

The Diary of a Young Girl

Anne Frank

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1942

In 1942, Anne Frank described the Nazi's occupation of Amsterdam, the life she lived before hiding, her family's move into a secret Annex, and her feelings about her new environment. Anne received a diary as a gift for her 13th birthday. She loved the gift and began to confide in it almost immediately.

June-August 1942

In 1940, the Germans invaded the Netherlands and began implementing anti-Jewish restrictions such as curfews for Jews and limitations on transportation. At the end of the school year, Margot, Anne's 15-year old sister, received a call-up from the SS, a Nazi paramilitary force. Receiving a call-up almost always meant being sent to a concentration camp.

The next morning, Otto and Edith Frank, Anne's parents, decided to move their family into a hiding place before Margot had to report for her summons. Two of Otto's business partners, Mr. Kleiman and Mr. Kugler, agreed to hide them in a hidden Annex in their office. Another family, the van Daans, would be joining the Franks in hiding. In addition to the two businessmen, a few others were informed of their move into hiding: Jan, Miep, Bep, and Mr. Voskuyl.

The Annex had previously been used as a laboratory for Mr. Kugler. It was originally hidden away behind a series of doors and offices. After a few weeks, a bookshelf was installed in front of the door to further hide it from workers and police. The Annex was three stories and contained multiple small bedrooms, a kitchen/dining area, and a bathroom. Though the space wasn't large enough to ensure total privacy, the residents had enough space to be on their own if they needed to be. The residents also used a private office in the building, but to avoid discovery, that office could only be used after hours as it wasn't directly connected to the Annex and could be accessed by Mr. Kleiman and Mr. Kugler's employees.

The van Daans arrived about a week after the Franks. The family consisted of three people: Mr. van Daan, Mrs. van Daan, and their 16-year old son Peter van Daan. Anne didn't like them at first. She constantly fought with Mr. and Mrs. van Daan, who thought Anne had a bad attitude, and she thought that Peter was obnoxious.

September-October 1942

A variety of conflicts and scenarios led to immediate tension within the Annex. Some were personality-related while others were isolated incidents. Regardless, the close quarters and inability to escape led to constant frustration and arguments:

- Anne found herself in conflict with her mother, Edith. Anne believed that her mother didn't understand her and thought that she went out of her way to shame her.
- Mrs. van Daan was a constant source of conflict for everyone in the Annex. She and her husband would have intense screaming matches, she would try to flirt with Otto, and she and Edith disagreed about how the makeshift home should be run.
- In an example of an isolated incident, Peter found a book the adults had kept away from the children. The book had to do with women, and the adults didn't want the children reading books written for an adult audience. However, Peter's curiosity got the best of him. He went behind his parents' backs to read the book. Mr. and Mrs. van Daan caught him and punished him for his disobedience. Initially, Peter refused to apologize and stayed in his room in the loft. However, after a few days of sulking, things returned to normal. At the time, Anne didn't like Peter's behavior and often referred to him as awkward and insolent.

A combination of the internal conflicts and the fear of discovery took its toll on Anne's emotional well-being. The adults often criticized Anne for being arrogant and selfish, especially when she disagreed with them. With the constant criticism, she began wondering if she actually was as poorly behaved as the adults implied. She felt torn because she knew that she was supposed to smile and take the abuse, but she wanted nothing more than to defend herself and speak out.

November-December 1942

In early November, as reports of persecution grew more intense, the residents of the Annex decided to bring in a new member—Albert Dussel, a local dentist. Dussel moved in in mid-November. The residents of the Annex welcomed him with coffee and cognac.

Once they talked him through the rules, they began to ask Dussel for updates on the outside world. He revealed that many of their friends had been taken to concentration camps. He told them that the Nazis had intensified their efforts to find Jewish people and began taking entire families out of their homes. As Anne heard these stories, she began to feel guilty for her own security in the Annex. She questioned why she should be able to hide in safety while so many others were suffering at the hands of the Germans.

At first, Anne took a liking to Dussel. She thought he was nice and selfless. He was a bit slow to learn the rules, but this didn't bother her because she knew he needed time to adapt to the new environment. **However, her opinion of him quickly began to change as he turned out to be more selfish and strict than Anne originally thought.**

Because she had to share a room with him, she was the first to see his true personality. He'd constantly correct Anne and admonish her for her behavior. He also kept a rigid schedule and would get angry if anyone bothered him when he tried to go about his day. While Anne thought about acting

out in revenge, she figured it would only end with more trouble for her.

