

fascist! You'll never see the sun again."⁵

The death-car moved off and I was taken back to the Rostov railway station. Again I was locked in a prison wagon attached to the passenger train, with three armed guards in the compartment next to me. The Georgians had been replaced by Kalmyk soldiers.⁶ We reached Moscow where my prison wagon was detached and shunted off to a siding.

Although I knew very well that my prison guard in Yerevan had egregiously lied to me, I still retained a flicker of hope. Perhaps they had actually brought me to Moscow for a real trial. But no such thing. If they had wanted to grant me a real trial, they would have taken me there directly and not kept me locked in this wagon for three days.

My wagon was reattached and the train finally got on its way. I was sent to Krasnoyarsk, a metallurgical town, relatively new at the time, with a population of 484,000. Krasnoyarsk spread out on both sides of the Yenisei River which rises in the far south near Lake Baikal and runs north to the Taymyr Peninsula where it flows into the Kara Sea and thence to the Arctic Ocean. The Yenisei is only navigable for a month and a half or two months

5 Here I must note that by this time my father was already quite familiar with the Russian language which he later perfected in the lagers. By his own account, the Czech language he had mastered at the university in Prague helped him to learn another Slavic language.

6 The Kalmyks belong to the Mongolian group and were mostly concentrated on the western shores of the Caspian Sea. They are Buddhist by religion. See Viktor Kozlov, *The Peoples of the Soviet Union* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988). In December 1943, NKVD agents entered Kalmyk homes, drove entire families out and deported them to various places in Siberia, and the Kalmyk community was broken and scattered.