SECRETARY GENERAL

I would like to discuss two major issues today: The matter of integrating Arab workers into the Communist Party and the growing danger of Adolf Hitler.

GROSSVOGEL

(Emotionally)

... there is a growing concern among Jewish members about the Arab riots.

LEOPOLD

(Assertive)

I understand the concern, at the same time, excluding Arabs defies the idea of unity of the workers.

Everybody looks at Leopold as he makes this radical statement.

LEOPOLD (CONT'D)

I am more concerned with the rise of Fascism in Germany. The threat goes beyond Germany's borders.

EXT. TEL AVIV BOULEVARD -- DAY

A man is reading the PALESTINE TELEGRAPH at a street corner newsstand. The date is May 1, 1925. Headline: Workers to celebrate May Day worldwide.

CU on a article with a picture of Adolf Hitler. The heading: Hitler's National Socialist Labor Party revived.

At the background we hear a beating of drums that is getting louder.

A parade of workers and youth, carrying flags and colorful banners appears around the corner.

Leopold, Grossvogel and Katz with a small group of Arab workers, wearing traditional Kafia's, lead the demonstrators.

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFE TEL AVIV -- EARLY AFTERNOON

Leopold meets with ALTER STORM, late 20's. A dark complexioned waiter serves the two men with Turkish coffee in miniature cups.

LEOPOLD

It has been a long time since Nowi-Targ. You look pretty good. The Palestine sun did you good.

STORM

You look pretty good, yourself, Domb.

Leopold pauses as he notices Luba walking on the sidewalk. His eyes follow Luba.

Leopold gets up.

LEOPOLD

Excuse me; I will be back in a moment.

Luba is pleasantly surprised to see Leopold.

LEOPOLD (CONT'D)

Hello Luba. I am meeting with my friend Alter, would you like to join us?

LUBA
 (Enthusiastic)
 I'd love to...

Luba and Leopold join Storm who gets up to greet Luba.

STORM
 I'm pleased to meet you.

LUBA
 It is my pleasure to meet Domb's
 friends.

The Waiter serves a glass of Lemonade to Luba.

Luba and Leopold exchange meaningful looks. Storm notices
 the exchange.

STORM
 (Tactfully)
 I see that the two of you have a
 lot to talk about.

Storm gets up.

LEOPOLD
 That's all right; don't leave.

As Storm leaves.

STORM
 Thank you; we'll continue some
 other time.

Leopold and Luba's eyes meet again. There is a delicious
 moment of silence.

LEOPOLD
 (Breaks the silence)
 Do you have any plans for the
 afternoon?

Luba smiles.

EXT. TEL AVIV BEACH -- AFTERNOON

Luba and Leopold walk along the beach; they are holding
 hands. Occasionally they observe couples sitting on the
 sand and children building sand castles.

LEOPOLD
 Tell me a little about yourself.

LUBA
 I am from Lvov.

(MORE)

LUBA (CONT'D)

I fled Poland to avoid an arrest.
The Communist group I belonged to
was accused of murder.

LEOPOLD

(Stunned)

Murder?

LUBA

Off course it wasn't true; they
tried to frame us. (Beat)
What's your story?

LEOPOLD

I was born in Nowi-Targ. We moved
to Dombrova after the death of my
father. I left Poland after
spending 8 months in a Jail for
leading a miner's strike.

LUBA

Oh my! You and me that's a double
trouble.

EXT. TEL AVIV BEACH -- LATE AFTERNOON

Luba and Leopold sit on an isolated beach, watching the
golden sun as it slowly dips below the horizon.

Luba turns towards Leopold.

LUBA

What a beautiful sunset! It was a
lovely afternoon.

LEOPOLD

(Looking at Luba)

The sunset is beautiful and so are
you.

There is a moment of silence. Leopold and Luba's eyes meet
in a spark of passion.

The two get closer. Leopold wraps his arm around Luba's
shoulder. Luba gets closer and puts her arm around his
back. They get closer. They kiss softly. After a short
pause their lips lock again in a passionate kiss, as it
gets darker. The only lights on the beach come from a
crescent moon and the stars.