

THE MAN WHO WROTE THE CAMPS

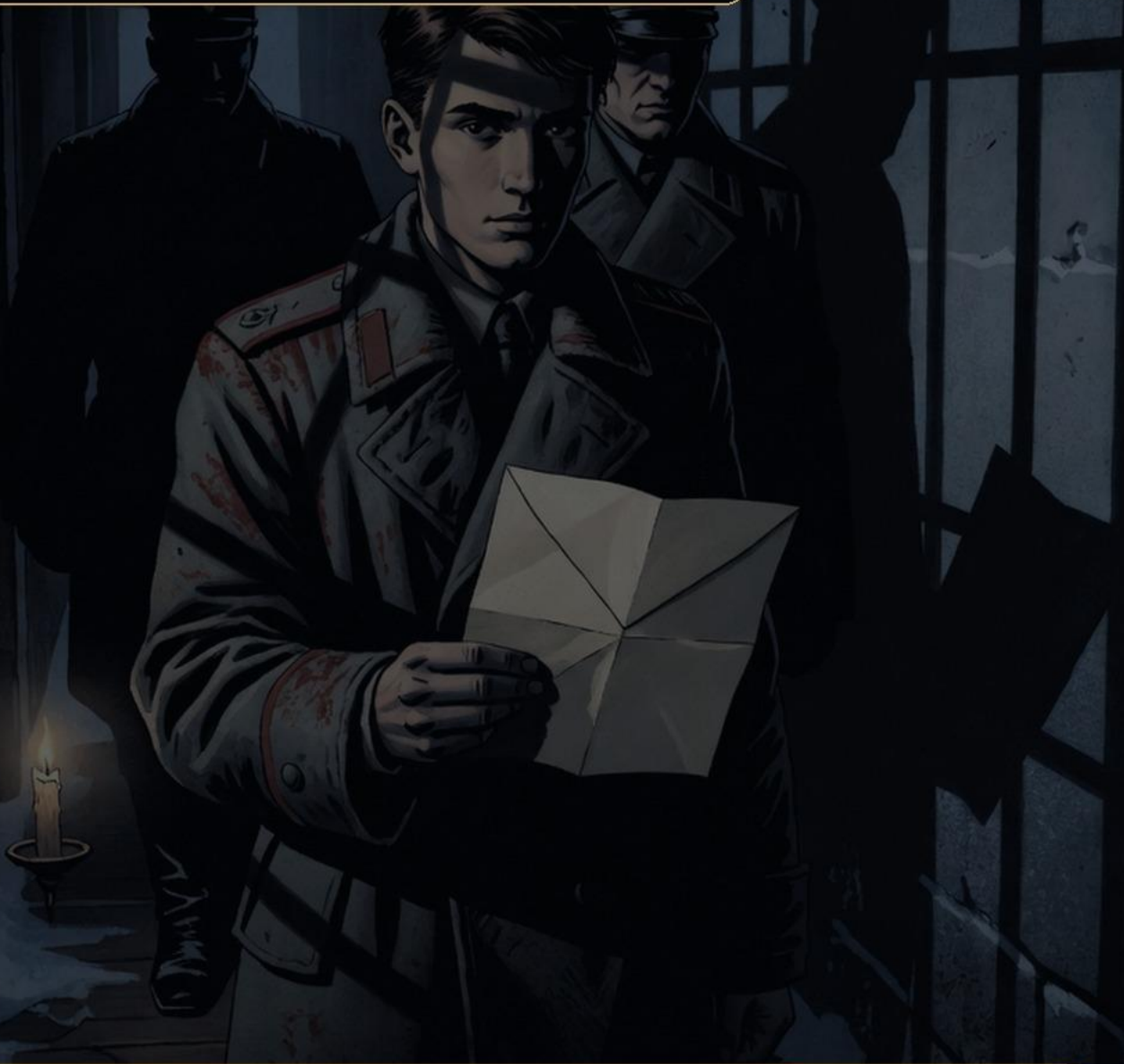
Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn · 1918–2008



