

# **Fear and Misery of the Third Reich**

**(1938)**

**by Bertolt Brecht**



***Liberated from  
capitalist control  
to educate the masses  
by  
Socialist Stories***

*Characters:*

- |    |                     |    |                  |
|----|---------------------|----|------------------|
| 1  | TWO SS OFFICERS     | 13 | ANNOUNCER        |
| 2  | MAN                 |    | TWO MALE WORKERS |
|    | WOMAN               |    | WOMAN WORKER     |
| 3  | SA MAN              |    | GENTLEMAN        |
|    | COOK                |    | SA MAN           |
|    | MAIDSERVANT         | 14 | WOMAN            |
|    | CHAUFFEUR           |    | SA MEN           |
|    | WORKER              |    | CHILD            |
| 4  | BRÜHL               |    | WORKER           |
|    | DIEVENBACH          |    | YOUNG WOMAN      |
|    | LOHMANN             | 15 | MAN              |
|    | JEHOVAH'S WITNESS   |    | WIFE             |
|    | SS MAN              |    | RELEASED MAN     |
| 5  | SS MAN              | 16 | OLD WOMAN        |
|    | DETAINEE            |    | YOUNG WOMAN      |
|    | SS OFFICER          |    | TWO SA MEN       |
| 6  | JUDGE               | 17 | TWO BAKERS       |
|    | INSPECTOR           | 18 | FARMER           |
|    | PROSECUTOR          |    | FARMER'S WIFE    |
|    | USHER               | 19 | PETIT-BOURGEOIS  |
|    | MAIDSERVANT         |    | TWO WOMEN        |
|    | SENIOR JUDGE        |    | YOUNG FELLOW     |
| 7  | TWO PATIENTS        |    | DAIRYWOMAN       |
|    | SURGEON             |    | BUTCHER'S WIFE   |
|    | SISTER              | 20 | DYING MAN        |
|    | THREE ASSISTANTS    |    | WIFE             |
|    | NURSES              |    | SON              |
| 8  | X AND Y, SCIENTISTS |    | PASTOR           |
| 9  | WOMAN               | 21 | FIVE BOYS        |
|    | HUSBAND             |    | SCHARFÜHRER      |
| 10 | MAIDSERVANT         | 22 | TWO BOYS         |
|    | MAN                 | 23 | NEIGHBOUR        |
|    | WIFE                |    | MAN              |
|    | BOY                 |    | WIFE             |
| 11 | DAUGHTER            | 24 | WOMAN            |
|    | MOTHER              |    | TWO WORKERS      |
| 12 | STUDENT             |    |                  |
|    | YOUNG WORKER        |    |                  |
|    | GROUP LEADER        |    |                  |

When He had ruled five years, and they informed us  
That He who claimed to have been sent by God  
Was ready for His promised war, the steelworks  
Had forged tank, gun and warship, and there waited  
Within His hangers aircraft in so great a number  
That they, leaving the earth at His command  
Would darken all the heavens, then we became determined  
To see what sort of nation, formed from what sort of  
people  
In what condition, what sort of thoughts thinking  
He would be calling to His colours. We staged a march-  
past.

See, now they come towards us  
A motley sight rewards us  
Their banners go before.  
To show how straight their course is  
They carry crooked crosses  
Which double-cross the poor.

Some march along like dummies  
Others crawl on their tummies  
Towards the war He's planned.  
One hears no lamentation  
No murmurs of vexation  
One only hears the band.

With wives and kids arriving  
Five years they've been surviving.  
Five more is more than they'll last.  
A ramshackle collection  
They parade for our inspection  
As they come marching past.

## One big family

First the SS approaches.  
 Blown up with beer and speeches  
 They're in a kind of daze.  
 Their aim is a People imperious  
 Respected and powerful and serious –  
 Above all, one that obeys.

*The night of January 30th, 1933. Two SS officers lurching down the street.*

THE FIRST: Top dogs, that's us. That torchlight procession, impressive, what? Broke one moment, next day running the government. Rags to riches in a single day.

*They make water.*

THE SECOND: And now it'll be a united nation. I'm expecting the German people to have an unprecedented moral revival.

THE FIRST: Wait till we've coaxed German Man out from among all those filthy subhumans. Hey, what part of Berlin is this? Not a flag showing.

THE SECOND: We've come the wrong way.

THE FIRST: A horrible sight.

THE SECOND: Lot of crooks round here.

THE FIRST: Think it could be dangerous?

THE SECOND: Decent comrades don't live in such slums.

THE FIRST: Not a light to be seen either.

THE SECOND: Nobody at home.

THE FIRST: That lot are. Catch them coming along to watch the birth of the Third Reich. We'd best cover our rear.

*Staggering, they set off again, the first following the second.*

THE FIRST: Isn't this the bit by the canal?

THE SECOND: Don't ask me.

THE FIRST: Over by the corner's where we cleaned up a bunch of Marxists. Afterwards they said it was a Catholic youth club. Pack of lies. Not one of them was wearing a collar.

THE SECOND: Think he'll really make us a united nation?

THE FIRST: He'll make anything.

*He stops, freezes and listens. Somewhere a window has been opened.*

THE SECOND: Wozzat?

*He pushes forward the safety catch on his revolver. An old man in a nightshirt leans out of the window and is heard softly calling 'Emma, are you there?'*

THE SECOND: That's them!

*He rushes round like a maniac, and starts shooting in every direction.*

THE FIRST bellows: Help!

*Behind a window opposite the one where the old man is still standing a terrible cry is heard. Someone has been hit.*

## 2

## A case of betrayal

The next to appear are the traitors  
 Who've given away their neighbours.  
 They know that people know.  
 If only the street would forget them!  
 They could sleep if their conscience would let them  
 But there's so far still to go.

*Breslau 1933. Lower-middle-class flat. A man and a woman are standing by the door listening. They are very pale.*

THE WOMAN: They've got to the ground floor.

THE MAN: Not quite.

THE WOMAN: They've smashed the banisters. He'd already passed out when they dragged him out of his flat.

THE MAN: I simply said the sound of foreign broadcasts didn't come from here.

THE WOMAN: That wasn't all you said.

THE MAN: I said nothing more than that.

THE WOMAN: Don't look at me that way. If you said nothing more, then you said nothing more.

THE MAN: That's the point.

THE WOMAN: Why not go round to the police and make a statement saying nobody called there on Saturday?

*Pause.*

THE MAN: Catch me going to the police. It was inhuman, the way they were treating him.

THE WOMAN: He asked for it. What's he want to meddle in politics for?

THE MAN: They didn't have to rip his jacket though. Our sort isn't that well off for clothes.

THE WOMAN: What's a jacket more or less?

THE MAN: They didn't have to rip it.

### 3

## The chalk cross

Here come the brown storm troopers  
That keen-eyed squad of snoopers  
To check where each man stands  
Their job's to put the boot in  
Then hang around saluting  
With bloodstained empty hands.

*Berlin 1933. Kitchen of a gentleman's house. The SA man, the cook, the maidservant, the chauffeur.*

THE MAIDSERVANT: Did they really only give you half an hour off?

THE SA MAN: Night exercise.

THE COOK: What are all these exercises about?

THE SA MAN: That's an official secret.

THE COOK: Is there a raid on?

THE SA MAN: Like to know, wouldn't you? None of you is going to find out from me. Wild horses wouldn't drag it from me.

THE MAIDSERVANT: So you got to go all the way out to Reinickendorf?

THE SA MAN: Reinickendorf or Rummelsburg or might be Lichtenfelde, why not eh?

THE MAIDSERVANT *somewhat confused*: Won't you have a bit to eat before going off?

THE SA MAN: If you twist my arm. Bring on the field kitchen. *The cook brings in a tray.*

No, you don't catch us talking. Always take the enemy by surprise. Zoom in from an unexpected direction. Look at the way the Führer prepares one of his coups. Like trying to see through a brick wall. No way of telling beforehand. For all I know he can't even tell himself. And then wham! — like that. It's amazing what happens. That's what makes people so frightened of us. *He has tucked in his napkin. With knife and fork poised he enquires*: How about if the gentry suddenly pop in, Anna? Me sitting here with a mouth full of sauce. *Exaggerating as though his mouth was full*: Heil Hitler!

THE MAIDSERVANT: Oh, they'll ring for the car first, won't they, Mr Francke?

THE CHAUFFEUR: What d'you say? Oh, of course.

*Pacified, the SA man starts turning his attention to the tray.*

THE MAIDSERVANT *sitting down beside him*: Don't you feel tired?

THE SA MAN: Bet your life.

THE MAIDSERVANT: But you've got Friday off, haven't you?

THE SA MAN *nods*: If nothing crops up.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Listen. Getting your watch mended was four marks fifty.

THE SA MAN: A bloody scandal.

THE MAIDSERVANT: The watch itself only cost 12 marks.

THE SA MAN: Is that assistant at the hardware shop still as saucy as ever?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Christ alive.

THE SA MAN: You only got to tell me.

THE MAIDSERVANT: I tell you everything anyway. Wearing your new boots are you?

THE SA MAN *not interested*: Yes, what about it?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Minna, you seen Theo's new boots yet?

THE COOK: No.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Let's have a look, then. That's what they're giving them now.

*The SA man, his mouth full, stretches out his leg to be inspected.*

Lovely, aren't they?

*The SA man looks around, seeking something.*

THE COOK: Something missing?

THE SA MAN: Bit dry here.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Like some beer, love? I'll get it.

*She hurries out.*

THE COOK: She'd run her legs off for you, Herr Theo.

THE SA MAN: Yeh, I always do okay. Wham, like that.

THE COOK: You men take a lot for granted, don't you?

THE SA MAN: That's what women want. *Seeing the cook lift a heavy pot.* What are you breaking your back for? Don't you bother, that's my job. *He carries the pot for her.*

THE COOK: That's real good of you. You're always finding things to do for me. Pity other people aren't so considerate. *With a look at the chauffeur.*

THE SA MAN: Don't have to make a song and dance of it. We're glad to help.

*There's a knock at the kitchen door.*

THE COOK: That'll be my brother. He's bringing a valve for the wireless. *She admits her brother, a worker.* My brother.

THE SA MAN *and* THE CHAUFFEUR: Heil Hitler!

*The worker mumbles something that could be taken for 'Heil Hitler' at a pinch.*

THE COOK: Got the valve, have you?

THE WORKER: Yes.

THE COOK: Want to put it in right away?

*The two go out.*

THE SA MAN: What's that fellow do?

THE CHAUFFEUR: Out of a job.

THE SA MAN: Come here often?



THE CHAUFFEUR *shrugging his shoulders*: I'm not here that much.

THE SA MAN: Anyhow the old girl's a hundred per cent for Germany.

THE CHAUFFEUR: You bet.

THE SA MAN: But that wouldn't stop her brother being something quite different.

THE CHAUFFEUR: Got any definite reason to suspect him?

