

[The Book of Joseph](#) by Karen Hartman

*Mania, trapped in Krakow in 1942, writes to her brother Joseph, who has escaped to New York. Adapted from an original letter by Mania Nachtigal.*

MANIA

My dearest brother -

Should I thank you for a long beautiful letter or for the birthday wishes or for the package you sent?

I thank you for all of that.

As you remember, I turned half a century on July 19. What did I experience? Nothing and a lot.

I married being 20, didn't know anything about life and people, and a year after I already had a child. A child had a child. My parenting responsibilities took over, maybe it was better this way, I didn't have much time to think.

But he, too, disappeared forever. Only everlasting emptiness stayed.

I know my Dear Brother that you, despite your young age, went through a lot.

Many times it hurt me really much that you didn't find a way to me. You thought I am stupid, or you preferred to deal with all the difficulties by yourself. But I had for you, my dear boy, not only sisterly feelings, but my eyes can look deeply into your soul. I knew that the office job was not the only and entire reason for your nervous breakdown.

Sometimes I feel like somebody asked me to sing after my tongue was removed.

Thank you for the package; it contained coffee, tea, oil which made me very happy but we can get everything here. Milk wasn't there but we can get fresh milk every day. The women bring it like they used to before the war.

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*You are welcome to perform this monologue for free! It would mean a lot to me if you would [buy this play](#), and it's a good idea for your performance too.*

*You may CUT but you may not CHANGE the words. Please introduce the monologue with title of play and author's name (this is a monologue from Leah's Train by Karen Hartman).*

*Feel free to send a video link to yourself performing the monologue through the Contact page, and let me know if I may share! Thanks and be well, KH*

[www.karenhartman.org](http://www.karenhartman.org)