1943

Six months into living in the Annex, tensions began to spike within the secret home. While Anne and her “Annex family” tried to hold onto hope, growing frustration and resentment led to constant fighting between the members of the household. The conflicts inside the home were intensified by constant fear as WWII continued to rage on throughout Europe.

January-March 1943

Anne’s fights with her mother, the van Daans, and Dussel began to escalate. She cried herself to sleep often and couldn’t understand why they constantly felt the need to point out her shortcomings. Her mother would often tell her that she should behave like her sister, Margot. However, Anne knew that she wasn’t anything like her sister, nor did she want to be. She thought Margot was too timid and weak-willed. Anne wanted to be outspoken, not passive.

In addition to the arguments in the Annex, the residents had to deal with other issues such as rats and burglary scares. As their time in the Annex continued, the residents of the Annex tried to hold onto hope despite the desperate nature of their situation. They listened closely for updates on the war and hoped for a quick Allied invasion and liberation. Throughout the day, they would try to keep themselves occupied with other tasks, such as education or reading, and would make jokes to lighten the mood.

April-July 1943

The helpers of the residents of the Annex did their best to provide resources and information on a regular basis. They would give the residents food, books, presents, and medicine. **However, because of health issues and other obligations, there were times that they were unable to offer their assistance.** Mr. Kleiman suffered from medical conditions and had to have surgeries. Miep and Bep tried to juggle work, life, and support all while avoiding rousing suspicions from Nazi forces. Worst of all, Mr. Voskuijl discovered that he had cancer.

As time continued in the Annex, tensions between the residents grew. Edith and Anne bickered frequently about Anne’s tendency to “talk back,” the adults got into intense arguments about food, and Dussel fought with everyone about the space he was entitled to. In addition to the heightened internal tensions, constant air raids had everyone on edge. One night, Anne was so terrified of the gunfire that she packed up her bags in preparation to leave should the building be destroyed. However, her mother informed her that, should that happen, they’d have nowhere to go.

August-September 1943

In the warehouse, some of the employees began to grow curious about the Annex and its contents. The helpers would constantly make excuses to keep people from investigating and were extra cautious when visiting the residents. For example, Mr. Kugler once snuck up to the Annex through a set of back stairs after telling his employees he was going to the drugstore. He tried to leave

the Annex through the main door, but an employee was hanging around the office space. He ended up having to sneak down the back stairs in his socks to avoid detection because his shoes made too much noise.

Inside of the Annex, Dussel's rapport with his fellow residents continued to deteriorate. From throwing a fit over having to turn over their radio to the Germans to stating that the English were idiots for not destroying Italy in its entirety, Dussel's attitude began to wear on the others. Though he would apologize and swear to be "better," the residents no longer believed in his hollow promises.

Anne stopped speaking as frequently as she had in the past. She recognized that the more she kept to herself, the less annoyed she would get with other people and vice versa. **However, despite trying to stay away from the fighting, Anne developed severe anxiety and depression.** She used valerian drops to try to ease her mental woes, but they didn't do much. She said that laughter would be the best medicine, but that there wasn't much to laugh and smile about in the Annex.

October-December 1943

As the year came to an end, the residents of the Annex prepared for their second winter. **Though illness and constant fighting plagued morale, the holidays provided a brief reprieve from the stress of isolation and hiding.** This glimmer of hope prompted the residents to be more relaxed with their rules and restrictions. While this gave them a taste of "normal" life again, it also put them at risk of possible detection.

As the winter months began, Anne's depression and anxiety got worse. The combination of constant fear and crippling loneliness led Anne to lose her appetite and sleep for significant periods of time. She said that sleep made the days go by faster and the fear less impactful.

However, as she began to sleep more, she started having nightmares. In one recurring dream, Anne would see her classmate, Hanneli, dressed in rags and crying out in desperation. She'd ask Anne to save her, but Anne never could. She prayed to God to save her former classmate from her torment. In later dreams, Hanneli was joined by Anne's grandmother.

In October, the van Daans ran out of funds and could no longer afford to give their helpers money to pay for supplies. Mr. and Mrs. van Daan had constant fights about their financial state and often disagreed on how to handle their lack of funds. In addition to financial arguments, the van Daan's constantly fought with Dussel. These conflicts got so bad that Dussel and the van Daans refused to speak to one another for a period of time.