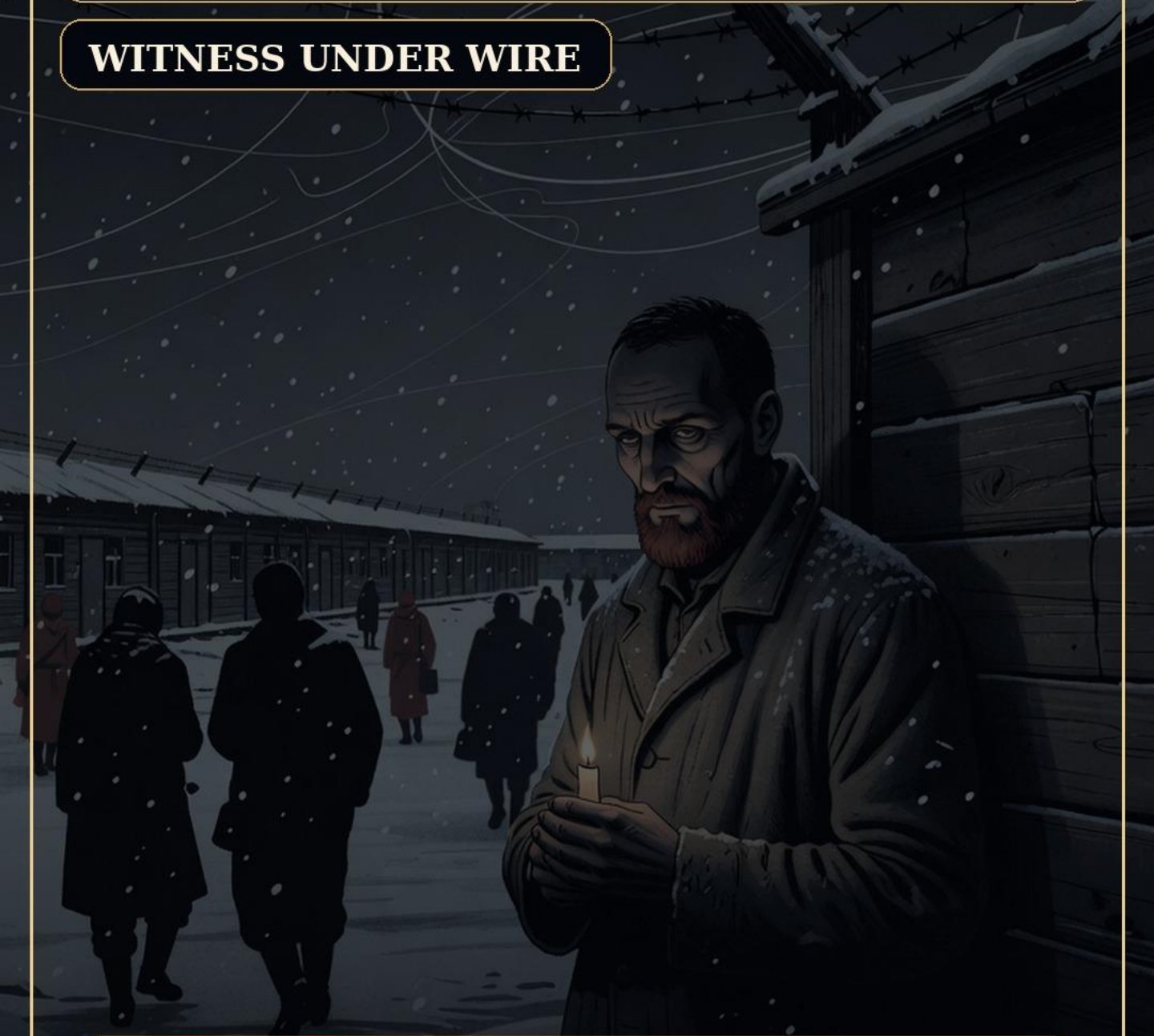
Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn (1918–2008) was a Russian novelist and historian who forced the Soviet prison camps into public memory.

BEFORE THE RUPTURE

Before the arrest, he was a decorated Red Army officer and young mathematician who still believed the system could be corrected.

THE LETTER BECOMES A CELL

In 1945, private letters criticizing Stalin were enough. He was arrested and sentenced to eight years in labour camps.

WITNESS UNDER WIRE

The camps and exile did not turn him into a slogan. They gave him the witness he would spend decades arranging into language.

SECRET PAGES

After release, he taught mathematics in provincial Russia and wrote secretly at night, hiding pages from the state that had already taken years from him.

THE WORKS OPEN

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich opened a camp barrack to readers. The First Circle, Cancer Ward, and The Gulag Archipelago widened the witness.

EXILE, RETURN, DEATH

The books brought the Nobel Prize, exile from the Soviet Union, and eventual return. He died of heart failure near Moscow on August 3, 2008, aged 89.

WORTH / ACHIEVEMENT

Worth: he made a hidden machinery of fear impossible to unknow. The empire could hide prisoners; it could not unwrite the testimony.

Sources: Britannica; Nobel Prize; The Guardian; Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn Center.