THE SA MAN: Me? No. Never. I never suspect anyone. You suspect somebody, see, and it's the same as being sure, almost. And then the fur will fly.

THE CHAUFFEUR *murmurs*: Wham, like that.

THE SA MAN: That's right. *Leaning back, with one eye shut*: Could you understand what he was mumbling? *He imitates the worker's greeting*: Might have been 'Heil Hitler'. Might not. Me and that lot's old pals.

*He gives a resounding laugh. The cook and the worker return. She sets food before him.*

THE COOK: My brother's that clever with the wireless. And yet he doesn't care a bit about listening to it. If I'd the time I'd always be putting it on. *To the worker*: And you've got more time than you know what to do with, Franz.

THE SA MAN: What's that? Got a wireless and never puts the thing on?

THE WORKER: Bit of music sometimes.

THE COOK: And to think he made himself that smashing set out of twice nothing.

THE SA MAN: How many valves you got then?

THE WORKER *with a challenging stare*: Four.

THE SA MAN: Well, well, no accounting for taste. *To chauffeur*: Is there?

*Maid servant comes back with the beer.*

THE MAIDSERVANT: Ice cold.

THE SA MAN *putting his hand on hers in a friendly way*: You're puffed, girl. No call to rush like that, I wouldn't have minded waiting.

*She pours the bottle out for him.*

THE MAIDSERVANT: Doesn't matter. *Shakes hands with the*

*worker*: Did you bring the valve? Fancy walking all that way here. *To the SA man*: He lives out in Moabit.

THE SA MAN: Hey, where's my beer got to? Somebody's drunk my beer. *To the chauffeur*: Was it you drunk my beer?

THE CHAUFFEUR: No, certainly not. What d'you say that for? Has your beer gone?

THE MAIDSERVANT: But I poured it out for you.

THE SA MAN *to the cook*: You swigged my beer, you did. *Gives a resounding laugh*. Keep your hair on. Little trick they teach you in our squad. How to knock back a beer without being seen or heard. *To the worker*: Did you want to say something?

THE WORKER: That trick's got whiskers.

THE SA MAN: Let's see how you do it then. *He pours him a beer from the bottle*.

THE WORKER: Right. Here I have one beer. *He raises his glass*. And now for the trick. *Calmly and appreciatively he drinks the beer*.

THE COOK: But we all saw you.

THE WORKER *wiping his mouth*: Did you? Then I must have done it wrong.

*The chauffeur laughs aloud*.

THE SA MAN: What's so funny about that?

THE WORKER: You couldn't have done it any different. How did you do it, then?

THE SA MAN: How can I show you when you've drunk up all my beer?

THE WORKER: Of course. That's right. You can't do that trick without beer. D'you know another trick? You people surely know more than one trick.

THE SA MAN: What d'you mean, 'you people'?

THE WORKER: You young fellows.

THE SA MAN: Oh.

THE MAIDSERVANT: But Theo, Mr Lincke was only joking.

THE WORKER *thinks he had better be conciliatory*: Don't mind, do you?

THE COOK: I'll get you another beer.

THE SA MAN: No call for that. I washed my food down all right.

THE COOK: Herr Theo can take a joke.

THE SA MAN *to the worker*: Why not sit down? We won't bite your head off.

*The worker sits down.*

Live and let live. And a joke now and then. Why not? Public opinion, that's the one thing we're really strict about.

THE COOK: A good thing you are.

THE WORKER: And how's public opinion these days?

THE SA MAN: Public opinion these days is fine. You with me there?

THE WORKER: Oh yes. It's just that nobody tells anyone what he thinks.

THE SA MAN: Nobody tells anyone? What d'you mean? They tell me all right.

THE WORKER: Really?

THE SA MAN: Well of course they're not going to come along and tell you all their thoughts. You go to them.

THE WORKER: Where?

THE SA MAN: To the public welfare for instance. In the mornings we'll be at the public welfare.

THE WORKER: That's right, now and again you hear somebody grumbling there.

THE SA MAN: You see?

THE WORKER: But that way all you can do is catch them once, then they know you. And after that they'll clam up again.

THE SA MAN: Why should they know me? Shall I show you why they don't? Interested in tricks, aren't you? No reason why I shouldn't show you one, we've got plenty. I always say if they only realised what a lot we've got up our sleeve, and how they'll never survive whatever happens, then perhaps they'd pack it in.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Go on, Theo, tell them how you do it.

THE SA MAN: Right. Let's suppose we're at the public welfare in the Münzstrasse. Let's say you - *looking at the worker* - are in the line ahead of me. But I got to make a few preparations first. *He goes out.*

THE WORKER *winking at the chauffeur*: So now we're getting a chance to see how they do it.

THE COOK: They're going to smell out all the Marxists because they got to be stopped disrupting everything.

THE WORKER: Is that it?

*The SA man comes back.*

THE SA MAN: I'd be in civvies of course. *To the worker*: Okay, start grumbling.

THE WORKER: What about?

THE SA MAN: Go on, you've got something on your chest. Your lot always have.

THE WORKER: Me? No.

THE SA MAN: You're a tough guy, aren't you? Don't tell me you think everything's a hundred per cent.

THE WORKER: Why not?

THE SA MAN: All right, let's call it off. If you won't play the whole thing's off.

THE WORKER: All right then. I'll shoot my mouth off for you. These buggers keep you hanging about as if we'd all the time in the world. Two hours it took me to get here from Rummelsburg.

THE SA MAN: What the hell. Don't tell me the distance from Rummelsburg to the Münzstrasse is any further under Hitler than it was under that racketeering Republic. Come on, you can do better than that.

THE COOK: It's only play acting, Franz, we all know what you say won't be your real opinions.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Don't you see you're just acting a grumbler? Theo won't take it amiss, you can depend on it. He just wants to show us something.

THE WORKER: Right. In that case I'll say. The SA looks very fine, but I think it's shit. Give me the Maxists and the Jews.

THE COOK: Franz! Really!

THE MAIDSERVANT: How can you say that, Mr Lincke?

THE SA MAN *laughing*: For Christ sake! I'd just turn you over to the nearest cop. Not got much imagination, have you? Look, you've got to say something you might be able to wriggle out of. Sort of thing you'd hear in real life.

THE WORKER: All right, then you'll have to give me a hand and provoke me.

THE SA MAN: That went out years ago. Suppose I said 'Our Führer's the greatest man there's ever been, greater than Jesus Christ and Napoleon rolled into one,' all you'd say was 'You bet he is.' So I'd best take the other road and say: 'They're a big-mouthed lot. You know the one about Goebbels and the two fleas? Well, the two fleas had a bet who could get from one side of his mouth to the other quickest. The winner was the one went round the back of his head. It wasn't so far that way.'

THE CHAUFFEUR: Ha.

*All laugh.*

THE SA MAN *to the worker*: Now it's your turn to make a crack.

THE WORKER: I can't cap a story like that bang off. Telling the joke wouldn't stop you being an informer.

THE MAIDSERVANT: He's right, Theo.

THE SA MAN: You're a right bunch of turds. Make me sick, you do. Not a bloody soul got the guts to open his mouth.

THE WORKER: Is that what you really think, or is it what you say at the public welfare?

THE SA MAN: I say it at the public welfare too.

THE WORKER: In that case what I say at the public welfare is Look before you leap. I'm a coward. I don't carry a gun.

THE SA MAN: Right, brother, if you're going to be so careful about looking, let me tell you you can look and look, then all of a sudden you're in the voluntary labour service.

THE WORKER: And if you don't look?

THE SA MAN: Then you'll be in it just the same. Sure. It's voluntary, see? Voluntary's good, don't you think?

THE WORKER: That's where it might be possible for some daring fellow to make a joke or two about the Voluntary Labour Service, suppose both of you were standing at the Public Welfare and you gave him one of those looks with your blue eyes. I wonder what he could say. Maybe: another fifteen went off yesterday. Funny how they get them to do it, when you think it's all voluntary and folk are paid no more for doing something than for doing nothing

though they must need to eat more. Then I heard the one about Dr Ley and the cat and of course I saw the whole thing. You know that story?

THE SA MAN: No, we don't.

THE WORKER: Well, Dr Ley went on this little Strength Through Joy trip, strictly on business, and he met one of those former Weimar party bosses – I'm not up in all their names, anyway it might have been in a concentration camp though Dr Ley's got much too much sense to visit one of those – and the old boss asked him how'd he get the workers to swallow all the things they usedn't to put up with at any price. Dr Ley pointed to a cat lying in the sun and said: suppose you wanted to give that cat a mouthful of mustard and make her swallow it whether she wanted or not. How would you do it? Boss takes the mustard and smears it over the cat's chops; of course it spits it back in his face, no question of swallowing, just a lot of bloody scratches. No, old boy, says Dr Ley in his endearing way, you got the wrong approach. Now watch me. He takes the mustard with a practised follow-through and sticks it abracadabra up the wretched beast's arsehole. *To the ladies:* Excuse my French, but that's part of the story. – Numbed and stunned by the frightful pain, cat instantly sets to licking out the lot. There you are, my dear fellow, says the triumphant Dr Ley, she's eating it. And voluntarily at that! *They laugh.*

THE WORKER: Yes, it's very funny.

THE SA MAN: That's got things going. Voluntary Labour Service, that's a favourite subject. Trouble is: nobody bothers to dig his toes in. Oh, they can make us eat shit and we'll still say thank you for it.

THE WORKER: I'm not so sure about that. There am I the other day on the Alexanderplatz wondering whether to volunteer for the Voluntary Labour Service spontaneous-like or wait till they shove me in. Over from the grocer's on the corner comes a skinny little woman, must be some proletarian's wife. Half a mo, says I, what are the proletarians doing in the Third Reich when we've got national unity and even Baron Thyssen is in it? No, says

she, not when they've gone and put up the price of marge. From fifty pfennigs to one mark. You trying to tell me that's national unity? Better mind out, ma, says I, what you're saying to me, I'm patriotic to the backbone. All bones and no meat, says she, and chaff in the bread. She was that worked up. I just stand there mumbling: best get butter then. It's better for you. Mustn't skimp on your food, cause that saps the people's strength and we can't afford that what with so many enemies encircling us even in the top civil service . . . we been warned. No, says she, we're all of us Nazis so long as we got breath in our bodies, what mayn't be long now in view of the war menace. Only the other day I got to offer my best sofa to the Winter Aid, says she, cause I hear Goering's having to sleep on the floor he's that worried about our raw materials, and in the office they say they'd rather have a piano - you know, for Strength Through Joy. And no proper flour to be had. I takes my sofa away from the Winter Aid People and goes to the second-hand dealer round the corner, I been meaning to buy half a pound of butter for some time. And at the dairy they tell me: no butter today, comrade, would you like some guns? I say, give me, says she. I say: come on what d'you want guns for, ma? On an empty stomach? No, says she, if I'm going to be hungry they should be shot, the whole lot of them starting with Hitler at the top . . . Come on, says I, come on, exclaims I appalled . . . With Hitler at the top we'll conquer France, says she. Now we're getting our petrol from wool. And the wool? says I. The wool, says she: these days that's made from petrol. Wool's another thing we need. Any time a bit of good stuff from the old days reaches the Winter Aid the lot that run the place grab it for themselves, says she. If Hitler only knew, says they, but he knows nothing the poor lamb, never went to secondary school they say. I was struck dumb by so much subversiveness. You just stay here, young lady, says I, I got to make a call at police headquarters. But when I come back with an officer what d'you you think, she's cleared off.

