



SIEBENQUELL

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# Stories that help us to touch the heart of life

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SOURCE AUSSTELLUNG-GERAUBTE-KINDER-6\_WELT

*In the last few months, I have often heard the phrase: We live in troubled times. It is a sentiment I can understand all too well. The daily news seems to be seeped in negativity. There is a gloomy sense that a cruelty and viciousness is creeping into our world and society on so many levels. A heartlessness that was once derided and scorned has suddenly become fashionable and attractive to people who see how it might benefit them, no matter what it costs others.*

*In precisely such moments, we tend to forget that stories can help us to recognise the depth and truth of the moment we find ourselves in, often in ways that political and social analysis cannot. I do not intend to offer my extensive commentary on the worldwide situation, but to offer a story that might open our eyes to the deeper levels of meaning contained within our troubled times. I simply share with you the words of a storyteller.*

**»Terrible things are happening outside. At any time of night and day, poor helpless people are being dragged out of their homes. They're allowed to take only a knapsack and a little cash with them, and even then, they're robbed of these possessions on the way. Families are torn apart; men, women and**

**children are separated. Children come home from school to find that their parents have disappeared. Women return from shopping to find their houses sealed, their families gone.«**

*When I recently shared this text with a small group of people, nearly every head in the room started to nod. A conversation ensued that commented on the dreadful situation in the USA , with the wave of deportations, the breaking up of families, the fear that is being instilled by the arbitrariness of the arrests, and the lack of any due process. The conversation was loud, long and heated.*

*Then I simply added the name of the name of this storyteller: Anne Frank. She wrote these words on Wednesday, January 13th, 1943 in her famous diary.*

*Then there was silence, shock and tears. The story and the storyteller moved us to places of understanding that all our contemporary analysis could not. As one woman said: »The moment you gave us the name of the storyteller and the time she wrote her words, I dawned on me, that we are not just going through a time of political and social adjustment. We are touching the heart of darkness.«*

*This is the power inherent within the stories. Storytelling is a true way of knowing. Without the stories, we will never touch the true heart of the moment within which we live. We do not tell stories just to while away the time or amuse ourselves to death. Like Scheherazade, we tell stories for 1001 nights or longer, to save our lives.*

**P. Erik Riechers SAC**

*Aachen, May 22, 2025*