

Wake up.

Translate memoirs
of teenage Nazi resisters
in the first person.

You are brought to a damp cell.
Unbreathable air,
the smell of urine, sweat, blood,
and sickness surround you.
Sixteen or eighteen people
are crammed in a space
meant for two.

Your friends have been brought to this cell.
They have been beaten already.

You are a young woman,
just barely eighteen,
abused at the hands of old men.

When you get out of prison,
you stumbled home to your mother.
You are almost an adult
but you want
her embrace.
She sees your skin:
broken, black, and blue from beatings.
She rubs soap gently on your back.

Do you remember when your mother
rubbed soap on your back?
Seven years ago,
you were near dead, lying in the hospital
with cancer flowing through your blood.
You woke up from a coma
and couldn't walk.
Your mom had to help you shower.
She gently rubbed soap on your back.

Read Gestapo reports and
forced confessions.
You can't distinguish between reality
and what has been coerced.
What did they say
to stop the beating?

What did they say
to protect the people they loved?

What is real,
what is fake?

Make dinner.

See a documentary
about the Vietnam War.
See children burning,
soldiers raping women.

If it weren't for Vietnam,
you wouldn't be here.

Your grandmother answered
the phone once.
Your dad said he was leaving.
She answered the phone again.
Someone on the other line
said he was a traitor.
She didn't know when
she would see her son again.

There was another soldier
in your dad's town.
He was a prisoner of war.
He marched hundreds of miles
in the jungle
along the Ho Chi Minh trail.
His friends died.
His mother didn't know when
she'd see him again.

*Go to bed.
Wake up.
Go to the museum.*

See the shackles
that brought enslaved
Africans to the New World.
See the tobacco and sugar that
white Americans and Europeans craved
from the torn hands and
broken backs of the enslaved.

See the bodies
hanging from trees.
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root.

Your standing next
to the Angola prison tower,
a manifestation of the
prison industrial complex.
Men in striped suits
stand in front of you.
This prison is larger
than Manhattan.
That prison has it's own
museum.

Your president wants to
make America great again.
A little boy near you
asks his mom, 'Does Donald Trump
only like white people?'

*Go to sleep.
Wake up.
Keep researching.*

See the horrors of the Nazis
day after day.
One day, the Nazis arrest
over 700 young people
while thousands are packed into trains,
deported
to gas chambers and ovens.

In front of you
are bodies, hanging from gallows
and boys in gray uniforms,
the letters OST on their chest.
A German boy tells you
he saw a pregnant forced laborer
kicked in the stomach.
He wants
to do something about it.
He wants
to sabotage the machine.

Try to find hope in resistance.