*Stops play-acting.* What d'you say to that, eh?

THE SA MAN *still acting:* Me? What do I say? Well, I might

give a reproachful look. You went straight round to the police, I might say. Can't risk talking freely when you're around.

THE WORKER: I should think not. Not with me. You confide in me, you'll be done. I know my duty as a comrade: any time my own mother mutters something to me about the price of margarine or something I go straight to the local SA office. I'll denounce my own brother for grumbling about the Voluntary Labour Service. As for my girl, when she tells me 'Heil Hitler' she's got pregnant at a work camp then I have them bring her in: we can't have abortions because if we made exceptions for our nearest and dearest the Third Reich would run out of manpower, and the Third Reich's what we love best. — Was that more like it? Did I act all right?

THE SA MAN: I guess that'll do. *Goes on acting.* You'll be okay, go and draw your benefit, we've all understood, eh brothers? But you can count on me, my friend, 'nuff said, mum's the word. *He slaps him on the shoulder.* No longer acting: Right, then in you go into the office and they'll pick you up bang off.

THE WORKER: What, without you leaving the line and following me in?

THE SA MAN: Yeh.

THE WORKER: And without you giving someone a wink, which might look fishy?

THE SA MAN: Without me winking.

THE WORKER: How's it done then?

THE SA MAN: Ha, you'd like to know that trick. Well, stand up, and show us your back. *He turns him round by the shoulders, so that everyone can see his back.* Then to the maidservant: Seen it?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Look, he's got a white cross on it.

THE COOK: Right between his shoulders.

THE CHAUFFEUR: So he has.

THE SA MAN: And how did he get it? *Shows the palm of his hand.* See, just a little white chalk cross and there's its impression large as life.

*The worker takes off his jacket and looks at the cross.*



THE WORKER: Nice work.

THE SA MAN: Not bad, eh? I always have my chalk on me. Ah, you have to use your loaf, things don't always go according to the book. *With satisfaction*: Well, so it's off to Reinickendorf. *Corrects himself*: That's where my aunt lives, you know. You lot don't seem very enthusiastic. *To the maidservant*: What are you gawping like that for, Anna? Missed the whole point of the trick, I suppose?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Of course not. Think I'm silly or something?

THE SA MAN *as if the whole joke has gone sour, stretches his hand out to her*: Wipe it off.

*She washes his hand with a rag.*

THE COOK: You've got to use those sort of methods so long as they keep on trying to undermine everything our Führer has built up and what makes other people so envious of us.

THE CHAUFFEUR: What was that? Oh yes, quite so. *Looks at his watch*. Well, time to wash the car again. Heil Hitler!  
*Exit.*

THE SA MAN: What kind of a fellow's that?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Keeps himself to himself. Not a bit political.

THE WORKER: Well, Minna, I'd better be off. No hard feelings about the beer, eh? And let me say I'm surer than ever that no one's going to complain about the Third Reich and get away with it. That's set my mind at rest. Me, I don't ever come across that sort of subversive element. I'd gladly confront them if I did. Only I'm not quite so quick to the punch as you. *Clearly and distinctly*: All right, Minna, thanks a lot and Heil Hitler!

THE OTHERS: Heil Hitler!

THE SA MAN: Take a tip from me and don't be quite so innocent. It attracts attention. No call to have to watch your mouth with me, I can take a joke now and again. All right: Heil Hitler!

*The worker goes.*

THE SA MAN: Bit sudden the way those two cleared out. Something's put ants in their pants. I shouldn't have said

that about Reinickendorf. They're waiting to pounce on that sort of thing.

THE MAIDSERVANT: There's something else I wanted to ask you, Theo.

THE SA MAN: Fire away, any time.

THE COOK: I'm off to put out the laundry. I was young once too. *Exit.*

THE SA MAN: What is it?

THE MAIDSERVANT: But I shan't ask unless I can see you won't mind; otherwise I'll say nothing.

THE SA MAN: Spit it out, then.

THE MAIDSERVANT: It's just that . . . I don't like saying . . . well, I need 20 marks from your account.

THE SA MAN: Twenty marks?

THE MAIDSERVANT: There you are, you *do* mind.

THE SA MAN: Twenty marks out of our savings account, can't expect me to give three cheers. What do you want it for?

THE MAIDSERVANT: I'd rather not say.

THE SA MAN: So. You're not saying. That's a laugh.

THE MAIDSERVANT: I know you won't agree with me, Theo, so I'd sooner not give my reasons yet awhile.

THE SA MAN: Well, if you don't trust me . . .

THE MAIDSERVANT: Of course I trust you.

THE SA MAN: So you want to give up having a joint savings account?

THE MAIDSERVANT: How can you say that? If I take out twenty marks I'll still have ninety-seven marks left.

THE SA MAN: No need to do sums for my benefit. I know how much there is. I just think you're wanting to break it off, probably because you're flirting with someone else.

Perhaps you'll be wanting to check our statement too.

THE MAIDSERVANT: I'm not flirting with anyone else.

THE SA MAN: Then tell me what it's for.

THE MAIDSERVANT: You don't want to let me have it.

THE SA MAN: How am I to tell it isn't for something wrong?

THE MAIDSERVANT: It's not anything wrong, and if I didn't need it I wouldn't call for it, you must know that.

THE SA MAN: I don't know nothing. All I know is the whole business strikes me as rather fishy. Why should you

suddenly need twenty marks? It's quite a bit of money. You pregnant?

THE MAIDSERVANT: No.

THE SA MAN: Sure?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Yes.

THE SA MAN: If I thought for a minute you were planning anything illegal, if I caught a whiff of that kind of thing, I'd be down like a ton of bricks, let me tell you. You might just have heard that any interference with our burgeoning fruit is the worst crime you can commit. If the German people stopped multiplying itself it would be all up with our historic mission.

THE MAIDSERVANT: But Theo, I don't know what you're talking about. It's nothing like that, I'd have told you if it was because you'd be involved too. But if that's what you're thinking then let me tell you. It's just I want to help Frieda buy a winter coat.

THE SA MAN: And why can't your sister buy her coats for herself?

THE MAIDSERVANT: How could she on her disability pension, it's twenty-six marks eighty a month.

THE SA MAN: What about our Winter Aid? But that's just it, you've no confidence in our National Socialist state. I can tell that anyway from the sort of conversations that go on in this kitchen. Do you think I didn't see what a long face you pulled at my experiment?

THE MAIDSERVANT: What do you mean by a long face?

THE SA MAN: You pulled one all right. Just like our friends who cleared out so suddenly.

THE MAIDSERVANT: If you really want to know what I think, I don't like that kind of thing.

THE SA MAN: And what is it you don't like, may I ask?

THE MAIDSERVANT: The way you catch those poor down-and-outs by dressing up and playing tricks and all that. My father's unemployed too.

THE SA MAN: Ha, that's all I needed to hear. As if talking to that fellow Lincke hadn't already set me thinking.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Do you mean to say you're going to nail

him for what he did just to please you and with all of us egging him on?

THE SA MAN: I'm not saying nothing. As I already told you. And if you've anything against what I'm doing as part of my duty then let me say just look in *Mein Kampf* and you'll see how the Führer himself didn't think it beneath him to test the people's attitude of mind, and it was actually his job for a while when he was in the army and it was all for Germany and the consequences were tremendously important.

THE MAIDSERVANT: If that's your line, Theo, then I'd just like to know if I can have the twenty marks. That's all.

THE SA MAN: Then all I can say to you is I'm not in the mood to have anything taken off me.

THE MAIDSERVANT: What do you mean, taken off you? Whose money is it, yours or mine?

THE SA MAN: That's a nice way to be speaking about our joint money all of a sudden. I suppose that's why we purged the Jews from the life of our nation, so we could have our own kith and kin suck our blood instead?

THE MAIDSERVANT: How can you say things like that on account of twenty marks?

THE SA MAN: I've plenty of expenses. My boots alone set me back twenty-seven marks.

THE MAIDSERVANT: But weren't they issued to you?

THE SA MAN: That's what we thought. And that's why I took the better kind, the ones with gaiters. Then they demanded payment and we were stung.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Twenty-seven marks for boots? So what other expenses were there?

THE SA MAN: What d'you mean, other expenses?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Didn't you say you had lots of expenses?

THE SA MAN: Forgotten what they were. Anyway I'm not here to be cross-examined. Keep your hair on, I'm not going to swindle you. And as for the twenty marks I'll think it over.

THE MAIDSERVANT *weeping*: Theo, I just can't believe you'd tell me the money was all right and it wasn't true. Oh now I

don't know what to think. Surely there's twenty marks left in the savings bank out of all that money?

THE SA MAN *slapping her on the shoulder*: But nobody's suggesting for a minute that there's nothing left in our savings bank. Out of the question. You know you can rely on me. You trust something to me, it's like locking it in the safe. Well, decided to trust Theo again, have you?

*She weeps without replying.*

THE SA MAN: It's just nerves, you've been working too hard. Well, time I went off to that night exercise. I'll be coming for you on Friday, then. Heil Hitler! *Exit.*

*The maidservant tries to suppress her tears and walks distractedly up and down the kitchen. The cook comes back with a basket of linen.*

THE COOK: What's wrong? Had a quarrel? Theo's such a splendid boy. Pity there aren't more like him. Nothing serious, is it?

THE MAIDSERVANT *still weeping*: Minna, can't you go out to your brother's and tell him to watch out for himself?

THE COOK: What for?

THE MAIDSERVANT: Just watch out, I mean.

THE COOK: On account of tonight? You can't be serious. Theo would never do such a thing.

THE MAIDSERVANT: I don't know what to think any longer, Minna. He's changed so. They've completely ruined him. He's keeping bad company. Four years we've been going out together, and now it seems to me just as though . . . I even feel like asking you to look at my shoulder and see if there's a white cross on it.

## 4

## Peat-bog soldiers

With storm troopers parading  
 These men carry on debating  
 What Lenin and Kautsky meant  
 Till, clutching the tomes they've cited

They're forcibly united  
By joint imprisonment.

*Esterwegen concentration camp, 1934. Some prisoners are mixing cement.*

BRÜHL *softly to Dievenbach*: I'd steer clear of Lohmann; he talks.

DIEVENBACH *aloud*: Oi, Lohmann, here's Brühl saying I should steer clear of you; you talk.

BRÜHL: Bastard.

LOHMANN: That's good coming from you, you bloody Judas. Why did Karl get given solitary?