On top of everything, the distribution of food became problematic. The Franks accused the van Daans of keeping food from the rest of the residents. They were frying fewer potatoes for the group and weren't giving out oils and meat fairly.

1944

1944 marked a change for Anne. **In her diary entries, she began discussing changes in her body as well as new perspectives on life in the Annex, her relationships with her fellow residents, and**

her future after the war.

As the new year began, Anne spent time reflecting on her life before the Annex. Before going into hiding, Anne didn't think about "serious things" very often. She fought much harder for the approval of her family and allowed her emotions to dictate her behavior.

While she recognized that she still had a lot of growing up to do, she noted the ways in which she had matured and the ways in which life in the Annex had impacted her development. For example, she recognized that she'd painted her mother and Mrs. van Daan in a negative light in her older diary entries. While she still didn't want to spend a lot of time with either of them, she admitted that her depiction of them was harsher than necessary.

January-February 1944

As her loneliness grew, Anne decided to confide in Peter. Though, at first, he was an outlet for Anne to vent to, she began to take an actual liking to him. She described the warm feeling she got looking into his eyes and making him blush. Initially, she insisted that she wasn't in love with him, but her affections grew the more time she spent with him.

Soon, Peter started to confide in Anne. She appreciated his honesty and was glad that someone trusted her. In addition to his frustrations, he also talked to Anne about his dreams and insecurities. He told her that he wanted to go to the Dutch East Indies to work and that he wished he weren't Jewish because life seemed to be so much easier for non-Jewish people. He also suffered from a serious inferiority complex and longed for affection.

As Anne and Peter started to spend significant time together, **Anne started to develop romantic feelings for him.** She talked about him constantly and was upset on days they didn't speak much. She tried to find excuses to go to his room to talk and began referring to Peter as "him" in her diary. Even his smallest actions had a profound impact on her. For example, she once said that she started glowing once after he just looked at her. She thought about him all of the time and began to dream about him.

March 1944

In early March, Anne again became annoyed with the behavior of the adults in the Annex. She believed they were behaving selfishly and didn't consider other people's feelings when they spoke. Anne wanted to be free of her parents' oversight and distanced herself from them because they didn't treat her like an adult or respect her emotions.

In mid-March, the tension inside of the Annex intensified because the people who had been supplying food and ration coupons to the residents were arrested. **While the arrested parties were eventually released, the residents were forced to eat rotten food for a while.** The stench was so bad that they had to cover their noses with rags to deal with the rancid smell.

The van Daans would fight with one another constantly, and these fights had a negative effect on Peter. He was frustrated with his parents' constant bickering. He wanted to be close to his parents, but

he didn't feel like he could trust them. He expressed his feelings to Anne and appreciated her company. **He said that her support and optimism helped him when he was struggling.**

Eventually, Peter and Anne became close enough to openly discuss taboo topics such as sex. Anne admitted that she and Margot hadn't been told much about sex. Peter, on the other hand, knew quite a bit. He told Anne about contraceptives and the process of puberty for boys. Anne never thought that she could have these conversations with someone of the opposite sex.

Near the end of March, the adults started commenting on the relationship between Peter and Anne. The van Daans nicknamed Peter's room "Anne's second home" and made jokes about an Annex wedding. Edith and Otto worried about Anne going into Peter's room alone because they were afraid that the children would act inappropriately. This led Edith to forbid Anne from visiting Peter's room. Anne wasn't willing to give up on Peter easily, and she tried to figure out a way to get around her mother's restrictions.

April 1944

As food became more scarce, the residents began eating in "food cycles." A food cycle was a period of time in which they would only eat one type of food. For example, the residents could only get their hands on endives for a while, so they'd eat it at every meal. While they would supplement the dishes with potatoes and beans, the residents grew tired of the lack of variety.

On April 11, a break-in occurred at the warehouse. The men of the Annex heard a loud noise and left the Annex to investigate. When they got to the warehouse, they saw the thieves robbing the shop. Mr. van Daan startled them by crying out, "Police!" The burglars ran and broke down a panel leading outside as they escaped. Mr. van Daan and Peter went down to replace the panel and were seen by two people outside of the warehouse. Afraid that they'd be mistaken for the thieves, Mr. van Daan and Peter ran back to their hiding place and prayed the people outside hadn't called the police.

