

TOP SECRET

**1986
DIARIES
FOUND**

CHERNOBYL

26 ABRIL

REMEMBERING A DISASTER

Our C1 classes put themselves in the shoes of people who lived through the disaster...

The Chernobyl disaster happened on April 26, 1986, at a nuclear power plant in Ukraine, which was part of the Soviet Union. During a safety test, something went very wrong, causing an explosion in one of the reactors. This explosion released a lot of dangerous radiation into the air. The radiation spread over a large area, affecting many people and the environment.

The Soviet government tried to keep it a secret at first, but soon the world found out. People living nearby had to leave their homes and could not return for many years. The area around the reactor, called the "Exclusion Zone," is still dangerous because of the radiation.

Many people got sick from the radiation, and some died. It was one of the worst nuclear accidents in history. Today, scientists and workers are still working to make the area safe. The Chernobyl disaster reminds us of the dangers of nuclear power when things go wrong.

**Diary of Lyudmila
Kovtun, Pripyat resident**

April 26th 1986

Dear Diary,

Yesterday feels like a dream or a nightmare. I was at home when the explosion happened. I saw the fireball rising above the reactor from my window. The whole building shook, the sirens started to sound. At first, I thought that it was a fire, but something inside me told me this was far worse.

I've always been optimistic, focussed on the good in our community, but today the anxiety inside of me is killing me. Viktor, my husband, is still not home, he works at the power plant. I can't stop worrying. He used to tell me not to fuss about him. On top of that, the politicians are saying nothing dangerous is happening, but I'm cynical about it. I spent the whole morning helping organise children during the evacuation, trying to keep them calm, although I was terrified, too.

What's really going on? I can't get this question out of my mind. My neighbour told me there's nothing to worry about, nothing is going to come about, and in a couple of days everything is going to finish in some gossip and no more. She is being really naive.

I keep telling myself it will be OK, but I'm not sure. I hope Viktor comes home soon. I have to stay strong for my family, but now everything seems to be awful.

As told by Isabel and Nora

**The diary of
Natasha Ivanov,
child evacuee**

DEAR DIARY,

Last night after dinner I had just been arguing with my mum about a silly thing that I can't remember, so I decided that I would play marbles instead of doing what my mum said.

As time went on, my eyes were closing slowly when suddenly a storm sound frightened me. As I am very curious, I looked out the window. Because of the darkness, I couldn't see anything, so I went to bed before my mum checked on my room.

When I woke up this morning, I heard my parents discussing something - I couldn't hear what it was about, but I'm sure it was something really important.

Suddenly, my younger brother opened my door, he was on the verge of starting to cry. In that moment, I realised that something was wrong. I have a hug to calm him down, I tried to transmit to him that everything was OK, I was so scared though.

In the evening, my parents told me that they had taken the decision of escaping to Italy to my dad's family, away from the danger. I'm now in the car on the way to a new life...

**As told by Ninbe and
Maddi**

26th April, 1986

Dear Diary,

I TOLD them, I TOLD them that covering up the problems of the reactor was a bad idea! And now what? A nuclear disaster has happened because no one believed me. Now, millions of people are questioning what to do and in the next few hours, we are going to communicate the process that we need to follow to evacuate. As I had some suspicions that this was going to happen, my wife and son left weeks ago to Moldova. When this happened, I was sleeping. I woke up with a call from my secretary very distressed. Before I picked up the phone, I knew that something was wrong. My secretary told me that the 4th reactor had exploded at Iam. We are sacrificing lots of firefighters and police officers but they can't deal with the radiation. It seems it is the worst nuclear disaster that has ever happened. A midday I saw some kids playing outside, which I don't think is a good idea because of the radioactivity bubble that is clearly visible above the nuclear plant. This is one of the reasons why we, the Soviet government, should alert the citizens to the seriousness of the problem.

Well, I TOLD them. I just left my resignation letter on the table of my office and I'm writing this on the way to meet my family again in Moldova.

I TOLD THEM.

CONFIDENTIAL

AS TOLD BY JUNE,
DUNE AND UNAI

Dear diary...

DIARY OF IGOR
KOVALENKO, A
LOCAL
FIREFIGHTER

TE April 26, 1986

Today something really important happened. While I was sleeping, the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant caught fire. As I am a firefighter, I went to the nuclear plant to put out the fire throwing different materials. I didn't know what was going on but it seemed to be dangerous. The government didn't convey anything but some workers said they knew this would happen. However, nobody believed them so many people died because of the radiation and many others were evacuated.

I was in front of the mirror and I saw myself full of red rashes and I didn't know what they were. I first thought it was an allergy but then I realized that it could have been because of the explosion. I worked there during the night. Suddenly, I had a message saying that one workmate had the same rashes and he died. I think I will be the next one...

My girlfriend was on holiday when this happened. I called her before and I told her that I would die soon. She wanted to return home, but it was too dangerous and if not she would also die. I understood her situation but I wouldn't forgive myself if she died due to me. I hope she will be fine and happy.

I hope this will finish soon and people survive. I suppose it will be difficult to recover fast. We will have to achieve it ourselves because the government is not collaborative. We have to continue helping each other.