BRÜHL: Nothing to do with me. Was it me got cigarettes from God knows where?

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS: Look out.

*The SS sentry up on the embankment goes by.*

THE SS MAN: Someone was talking here. Who was it? *Nobody answers.* If that happens just once more it'll be solitary confinement for the lot of you, get me? Now sing!

*The prisoners sing verse 1 of the 'Song of the Peat-bog Soldiers'. The SS man moves on.*

PRISONERS:

See, whichever way one gazes  
Naught but boggy heath lies there.  
Not one bird his sweet voice raises  
In those oak trees gaunt and bare.  
We are the peat-bog soldiers  
With shovels on our shoulders  
We march.

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS: Why do you people carry on quarrelling even now?

DIEVENBACH: Don't you worry, Jehovah, you wouldn't understand. *Indicating Brühl*: Yesterday his party voted for Hitler's foreign policy in the Reichstag. And he - *indicating Lohmann* - thinks Hitler's foreign policy means war.

BRÜHL: Not with us around.

LOHMANN: Last war we had you were around all right.

BRÜHL: Anyway the German armed forces are too weak.

LOHMANN: Still, your lot did at least bring Hitler a battle-cruiser as part of the wedding deal.

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS to *Dievenbach*: What were you? Communist or Social-democrat?

DIEVENBACH: I kept outside all that.

LOHMANN: But you're inside now all right, inside a camp I mean.

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS: Look out.

*The SS man appears again. He watches them. Slowly Brühl starts singing the third verse of the 'Song of the Peat-bog Soldiers'. The SS man moves on.*

BRÜHL:

Back and forth the guards keep pacing  
Not a soul can get away.

Shots for those who try escaping  
Thick barbed wire for those who stay.

We are the peat-bog soldiers  
With shovels on our shoulders  
We march.

LOHMANN *hurls his shovel from him*: When I think I'm only in here because your lot sabotaged the united front I could bash your bloody brains out right now.

BRÜHL: Ha! 'Like your brother must I be/Or you'll turn and clobber me' - is that it? United front indeed. Softly softly catchee monkey: would have suited you nicely to sneak all our members away, wouldn't it?

LOHMANN: When you'd rather have Hitler sneak them away, like now. You traitors!

BRÜHL *furiously takes his shovel and brandishes it at Lohmann, who holds his own shovel at the ready*: I'll teach you something you won't forget!

THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS: Look out.

*He hastily starts singing the last verse of the 'Song of the Peat-bog Soldiers'. The SS man reappears and the others join in as they resume mixing their cement.*

We've no use for caterwauling.

Sunshine follows after rain.

One day soon you'll hear us calling:

Homeland, you are ours again.  
 And then we peat-bog soldiers  
 Will rise, throw back our shoulders  
 And march.

THE SS MAN: Which of you shouted 'Traitors'?

*Nobody answers.*

THE SS MAN: You people never learn, do you? *To Lohmann:*  
 Which?

*Lohmann stares at Brühl and says nothing.*

THE SS MAN *to Dievenbach:* Which?

*Dievenbach says nothing.*

THE SS MAN *to the Jehovah's Witness:* Which?

*The Jehovah's Witness says nothing.*

THE SS MAN *to Brühl:* Which?

*Brühl says nothing.*

THE SS MAN: I shall count up to five, then it'll be solitary  
 confinement for the whole lot of you till you turn blue.

*He waits for five seconds. They all stand in silence staring  
 straight ahead.*

THE SS MAN: So it's solitary.

## 5

## Servants of the people

The camps are run by warders  
 Narks, butchers and marauders –  
 The people's servants they  
 They'll crush you and assail you  
 And flog you and impale you  
 For negligible pay.

*Oranienburg concentration camp, 1934. A small yard  
 between the huts. In the darkness a sound of flogging. As it  
 gets light an SS man is seen flogging a detainee. An SS officer  
 stands in the background smoking; with his back to the scene.  
 Then he goes off.*



THE SS MAN *sits down on a barrel, exhausted: Work on.*

*The detainee rises from the ground and starts unsteadily cleaning the drains.*

Why can't you say no when they ask if you're a communist, you cunt? It means the lash for you and I have to stay in barracks. I'm so fucking tired. Why can't they give the job to Klapproth? He enjoys this sort of thing. Look, if that bastard comes round again – *he listens* – you're to take the whip and flog the ground hard as you can, right?

THE DETAINEE: Yes, sir.

THE SS MAN: But only because you buggers have flogged me out, right?

THE DETAINEE: Yes, sir.

THE SS MAN: Here he comes.

*Steps are heard outside, and the SS man points to the whip. The detainee picks it up and flogs the ground. This doesn't sound authentic, so the SS man idly points to a nearby basket which the detainee then flogs. The steps outside come to a stop. The SS man abruptly rises in some agitation, snatches the whip and begins beating the detainee.*

THE DETAINEE *softly*: Not my stomach.

*The SS man hits him on the bottom. The SS officer looks in.*

THE SS OFFICER: Flog his stomach.

*The SS man beats the detainee's stomach.*

## 6

### Judicial process

The judges follow limply.

They were told that justice is simply

What serves our People best.

They objected: how are we to know that?

But they'll soon be interpreting it so that

The whole people is under arrest.

*Augsburg 1934. Consultation room in a court building. A milky January morning can be seen through the window. A*

*spherical gas lamp is still burning. The district judge is just putting on his robes. There is a knock.*

THE JUDGE: Come in.

*Enter the police inspector.*

THE INSPECTOR: Good morning, your honour.

THE JUDGE: Good morning, Mr Tallinger. It's about the case of Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer. I must admit the whole affair is a bit beyond me.

THE INSPECTOR: ?

THE JUDGE: I understand from the file that the shop where the incident occurred – Arndt's the jeweller's – is a Jewish one?

THE INSPECTOR: ?

THE JUDGE: And presumably Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer are still members of Storm Troop 7?

*The inspector nods.*

THE JUDGE: Which means that the Troop saw no reason to discipline them?

*The inspector shakes his head.*

THE JUDGE: All the same, I take it the Troop must have instituted some kind of inquiry in view of the disturbance which the incident caused in the neighbourhood?

*The inspector shrugs his shoulders.*

THE JUDGE: I would appreciate it, Tallinger, if you would give me a brief summary before we go into court. Would you?

THE INSPECTOR *mechanically*: On 2 December 1933 at 0815 hours SA men Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer forced their way into Arndt's jewellers in the Schlettowstrasse and after a brief exchange of words wounded Mr Arndt age 54 on the head. The material damage amounted to a total of eleven thousand two hundred and thirty-four marks. Inquiries were instituted by the criminal investigation department on 7 December 1933 and led to . . .

THE JUDGE: Come on, Tallinger, that's all in the files. *He points irritably at the charge sheet, which consists of a single page.* This is the flimsiest and sloppiest made-out indictment I've ever seen, not that the last few months have been much of a picnic, let me tell you. But it does say that much.

I was hoping you might be able to tell me a bit about the background.

THE INSPECTOR: Yes, your honour.

THE JUDGE: Well, then?

THE INSPECTOR: There isn't any background to this case, your honour, so to speak.

THE JUDGE: Tallinger, are you trying to tell me it's all clear as daylight?

THE INSPECTOR *grinning*: Clear as daylight: no.

THE JUDGE: Various items of jewellery are alleged to have vanished in the course of the incident. Have they been recovered?

THE INSPECTOR: Not to my knowledge: no.

THE JUDGE: ?

THE INSPECTOR: Your honour, I've got a family.

THE JUDGE: So have I, Tallinger.

THE INSPECTOR: Yes, sir.

*Pause.*

THE INSPECTOR: This Arndt fellow is a Jew, you know.

THE JUDGE: So one would infer from the name.

THE INSPECTOR: Yes, sir. There's been a rumour for some time in the neighbourhood that there was a case of racial profanation.

THE JUDGE *begins to get a glimmer*: Indeed. Involving whom?

THE INSPECTOR: Arndt's daughter. She's nineteen and supposed to be pretty.

THE JUDGE: Was there any official follow-up?

THE INSPECTOR *reluctantly*: Well, no. The rumour died a natural death.

THE JUDGE: Who set it going?

THE INSPECTOR: The landlord of the building. A certain Mr von Mieh.

THE JUDGE: I suppose he wanted the Jewish shop out of his building?

THE INSPECTOR: That's what we thought. But then he seems to have changed his line.

THE JUDGE: At least that would explain why there was a certain amount of resentment against Arndt round there.

Leading these young people to act from a kind of upsurge of national feeling . . .

THE INSPECTOR *firmly*: I wouldn't say that, your honour.

THE JUDGE: What wouldn't you say?

THE INSPECTOR: That Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer will try to get much mileage out of the racial profanation business.

THE JUDGE: Why not?

THE INSPECTOR: As I told you, there hasn't been any official mention of the name of the Aryan involved. It could be anyone. Anywhere there's a bunch of Aryans you might find him, you get me? And where d'you find those bunches of Aryans? In other words the SA don't want this dragged up.

THE JUDGE *impatiently*: Why tell me about it, then?

THE INSPECTOR: Because you said you'd got a family. To stop you dragging it up. Any of the local witnesses might mention it.

THE JUDGE: I see. But I can't see much else.

THE INSPECTOR: The less the better, if you want my personal opinion.

THE JUDGE: It's easy for you to say that. I have to deliver a judgement.

THE INSPECTOR *vaguely*: That's right . . .

THE JUDGE: So we're left with a direct provocation on Arndt's part, or else there's no way of explaining what happened.

THE INSPECTOR: Just what I'd say myself, your honour.

THE JUDGE: Then how were those SA people provoked?

THE INSPECTOR: According to their statements: partly by Arndt himself and partly by some unemployed man he'd got in to sweep the snow. Apparently they were on their way to have a beer together and as they passed the shop there were Wagner the unemployed man and Arndt himself standing in the doorway and shouting vulgar terms of abuse at them.

THE JUDGE: I don't suppose they have any witnesses, have they?

THE INSPECTOR: Oh, they have. The landlord - you know,

von Miehl – said he was at the window and saw Wagner provoking the SA men. And Arndt's partner, a man called Stau, was round at Troop HQ the same afternoon and admitted in front of Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer that Arndt had always talked disparagingly about the SA, to him too.

THE JUDGE: Oh, so Arndt's got a partner? Aryan?

THE INSPECTOR: Aryan: what else? Can you really see him taking on a Jew as his front man?

THE JUDGE: But the partner wouldn't go and give evidence against him?

THE INSPECTOR *slyly*: Who's to say?

THE JUDGE *irritated*: What do you mean? There's no way the firm can claim damages if it can be proved that Arndt provoked Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer to assault him.

THE INSPECTOR: What makes you think Stau's interested in claiming damages?

THE JUDGE: I don't get you. Surely he's a partner?

THE INSPECTOR: That's it.

THE JUDGE: ?