Following this encounter, the residents enacted some changes in the Annex:

- Dussel, who had been using the office at night, could no longer use the office to work.
- Peter would patrol the warehouse from 8:30 PM to 9:30 PM.
- The residents couldn't open their windows anymore.
- The bathroom couldn't be used after rounds were made.
- A carpenter from the underground resistance made a barricade for the residents.

Peter and Anne became closer both emotionally and physically. One day, Peter and Anne shared a kiss and cuddled in the attic. Anne was exhilarated by the development in their relationship. However, she wondered what her parents would think and worried about the scandal that her actions could cause.

May 1944

The Annex suffered a severe loss after Mr. van Hooven, the man who helped deliver potatoes to the residents, was arrested for hiding two Jews in his home. **Anne lamented the state of the world and**

questioned the purpose of war. She hated that good people were being arrested for helping others while those driven by hatred were free to roam the streets and persecute others.

After talking with Peter, Anne decided to tell her father about their relationship. While Otto seemed okay with it at first, he wasn't comfortable with Anne becoming physically and romantically involved. He told Anne that she would have to show more restraint because Peter may get the wrong idea about Anne's affection and try to get physically involved with her.

In response, Anne wrote her father a letter protesting his suggestion to stay away from Peter. In the letter, she claimed her independence and said that she no longer needed the support of Otto or Edith. Peter made her happy, and she wanted to continue her relationship with him. She told her father that he'd either have to forbid her from visiting Peter altogether or accept that she was going to spend time with him.

Her father was saddened by Anne's note and told Anne that it was the most hurtful letter he'd ever received. He believed that he and Edith had always supported Anne. While he ultimately forgave her for her words, he was upset by Anne's lack of gratitude. Anne felt guilty about giving her father the letter. **However, she stood behind what she said and wanted to continue her relationship with Peter, even though she didn't have her father's approval.**

June-August 1944

Though she had become more confident in herself, Anne still struggled with her insecurities surrounding her personality. The adults of the Annex often accused her of being arrogant, and their words made Anne question what she was doing to deserve such a title. She was her own harshest critic and reproached herself for her seemingly unattractive behaviors.

In addition to her insecurity, Anne was concerned about her relationship with Peter. **She knew that he liked her, but she felt like something was holding their relationship back.** While she appreciated his friendship, she wanted more. She was still desperately in love with him and couldn't go a day without talking to him. Peter was more closed off than Anne, and she wanted to continue to break through his hardened exterior.

She feared that their fast movement toward intimacy hindered their relationship. She thought that their discussions about sex and their shared kisses actually prevented them from having a deeper relationship in which they talked about more serious things. She regretted the way their relationship had developed and worried that she may never develop the meaningful connection that she wanted.

In her final diary entry, Anne talked about the two sides of her personality. She felt like a walking contradiction, with one side of her being more sarcastic and carefree while the other side wanted deeper and more meaningful connections. She was afraid that people would mock her if she showed her more vulnerable side, and she only let that part of her personality emerge when she was alone.

August 4, 1944 and the Aftermath

On August 4, 1944, the Annex was raided by the SS. It is believed that someone tipped off the authorities to the hide-out. The helpers of the Annex were arrested (with the exceptions of Miep and Bep, who both evaded police custody):

- Mr. Kleiman was released early due to his poor health and remained in Amsterdam until his death in 1959.
- Mr. Kugler escaped imprisonment in 1945 and immigrated to Canada. He lived in Toronto until his death in 1981.
- Bep lived in Amsterdam until her death in 1983.
- Miep lived in Amsterdam for most of her life. Her husband, Jan, died in 1993. She died in Hoorn in 2010.

Dussel, the Franks, and the van Daans were sent to concentration camps:

- Mr. van Daan was gassed to death in Auschwitz in late 1944.
- Mrs. van Daan was sent to 5 different concentration camps. Her cause and time of death are unknown.
- Peter was forced to make the “death march” from Auschwitz to Mauthausen. He died on May 5, 1945. The camp was liberated three days later.
- Dussel was sent to 2 concentration camps. He died in December 1944 in Neuengamme.
- Edith died in Auschwitz in January 1945 of hunger and exhaustion.
- Margot and Anne were both transported from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen. A typhus epidemic was likely the cause of their deaths. Their time of death is unknown.
- Otto was the only resident to survive the concentration camps. He was in Auschwitz when it was liberated by the Russians. He lived in Amsterdam until 1953, then moved to Birsfelden, Switzerland. He remarried and dedicated his life to sharing his daughter’s diary with the world.