

Free – By Candlelight (after camp scene) by Claudia I. Haas

By Candlelight follows a group of teens in NYC and MN in the days following 9/11. Interwoven in their stories is a tale of a friendship between a young Jewish girl (Lanie) and a Catholic girl (Dorrie) which finds it's ending in the terror attacks.

In this scene Lanie has just come home from sleepaway camp and visits with Dorrie. They are 13-14. It is August, 1963. They have gifts for each other.

LANIE

You look older, Dorrie. Do you think I do?

DORRIE

Your new haircut's neat.

LANIE

No more ponytails! Well – open it! You're going to love it. We danced to it all summer.

DORRIE

This is so perfect – a real rock 'n roll album. Lesley Gore! Thank you! I adore her! Every time I play it, I'll think of you. Your turn. Open!

LANIE

It's – interesting –

DORRIE

It's an album of Shakespeare's music. They used it in the production at Williamstown. I have one also. The play was *Happy Birthday, Shakespeare* and it had scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* and *As You Like It* –

LANIE

It's just so “you,” Dorrie. Thanks. It's perfect.

DORRIE

It's so quiet today. Where is everyone?

LANIE

They're all next door at some end-of-season barbecue. I sort of planned this. I need to tell you things. Show you things.

DORRIE

Okay.

(LANIE brings out a picture.)

LANIE

This is my family – or some of it. My father’s family. Some distant cousin from Hungary sent this to my Dad after the war. There are no pictures of my mother’s family.

DORRIE

So you *do* have tons of family – like I do.

LANIE

No, I don’t. No grandmother or grandfather. No aunts, no uncles. My parents are all that’s left of their families.

DORRIE

What happened?

LANIE

World War II. You read *The Diary*, right?

DORRIE

Omigosh. OMIGOSH! Hitler?

(For Lanie, saying “Hitler” is a desecration of her home.)

LANIE

*Dorrie!* I told you the “H” word was never, *ever* to be said in this house.

DORRIE

I’m sorry, Lanie. I thought the “H” words was ... hell.

LANIE

Hell? No – I can say “hell.” Don’t Catholics believe in hell? How can you believe in something that no one will say?

DORRIE

I don’t know. Maybe I’m not a good Catholic.

LANIE

Well, I’m a good Jewish girl. You need to know that. You know how you’re going to be an actress when you grow up? Well, I know I’m going to marry a Jewish boy and have lots of Jewish children. To make up for all my relatives that can never have families.

DORRIE

Geez.

LANIE

I wanted you to read *The Diary* – because my mother was in one of those places – you know – the camps. And my father. And because – my parents say it isn’t enough to know that six million Jewish people were killed. My father says each one had a name. A family. A dream. Those dreams were murdered, too.

DORRIE

Lanie? How did your parents survive?

LANIE

*That* we don’t talk about. We talk about how they met and came to America. You know – mainly happy things. But sometimes, when my father talks about the past – he says that *that* stuff can happen here.

DORRIE

In America? I don’t think so, Lanie. Things like that don’t happen here. We are “the land of the free and the brave.”