THE INSPECTOR: We've found out – unofficially of course and off the record – that Stau's a regular visitor to Troop HQ. He used to be in the SA and may still be. Probably that's what made Arndt make him a partner. What's more, Stau's already been mixed up in a similar affair, where the SA dropped in on someone. They picked the wrong man that time and it took quite a bit of effort to get it all swept under the mat. Of course that's not to say that in our particular case Stau . . . Well, anyhow he's someone to be careful of. I hope you'll treat this as completely confidential, given what you said about your family earlier.

THE JUDGE *shaking his head*: I don't quite see how it can be in Mr Stau's interest for his business to lose more than eleven thousand marks.

THE INSPECTOR: Yes, the jewellery has disappeared. Anyhow Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer haven't got it. And they haven't fenced it either.

THE JUDGE: Indeed.

THE INSPECTOR: Stau naturally can't be expected to keep

Arndt on as his partner if Arndt can be shown to have acted in a provocative way. And any loss he has caused will have to be made up to Stau, see?

THE JUDGE: Yes, I do indeed see. *For a moment he looks thoughtfully at the inspector, who resumes his blank official expression.* Yes, then I suppose the long and the short of it will be that Arndt provoked the SA men. It seems that the fellow had made himself generally disliked. Didn't you tell me that the goings-on in his own family had already led the landlord to complain? Ah well, I know this shouldn't really be dragged up, but anyway we can take it that there will be relief in those quarters if he moves out shortly. Thank you very much, Tallinger, you've been a great help.

*The judge gives the inspector a cigar. The inspector leaves. In the doorway he meets the official prosecutor, who is just entering.*

THE PROSECUTOR *to the judge*: Can I have a word with you?

THE JUDGE *as he peels an apple for his breakfast*: You can indeed.

THE PROSECUTOR: It's about the case of Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer.

THE JUDGE *otherwise occupied*: Yes?

THE PROSECUTOR: It seems quite a straightforward case on the face of it . . .

THE JUDGE: Right. I really don't see why your department decided to prosecute, if you don't mind my saying so.

THE PROSECUTOR: What do you mean? The case has caused a deplorable stir in the neighbourhood. Even members of the party have thought it ought to be cleared up.

THE JUDGE: I simply see it as a plain case of Jewish provocation, that's all.

THE PROSECUTOR: Oh, rubbish, Goll! Don't imagine our indictments can be dismissed so lightly just because they seem a bit tersely expressed these days. I could have guessed you'd blithely settle for the most obvious interpretation. Better not make a boob of this. It doesn't take long to get transferred to the Silesian backwoods. And it's not all that cosy there these days.

THE JUDGE *puzzled, stops eating his apple*: I don't understand

that one little bit. Are you seriously telling me you propose to let the Jew Arndt go free?

THE PROSECUTOR *expansively*: You bet I am. The fellow had no idea of provoking anyone. Are you suggesting that because he's Jewish he can't expect justice in the courts of the Third Reich? That's some pretty queer opinions you're venting there, Goll.

THE JUDGE *irritably*: I was venting no opinions whatever. I simply concluded that Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer were provoked.

THE PROSECUTOR: But can't you see it wasn't Arndt who provoked them but that unemployed fellow, what's his damn name, the one clearing the snow, yes, Wagner?

THE JUDGE: There's not one single word about that in your indictment, my dear Spitz.

THE PROSECUTOR: Of course not. It merely came to the attention of the Prosecutor's office that those SA men had made an assault on Arndt. Which meant that we were officially bound to take action. But if witness von Miehl should testify in court that Arndt wasn't in the street at all during the dispute, whereas that unemployed fellow, what's his damn name, yes, Wagner, was hurling insults at the SA, then it will have to be taken into account.

THE JUDGE *tumbling to earth*: Is that what von Miehl is supposed to be saying? But he's the landlord who wants to get Arndt out of his building. He's not going to give evidence for him.

THE PROSECUTOR: Come on, what have you got against von Miehl? Why shouldn't he tell the truth under oath? Perhaps you don't realise that, quite apart from the fact that he's in the SS, von Miehl has pretty good contacts in the Ministry of Justice? My advice to you, Goll old man, is to treat him as a man of honour.

THE JUDGE: That's what I'm doing. After all, you can't call it exactly dishonourable these days not to want a Jewish shop in one's building.

THE PROSECUTOR *generously*: If the fellow pays his rent . . .

THE JUDGE *diplomatically*: I believe he's supposed to have reported him already on another matter . . .

THE PROSECUTOR: So you're aware of that? But who told you it was in order to get the fellow out? Particularly as the complaint was withdrawn? That suggests something more like a particularly close understanding, wouldn't you say? My dear Goll, how can you be so naive?

THE JUDGE *now getting really annoyed*: My dear Spitz, it's not that simple. The partner I thought would want to cover him wants to report him, and the landlord who reported him wants to cover him. You have to know the ins and outs.

THE PROSECUTOR: What do we draw our pay for?

THE JUDGE: Shockingly mixed-up business. Have a Havana? *The prosecutor takes a Havana and they smoke in silence. Then the judge gloomily reflects.*

THE JUDGE: But suppose it's established in court that Arndt never provoked anybody, then he can go on and sue the SA for damages.

THE PROSECUTOR: To start with he can't sue the SA but only Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer, who haven't a penny – that's if he doesn't simply have to make do with that unemployed fellow, what's his damn name ... got it, Wagner. *With emphasis*: Secondly he may think twice before suing members of the SA.

THE JUDGE: Where is he at the moment?

THE PROSECUTOR: In hospital.

THE JUDGE: And Wagner?

THE PROSECUTOR: In a concentration camp.

THE JUDGE *with a certain relief*: Oh well, in those circumstances I don't suppose Arndt will be wanting to sue the SA. And Wagner won't be particularly keen to make a big thing of his innocence. But the SA aren't going to be all that pleased if the Jew gets off scot free.

THE PROSECUTOR: The SA will have proof in court that they were provoked. By the Jew or by the Marxist, it's all the same to them.

THE JUDGE *still dubious*: Not entirely. After all the dispute between the SA and the unemployed man did result in damage to the shop. Storm Troop 7 isn't altogether in the clear.



**THE PROSECUTOR:** Oh well, you can't have everything. You'll never be able to satisfy all parties. As for which you should aim to satisfy, that's a matter for your sense of patriotism, my dear Goll. All I can say is that patriotic circles – by which I mean the highest quarters of the SS – are looking to the German judiciary to show a bit more backbone.

**THE JUDGE** *with a deep sigh:* The process of law is getting a bit complicated these days, my dear Spitz, you must admit.

**THE PROSECUTOR:** Of course. But you have an excellent remark by our Minister of Justice to guide you. Justice is what serves the German people best.

**THE JUDGE** *apathetically:* Mm yes.

**THE PROSECUTOR:** Mustn't let it get you down, that's all. *He gets up.* So now you've got the background. Should be plain sailing. See you later, my dear Goll.

*He leaves. The judge is not at all happy. He stands by the window for a while. Then he leafs aimlessly through his papers. Finally he presses the bell. A court usher enters.*

**THE JUDGE:** Go and find Detective-Inspector Tallinger in the witnesses' room and bring him back here. Discreetly.

*Exit the usher. Then the inspector reappears.*

**THE JUDGE:** Tallinger, you nearly landed me in the cart with your idea of treating this as a case of provocation on Arndt's part. Apparently Mr von Miehl is all set to swear that it was Wagner the unemployed man who did the provoking and not Arndt.

**THE INSPECTOR** *giving nothing away:* So they say, your honour.

**THE JUDGE:** What's that mean: 'so they say'?

**THE INSPECTOR:** That Wagner shouted the offensive remarks.

**THE JUDGE:** Isn't it true?

**THE INSPECTOR** *offended:* Your honour, whether it's true or not it's not something we can . . .

**THE JUDGE** *firmly:* Listen to me, Detective-Inspector Tallinger. This is a German court you're in. Has Wagner admitted that or has he not?

**THE INSPECTOR:** Your honour, I didn't go to the concentration camp myself, if you want to know. The official report

of his deposition – Wagner's supposed to have got something wrong with his kidneys – says that he admitted it. It's only that . . .

THE JUDGE: There you are, he did admit it. It's only that what?

THE INSPECTOR: He served in the war and was wounded in the neck, and according to Stau, you know, Arndt's partner, he can't talk above a whisper. So how von Miehl could have heard him from the first floor hurling insults isn't entirely . . .

THE JUDGE: I imagine it will be said that you don't need a voice in order to tell someone to 'get stuffed', as they put it. You can do it with a simple gesture. It's my impression the Prosecutor's department want to provide the SA with some way out of that sort. More precisely, of that sort and no other.

THE INSPECTOR: Yes, your honour.

THE JUDGE: What is Arndt's statement?

THE INSPECTOR: That he had no part in it and just hurt his head falling down the stairs. That's all we can get out of him.

THE JUDGE: The fellow's probably quite innocent and got into it accidentally, like Pontius Pilate and the Creed.

THE INSPECTOR *gives up*: Yes, your honour.

THE JUDGE: And it should be good enough for the SA if their men get off.

THE INSPECTOR: Yes, your honour.

THE JUDGE: Don't stand there saying 'yes, your honour' like a damn metronome.

THE INSPECTOR: Yes, your honour.

THE JUDGE: What are you trying to tell me? Don't get on your high horse now, Tallinger. You must make allowances for my being a bit on edge. I realise you're an honest man. And when you advised me you must have had something at the back of your mind?

THE INSPECTOR *being a kindly soul, plunges in*: Hasn't it struck you that our deputy prosecutor might simply be after your job and is putting the skids under you, sir? That's what they're saying. – Look at it this way, your

honour: you find the Jew not guilty. He never provoked a soul. Wasn't around. Got his head bashed in by pure accident, some quarrel between a different lot of people. Then after a while, back he comes to the shop. No way Stau can prevent it. And the shop is about eleven thousand marks short. Stau will be just as hit by this loss, because now he can't claim the eleven thousand back from Arndt. So Stau, from what I know of his sort, is going to tackle the SA about his jewels. He can't approach them in person because being in partnership with a Jew counts as being sold out to Judah. But he'll have people who can. Then it will come out that the SA go pinching jewels in an upsurge of national feeling. You can guess for yourself how Storm Troop 7 is going to look at your verdict. And the man in the street won't understand anyway. Because how can it be possible for a Jew to win a case against the SA under the Third Reich?

*For some while there has been noise off. It now becomes quite loud.*

THE JUDGE: What's that shocking noise? Just a minute, Tallinger. *He rings. The usher comes in.* What's that din, man?

THE USHER: The courtroom's full. And now they're jammed so tight in the corridors that nobody can get through. And there are some people from the SA there who say they've got to get through because they've orders to attend.

*Exit the usher, while the judge just looks scared.*

THE INSPECTOR *continuing*: Those people are going to be a bit of a nuisance to you, you know. I'd advise you to concentrate on Arndt and not stir up the SA.

THE JUDGE *sits brokenly, holding his head in his hands. In a weary voice*: All right, Tallinger, I'll have to think it over.

THE INSPECTOR: That's the idea, your honour.

*He leaves. The judge gets up with difficulty and rings insistently. Enter the usher.*

THE JUDGE: Just go over and ask Judge Fey of the High Court if he'd mind looking in for a moment.

*The usher goes. Enter the judge's maidservant with his packed breakfast.*

THE MAIDSERVANT: You'll be forgetting your own head next, your honour. You're a terrible man. What did you forget this time? Try and think. The most important thing of all! *She hands him the packet.* Your breakfast! You'll be going off again and buying those rolls hot from the oven and next thing we'll have another stomach-ache like last week. Because you don't look after yourself properly.

THE JUDGE: That'll do, Marie.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Had a job getting through, I did. The whole building's full of brownshirts on account of the trial. But they'll get it hot and strong today, won't they, your honour? Like at the butcher's folk were saying 'good thing there's still some justice left'. Going and beating a business man up! Half the SA used to be criminals; it's common knowledge in the neighbourhood. If we didn't have justice they'd be making away with the cathedral. After the rings, they were; that Häberle's got a girl friend who was on the game till six months ago. And they attacked Wagner, him with the neck wound and no job, when he was shovelling snow with everyone looking on. They're quite open about it, just terrorising the neighbourhood, and if anybody says anything they lay for him and beat him senseless.

THE JUDGE: All right, Marie. Just run along now.

THE MAIDSERVANT: I told them in the butcher's: his honour will show them where they get off, right? All the decent folk are on your side, that's a fact, your honour. Only don't eat your breakfast too quickly, it might do you harm. It's so bad for the health, and now I'll be off and not hold you up, you'll have to be going into court, and don't get worked up in court or perhaps you'd better eat first, it'll only take a few minutes and they won't matter and you shouldn't eat when your stomach's all tensed up. Because you should take better care of yourself. Your health's your most precious possession, but now I'll be off, there's no need to tell you and I can see you're raring to get on with the case and I've got to go to the grocer's still.

*Exit the maidservant. Enter Judge Fey of the High Court, an elderly judge with whom the district judge is friends.*

THE SENIOR JUDGE: What's up?

THE JUDGE: I've got something I'd like to discuss with you if you've a moment. I'm sitting on a pretty ghastly case this morning.

THE SENIOR JUDGE *sitting down*: I know, the SA case.

THE JUDGE *stops pacing around*: How d'you know about that?

THE SENIOR JUDGE: It came up in discussion yesterday afternoon. A nasty business.

*The judge starts again nervously pacing up and down.*

THE JUDGE: What are they saying over your side?

THE SENIOR JUDGE: You aren't envied. *Intrigued*: What'll you do?

THE JUDGE: That's just what I'd like to know. I must say I didn't realise this case had become so famous.

THE SENIOR JUDGE *slightly amazed*: Indeed?

THE JUDGE: That partner is said to be a rather disagreeable customer.

THE SENIOR JUDGE: So I gather. Not that von Miehl is much of a humanitarian either.

THE JUDGE: Is anything known about him?

THE SENIOR JUDGE: Enough to go on with. He's got those sort of contacts.

*Pause.*

THE JUDGE: Very high ones?

THE SENIOR JUDGE: Very high.

*Pause.*

THE SENIOR JUDGE *cautiously*: Suppose you leave the Jew out of it and acquit Häberle, Schünt and Gaunitzer on the ground that the unemployed man provoked them before he dodged back into the shop, I imagine the SA might find that all right? Arndt won't sue the SA in any case.

THE JUDGE *anxiously*: There's Arndt's partner. He'll go to the SA and ask for his valuables back. And then, you know, Fey, I'll have the whole SA leadership gunning for me.

THE SENIOR JUDGE *after considering this argument, which apparently has taken him by surprise*: But suppose you don't leave the Jew out of it, then von Miehl will bring bigger guns to bear, to put it mildly. Perhaps you didn't realise he's being pressed by his bank? Arndt's his lifebelt.

THE JUDGE *appalled*: Pressed by his bank!

*There is a knock.*

THE SENIOR JUDGE: Come in!

*Enter the usher.*

THE USHER: Your honour, I really don't know what to do about keeping seats for the Chief State Prosecutor and President Schönling of the High Court. If only their honours would let one know in time.

THE SENIOR JUDGE *since the judge says nothing*: Clear two seats and don't interrupt us.

*Exit the usher.*

THE JUDGE: That's something I could have done without.

THE SENIOR JUDGE: Whatever happens, von Miehl can't afford to abandon Arndt and let him be ruined. He needs him.

THE JUDGE *crushed*: Someone he can milk.

THE SENIOR JUDGE: I said nothing of the sort, my dear Goll. And it seems to me quite extraordinary that you should imply I did. Let me make it crystal clear that I've not said one word against Mr von Miehl. I regret having to do so, Goll.

THE JUDGE *getting worked up*: But Fey, you can't take it that way. Not in view of our mutual relationship.

THE SENIOR JUDGE: What on earth do you mean, 'our mutual relationship'? I can't interfere in your cases. You have to choose for yourself whose toes you are going to tread on, the SA or the Ministry of Justice; either way it's your decision and nobody else's. These days everybody's his own best friend.

THE JUDGE: Of course I'm my own best friend. But what do I advise myself to do?

*He stands by the door, listening to the noise outside.*

THE SENIOR JUDGE: A bad business.

THE JUDGE *agitatedly*: I'll do anything, my God, can't you see my position? You've changed so. I'll give my judgement this way or that way, whatever way they want me to, but I've got to know first what they want me to do. If one doesn't know that, there's no justice left.

THE SENIOR JUDGE: I wouldn't go round shouting that there's no justice left if I were you, Goll.

THE JUDGE: Oh God, what have I said now? That's not what I meant. I just mean that with so many conflicting interests . . .

THE SENIOR JUDGE: There are no conflicting interests in the Third Reich.

THE JUDGE: Of course not. I wasn't saying there were. Don't keep weighing every single word of mine on your scales.

THE SENIOR JUDGE: Why shouldn't I? I am a judge.

THE JUDGE *who is breaking into a sweat*: But Fey, if every word uttered by every judge had to be weighed like that! I'm prepared to go over everything in the most careful and conscientious possible way, but I have to be told what kind of a decision will satisfy higher considerations. If I allow the Jew to have stayed inside the shop then I'll upset the landlord – I mean the partner; I'm getting muddled – and if the provocation came from the unemployed man then it'll be the landlord who – yes, but von Miehl would rather – Look, they can't pack me off to the backwoods in Silesia, I've got a hernia and I'm not getting embroiled with the SA, Fey, after all I've a family. It's easy for my wife to say I should just find out what actually happened. I'd wake up in hospital if nothing worse. Do I talk about assault? No, I'll talk about provocation. So what's wanted? I shan't condemn the SA of course but only the Jew or the unemployed man, only which of the two should I condemn? How do I decide between unemployed man and Jew or between partner and landlord. Whatever happens I'm not going to Silesia, Fey, I'd rather a concentration camp, the whole thing's impossible. Don't look at me like that. I'm not in the dock. I'm prepared to do absolutely anything.

THE SENIOR JUDGE *who has got to his feet*: Being prepared isn't enough, my dear fellow.

THE JUDGE: But how am I to make my decision?

THE SENIOR JUDGE: Usually a judge goes by what his conscience tells him, Judge Goll. Let that be your guide. It has been a pleasure.

THE JUDGE: Yes, of course: to the best of my heart and

conscience. But here and now; what's my choice to be, Fey? What?

*The senior judge has left. The judge looks wordlessly after him. The telephone rings.*

THE JUDGE *picks up the receiver*: Yes? – Emmy? – What have they put off? Our skittles session? – Who was it rang? – Priesnitz, the one who's just taken his finals? Where did he get the message? – What I'm talking about? I've got a judgement to deliver.

*He hangs up. The usher enters. The noise in the corridors becomes obtrusive.*

THE USHER: Häberle, Schünt, Gaunitzer, your honour.

THE JUDGE *collecting his papers*: One moment.

THE USHER: I've put the President of the High Court at the press table. He was quite happy about it. But the Chief State Prosecutor refused to take a seat among the witnesses. He wanted to be on the bench, I think. Then you'd have had to preside from the dock, your honour! *He laughs foolishly at his own joke.*

THE JUDGE: Whatever happens I'm not doing that.

THE USHER: This way out, your honour. But where's your folder got to with the indictment?

THE JUDGE *utterly confused*: Oh yes, I'll need that. Or I won't know who's being accused, will I? What the devil are we to do with the Chief State Prosecutor?

THE USHER: But your honour, that's your address book you've picked up. Here's the file.

*He pushes it under the judge's arm. Wiping the sweat off his face, the judge goes distractedly out.*

7

## Occupational disease

And as for the physicians  
 The State gives them positions  
 And pays them so much a piece.  
 Their job is to keep mending



The bits the police keep sending  
Then send it all back to the police.

*Berlin 1934. A ward in the Charité Hospital. A new patient has been brought in. Nurses are busy writing his name on the slate at the head of his bed. Two patients in neighbouring beds are talking.*

THE FIRST PATIENT: Know anything about him?

THE SECOND: I saw them bandaging him downstairs. He was on a stretcher quite close to me. He was still conscious then, but when I asked what he'd got he didn't answer. His whole body's one big wound.

THE FIRST: No need to ask then, was there?

THE SECOND: I didn't see till they started bandaging him.

ONE OF THE NURSES: Quiet please, it's the professor.

*Followed by a train of assistants and nurses the surgeon enters the ward. He stops by one of the beds and pontificates.*

THE SURGEON: Gentlemen, we have here a quite beautiful case showing how essential it is to ask questions and keep on searching for the deeper causes of the disease if medicine is not to degenerate into mere quackery. This patient has all the symptoms of neuralgia and for a considerable time he received the appropriate treatment. In fact however he suffers from Raynaud's Disease, which he contracted in the course of his job as a worker operating pneumatically powered tools; that is to say, gentlemen, an occupational disease. We have now begun treating him correctly. His case will show you what a mistake it is to treat the patient as a mere component of the clinic instead of asking where he has come from, how did he contract his disease and what he will be going back to once treatment is concluded. There are three things a good doctor has to be able to do. What are they? The first?

THE FIRST ASSISTANT: Ask questions.

THE SURGEON: The second?

THE SECOND ASSISTANT: Ask questions.

THE SURGEON: And the third?

THE THIRD ASSISTANT: Ask questions, sir.

THE SURGEON: Correct. Ask questions. Particularly concerning . . . ?

THE THIRD ASSISTANT: The social conditions, sir.

THE SURGEON: The great thing is never to be shy of looking into the patient's private life – often a regrettably depressing one. If someone is forced to follow some occupation that is bound in the long run to destroy his body, so that he dies in effect to avoid starving to death, one doesn't much like hearing about it and consequently doesn't ask.

*He and his followers move on to the new patient.*

What has this man got?

*The sister whispers in his ear.*

Oh, I see.

*He gives him a cursory examination with evident reluctance.*

*Dictates:* Contusions on the back and thighs. Open wounds on the abdomen. Further symptoms?

THE SISTER *reads out:* Blood in his urine.

THE SURGEON: Diagnosis on admission?

THE SISTER: Lesion to left kidney.

THE SURGEON: Get him X-rayed. *Starts to turn away.*

THE THIRD ASSISTANT *who has been taking down his medical history:* How was that incurred, sir?

THE SURGEON: What have they put?

THE SISTER: Falling downstairs, it says here.

THE SURGEON *dictating:* A fall down the stairs. Why are his hands tied that way, Sister?

THE SISTER: The patient has twice torn his dressings off, professor.

THE SURGEON: Why?

THE FIRST PATIENT *sotto voce:* Where has the patient come from and where is he going back to?

*All heads turn in his direction.*

THE SURGEON *clearing his throat:* If this patient seems disturbed give him morphine. *Moves on to the next bed:* Feeling better now? It won't be long before you're fit as a fiddle.

*He examines the patient's neck.*

ONE ASSISTANT *to another*: Worker. Brought in from Oranienburg.

THE OTHER ASSISTANT *grinning*: Another case of occupational disease, I suppose.

## 8

## The physicists

Enter the local Newtons  
Dressed up like bearded Teutons –  
Not one of them hook-nosed.  
Their science will end up barbarian  
For they'll get an impeccably Aryan  
State-certified physics imposed.

*Göttingen 1935. Institute for Physics. Two scientists, X and Y. Y has just entered. He has a conspiratorial look.*

Y: I've got it.

X: What?

Y: The answer to what we asked Mikovsky in Paris.

X: About gravity waves?

Y: Yes.

X: What about it?

Y: Guess who's written giving just what we wanted.

X: Go on.

*Y takes a scrap of paper, writes a name and passes it to X. As soon as X has read it Y takes it back, tears it into small pieces and throws it into the stove.*

Y: Mikovsky passed our questions on to him. This is his answer.

X *grabs for it greedily*: Give me. He suddenly holds himself back. Just suppose we were caught corresponding with him like this . . .

Y: We absolutely mustn't be.

X: Well, without it we're stuck. Come on, give me.

- y: You won't be able to read it. I used my own shorthand, it's safer. I'll read it out to you.
- x: For God's sake be careful.
- y: Is Rollkopf in the lab today? *He points to the right.*
- x *pointing to the left*: No, but Reinhardt is. Sit over here.
- y *reads*: The problem concerns two arbitrary countervariant vectors  $\psi$  and  $\nu$  and a countervariant vector  $t$ . This is used to form the elements of a mixed tensor of the second degree whose structure can be expressed by  $\Sigma^{-br} = C_{br}^{-1}$
- x *who has been writing this down, suddenly gives him a sign to shut up*: Just a minute.  
*He gets up and tiptoes over to the wall, left. Having evidently heard nothing suspicious he returns. Y goes on reading aloud, with other similar interruptions. These lead them to inspect the telephone, suddenly open the door etc.*
- y: Where matter is passive, incoherent and not acting on itself by means of tensions  $T = \mu$  will be the only component of the tensional energy depth that differs from 0. Hence a static gravitational field is created whose equation, taking into account the constant proportionality factor  $8\pi x$  will be  $\Delta f = 4\pi x \mu$ . Given a suitable choice of spatial coordinates the degree of variation from  $c^2 dt^2$  will be very slight . . .  
*A door slams somewhere and they try to hide their notes. Then this seems to be unnecessary. From this point on they both become engrossed in the material and apparently oblivious of the danger of what they are doing.*
- y *reads on*: . . . by comparison however with the passive mass from which the field originates the masses concerned are very small, and the motion of the bodies implicated in the gravitational field is brought within this static field by means of a geodetic world line. As such this satisfies the variational principle  $\delta f ds = 0$  where the ends of the relevant portion of the world line remain fixed.
- x: But what's Einstein got to say about . . .  
*Y's look of horror makes X aware of his mistake so that he sits there paralysed with shock. Y snatches the notes which he has been taking down and hides away all the papers.*
- y *very loudly, in the direction of the left-hand wall*: What a

typical piece of misplaced Jewish ingenuity. Nothing to do with physics.

*Relieved, they again bring out their notes and silently resume work, using the utmost caution.*

## 9

## The Jewish wife

Over there we can see men coming  
Whom He's forced to relinquish their women  
And coupled with blondes in their place.  
It's no good their cursing and praying  
For once He catches them racially straying  
He'll whip them back into the Race.

*Frankfurt 1935. It is evening. A woman is packing suitcases. She is choosing what to take. Now and again she removes something from her suitcase and returns it to its original place in the room in order to pack another item instead. For a long while she hesitates whether to take a large photograph of her husband that stands on the chest of drawers. Finally she leaves the picture where it is. The packing tires her and for a time she sits on a suitcase leaning her head on her hand. Then she gets to her feet and telephones.*

THE WOMAN: This is Judith Keith. Hullo, is that you, doctor? Good evening. I just wanted to ring up and say you'll have to be looking for another bridge partner; I'm going away. – No, not long, but anyway a few weeks – I want to go to Amsterdam. – Yes, it's said to be lovely there in spring. – I've got friends there. – No, plural, believe it or not. – Who will you get for a fourth? – Come on, we haven't played for a fortnight. – That's right, Fritz had a cold too. It's absurd to go on playing bridge when it's as cold as this, I always say. – But no, doctor, how could I? – Anyway Thekla had her mother there. – I know. – What put that idea into my head? – No, it was nothing sudden, I kept putting it off, and

now I've really got to . . . Right, we'll have to cancel our cinema date, remember me to Thekla. – Ring him up on a Sunday sometimes, could you perhaps? – Well, au revoir! – Yes, of course I will. – Goodbye.

*She hangs up and calls another number.*

This is Judith Keith. Can I speak to Frau Schöck? – Lotte? – I just wanted to say goodbye. I'm going away for a bit. – No, nothing's wrong, it's just that I want to see some new faces. – I really meant to say that Fritz has got the Professor coming here on Tuesday evening, and I wondered if you could both come too, I'm off tonight as I said. – Tuesday, that's it. – No, I only wanted to tell you I'm off tonight, there's no connection, I just thought you might be able to come then. – Well, let's say even though I shan't be there, right? – Yes, I know you're not that sort, but what about it, these are unsettled times and everybody's being so careful, so you'll come? – It depends on Max? He'll manage it, the Professor will be there, tell him. – I must ring off now. – Goodbye then.

*She hangs up and called another number.*

That you, Gertrud? It's Judith. I'm so sorry to disturb you. – Thanks, I just wanted to ask if you could see that Fritz is all right, I'm going away for a few months. – Being his sister, I thought you . . . Why not? – Nobody'd think that, anyway not Fritz. – Well, of course he knows we don't . . . get on all that well, but . . . Then he can simply call you if you prefer it that way. – Yes, I'll tell him that. – Everything's fairly straight, of course the flat's on the big side. – You'd better leave his workroom to Ida to deal with, she knows what's to be done. – I find her pretty intelligent, and he's used to her. – And there's another thing, I hope you don't mind my saying so, but he doesn't like talking before meals, can you remember that? I always used to watch myself. – I don't want to argue about that just now, it's not long till my train goes and I haven't finished packing, you know. – Keep an eye on his suits and remind him to go to his tailor, he's ordered a new overcoat, and do see that his bedroom's properly heated, he likes sleeping with the window open and it's too cold. – No, I don't think

he needs to toughen himself up, but I must ring off now. – I'm very grateful to you, Gertrud, and we'll write to each other, won't we? – Goodbye.

*She hangs up and calls another number.*

Anna? It's Judith; look, I'm just off. – No, there's no way out, things are getting too difficult. – Too difficult! – Well, no, it isn't Fritz's idea, he doesn't know yet, I simply packed my things. – I don't think so. – I don't think he'll say all that much. It's all got too difficult for him, just in everyday matters. – That's something we haven't arranged. – We just never talked about it, absolutely never. – No, he hasn't altered, on the contrary. – I'd be glad if you and Kurt could look after him a bit, to start with. – Yes, specially Sundays, and try to make him give up this flat. – It's too big for him. – I'd like to have come and said goodbye to you, but it's your porter, you know. – So, goodbye; no, don't come to the station, it's a bad idea. – Goodbye, I'll write. – That's a promise.

*She hangs up without calling again. She has been smoking. Now she sets fire to the small book in which she has been looking up the numbers. She walks up and down two or three times. Then she starts speaking. She is rehearsing the short speech which she proposes to make to her husband. It is evident that he is sitting in a particular chair.*

Well, Fritz, I'm off. I suppose I've waited too long, I'm awfully sorry, but . . .

*She stands there thinking, then starts in a different way.*

Fritz, you must let me go, you can't keep . . . I'll be your downfall, it's quite clear; I know you aren't a coward, you're not scared of the police, but there are worse things. They won't put you in a camp, but they'll ban you from the clinic any day now. You won't say anything at the time, but it'll make you ill. I'm not going to watch you sitting around the flat pretending to read magazines, it's pure selfishness on my part, my leaving, that's all. Don't tell me anything . . .

*She again stops. She makes a fresh start.*

Don't tell me you haven't changed; you have! Only last week you established quite objectively that the proportion

of Jewish scientists wasn't all that high. Objectivity is always the start of it, and why do you keep telling me I've never been such a Jewish chauvinist as now? Of course I'm one. Chauvinism is catching. Oh, Fritz, what has happened to us?

*She again stops. She makes a fresh start.*

I never told you I wanted to go away, have done for a long time, because I can't talk when I look at you, Fritz. Then it seems to me there's no point in talking. It has all been settled already. What's got into them, d'you think? What do they really want? What am I doing to them? I've never had anything to do with politics. Did I vote Communist? But I'm just one of those bourgeois housewives with servants and so on, and now all of a sudden it seems only blondes can be that. I've often thought lately about something you told me years back, how some people were more valuable than others, so one lot were given insulin when they got diabetes and the others weren't. And this was something I understood, idiot that I was. Well, now they've drawn a new distinction of the same sort, and this time I'm one of the less valuable ones. Serves me right.

*She again stops. She makes a fresh start.*

Yes, I'm packing. Don't pretend you haven't noticed anything the last few days. Nothing really matters, Fritz, except just one thing: if we spend our last hour together without looking at each other's eyes. That's a triumph they can't be allowed, the liars who force everyone else to lie. Ten years ago when somebody said no one would think I was Jewish, you instantly said yes, they would. And that's fine. That was straightforward. Why take things in a roundabout way now? I'm packing so they shan't take away your job as senior physician. And because they've stopped saying good morning to you at the clinic, and because you're not sleeping nowadays. I don't want you to tell me I mustn't go. And I'm hurrying because I don't want to hear you telling me I must. It's a matter of time. Principles are a matter of time. They don't last for ever, any more than a glove does. There are good ones which last a long while. But even they only have a certain life. Don't get



the idea that I'm angry. Yes, I am. Why should I always be understanding? What's wrong with the shape of my nose and the colour of my hair? I'm to leave the town where I was born just so they don't have to go short of butter. What sort of people are you, yourself included? You work out the quantum theory and the Trendelenburg test, then allow a lot of semi-barbarians to tell you you're to conquer the world but you can't have the woman you want. The artificial lung, and the dive-bomber! You are monsters or you pander to monsters. Yes, I know I'm being unreasonable, but what good is reason in a world like this? There you sit watching your wife pack and saying nothing. Walls have ears, is that it? But you people say nothing. One lot listens and the other keeps silent. To hell with that. I'm supposed to keep silent too. If I loved you I'd keep silent. I truly do love you. Give me those underclothes. They're suggestive. I'll need them. I'm thirty-six, that isn't too old, but I can't do much more experimenting. The next time I settle in a country things can't be like this. The next man I get must be allowed to keep me. And don't tell me you'll send me money; you know you won't be allowed to. And you aren't to pretend it's just a matter of four weeks either. This business is going to last rather more than four weeks. You know that, and so do I. So don't go telling me 'After all it's only for two or three weeks' as you hand me the fur coat I shan't need till next winter. And don't let's speak about disaster. Let's speak about disgrace. Oh, Fritz!

*She stops. A door opens. She hurriedly sees to her appearance. The husband comes in.*

THE HUSBAND: What are you doing? Tidying up?

THE WOMAN: No.

THE HUSBAND: Why are you packing?

THE WOMAN: I want to get away.

THE HUSBAND: What are you talking about?

THE WOMAN: We did mention the possibility of my going away for a bit. It's no longer very pleasant here.

THE HUSBAND: That's a lot of nonsense.

THE WOMAN: Do you want me to stay, then?

THE HUSBAND: Where are you thinking of going?

THE WOMAN: Amsterdam. Just away.

THE HUSBAND: But you've got nobody there.

THE WOMAN: No.

THE HUSBAND: Why don't you wish to stay here? There's absolutely no need for you to go so far as I'm concerned.

THE WOMAN: No.

THE HUSBAND: You know I haven't changed, you do, don't you, Judith?

THE WOMAN: Yes.

*He embraces her. They stand without speaking among the suitcases.*

THE HUSBAND: And there's nothing else makes you want to go?

THE WOMAN: You know that.

THE HUSBAND: It might not be such a bad idea, I suppose. You need a breather. It's stifling in this place. I'll come and collect you. As soon as I get across the frontier, even if it's only for two days, I'll start feeling better.

THE WOMAN: Yes, why don't you?

THE HUSBAND: Things can't go on like this all that much longer. Something's bound to change. The whole business will die down again like an inflammation – it's a disaster, it really is.

THE WOMAN: Definitely. Did you run into Schöck?

THE HUSBAND: Yes, just on the stairs, that's to say. I think he's begun to be sorry about the way they dropped us. He was quite embarrassed. In the long run they can't completely sit on filthy intellectuals like us. And they won't be able to run a war with a lot of spineless wrecks. People aren't all that standoffish if you face up to them squarely. What time are you off, then?

THE WOMAN: Nine-fifteen.

THE HUSBAND: And where am I to send money to?

THE WOMAN: Let's say poste restante, Amsterdam main Post-Office.

THE HUSBAND: I'll see they give me a special permit. Good God, I can't send my wife off with ten marks a month. It's all a lousy business.

THE WOMAN: If you can come and collect me it'll do you a bit of good.

THE HUSBAND: To read a paper with something in it for once.

THE WOMAN: I rang Gertrud. She'll see you're all right.

THE HUSBAND: Quite unnecessary. For two or three weeks.

THE WOMAN *who has again begun packing*: Do you mind handing me my fur coat?

THE HUSBAND *handing it to her*: After all it's only for two or three weeks.

10

## The spy

Here come the worthy schoolteachers  
 The Youth Movement takes the poor creatures  
 And makes them all thrust out their chest.  
 Every schoolboy's a spy. So now marking  
 Is based not on knowledge, but narking  
 And on who knows whose weaknesses best.

They educate traducers  
 To set hatchet-men and bruisers  
 On their own parents' tail.  
 Denounced by their sons as traitors  
 To Himmler's apparatus  
 The fathers go handcuffed to gaol.

*Cologne 1935. A wet Sunday afternoon. The man, the wife and the boy have finished lunch. The maidservant enters.*

THE MAIDSERVANT: Mr and Mrs Klimbtsch are asking if you are at home.

THE MAN *snarls*: No.

*The maidservant goes out.*

THE WIFE: You should have gone to the phone yourself. They must know we couldn't possibly have gone out yet.

THE MAN: Why couldn't we?

THE WIFE: Because it's raining.

THE MAN: That's no reason.

THE WIFE: Where could we have gone to? That's the first thing they'll ask.

THE MAN: Oh, masses of places.

THE WIFE: Let's go then.

THE MAN: Where to?

THE WIFE: If only it wasn't raining.

THE MAN: And where'd we go if it wasn't raining?

THE WIFE: At least in the old days you could go and meet someone.

*Pause.*

THE WIFE: It was a mistake you not going to the phone. Now they'll realise we don't want to have them.

THE MAN: Suppose they do?

THE WIFE: Then it wouldn't look very nice, our dropping them just when everyone else does.

THE MAN: We're not dropping them.

THE WIFE: Why shouldn't they come here in that case?

THE MAN: Because Klimbtsch bores me to tears.

THE WIFE: He never bored you in the old days.

THE MAN: In the old days . . . All this talk of the old days gets me down.

THE WIFE: Well anyhow you'd never have cut him just because the school inspectors are after him.

THE MAN: Are you telling me I'm a coward?

*Pause.*

THE MAN: All right, ring up and tell them we've just come back on account of the rain.

*The wife remains seated.*

THE WIFE: What about asking the Lemkes to come over?

THE MAN: And have them go on telling us we're slack about civil defence?

THE WIFE *to the boy*: Klaus-Heinrich, stop fiddling with the wireless.

*The boy turns his attention to the newspapers.*

THE MAN: It's a disaster, its raining like this. It's quite

intolerable, living in a country where it's a disaster when it rains.

THE WIFE: Do you really think it's sensible to go round making remarks like that?

THE MAN: I can make what remarks I like between my own four walls. This is my home, and I shall damn well say . . .  
*He is interrupted. The maidservant enters with coffee things. So long as she is present they remain silent.*

THE MAN: Have we got to have a maid whose father is the block warden?

THE WIFE: We've been over that again and again. The last thing you said was that it had its advantages.

THE MAN: What aren't I supposed to have said? If you mentioned anything of the sort to your mother we could land in a proper mess.

THE WIFE: The things I talk about to my mother . . .  
*Enter the maidservant with the coffee.*

THE WIFE: That's all right, Erna. You can go now, I'll see to it.

THE MAIDSERVANT: Thank you very much, ma'am.

THE BOY *looking up from his paper*: Is that how vicars always behave, dad?

THE MAN: How do you mean?

THE BOY: Like it says here.

THE MAN: What's that you're reading?

*Snatches the paper from his hands.*

THE BOY: Hey, our group leader said it was all right for us to know about anything in that paper.

THE MAN: I don't have to go by what your group leader says. It's for me to decide what you can or can't read.

THE WIFE: There's ten pfennigs, Klaus-Heinrich, run over and get yourself something.

THE BOY: But it's raining.

*He hangs round the window, trying to make up his mind.*

THE MAN: If they go on reporting these cases against priests I shall cancel the paper altogether.

THE WIFE: Which are you going to take, then? They're all reporting them.

THE MAN: If all the papers are full of this kind of filth I'd

sooner not read a paper at all. And I wouldn't be any worse informed about what's going on in the world.

THE WIFE: There's something to be said for a bit of a clean-up.

THE MAN: Clean-up, indeed. The whole thing's politics.

THE WIFE: Well, it's none of our business anyway. After all, we're protestants.

THE MAN: It matters to our people all right if it can't hear the word vestry without being reminded of dirt like this.

THE WIFE: But what do you want them to do when this kind of thing happens?

THE MAN: What do I want them to do? Suppose they looked into their own back yard. I'm told it isn't all so snowy white in that Brown House of theirs.

THE WIFE: But that only goes to show how far our people's recovery has gone, Karl.

THE MAN: Recovery! A nice kind of recovery. If that's what recovery looks like, I'd sooner have the disease any day.

THE WIFE: You're so on edge today. Did something happen at the school?

THE MAN: What on earth could have happened at school? And for God's sake don't keep saying I'm on edge, it makes me feel on edge.

THE WIFE: We oughtn't to keep on quarrelling so, Karl. In the old days . . .

THE MAN: Just what I was waiting for. In the old days. Neither in the old days nor now did I wish to have my son's imagination perverted for him.

THE WIFE: Where has he got to, anyway?

THE MAN: How am I to know?

THE WIFE: Did you see him go?

THE MAN: No.

THE WIFE: I can't think where he can have gone. *She calls:* Klaus-Heinrich!

*She hurries out of the room, and is heard calling. She returns.*

THE WIFE: He really has left.

THE MAN: Why shouldn't he?

THE WIFE: But it's raining buckets.

THE MAN: Why are you so on edge at the boy's having left?

THE WIFE: You remember what we were talking about?

THE MAN: What's that got to do with it?

THE WIFE: You've been so careless lately.

THE MAN: I have certainly not been careless, but even if I had what's that got to do with the boy's having left?

THE WIFE: You know how they listen to everything.

THE MAN: Well?

THE WIFE: Well. Suppose he goes round telling people? You know how they're always dinning it into them in the Hitler Youth. They deliberately encourage the kids to repeat everything. It's so odd his going off so quietly.

THE MAN: Rubbish.

THE WIFE: Didn't you see when he went?

THE MAN: He was hanging round the window for quite a time.

THE WIFE: I'd like to know how much he heard.

THE MAN: But he must know what happens to people who get reported.

THE WIFE: What about that boy the Schmulkes were telling us about? They say his father's still in a concentration camp. I wish we knew how long he was in the room.

THE MAN: The whole thing's a load of rubbish.

*He hastens to the other rooms and calls the boy.*

THE WIFE: I just can't see him going off somewhere without saying a word. It wouldn't be like him.

THE MAN: Mightn't he be with a school friend?

THE WIFE: Then he'd have to be at the Mummermanns'. I'll give them a ring. *She telephones.*

THE MAN: It's all a false alarm, if you ask me.

THE WIFE *telephoning*: Is that Mrs Mummermann? It's Mrs Furcke here. Good afternoon. Is Klaus-Heinrich with you? He isn't? - Then where on earth can the boy be? - Mrs Mummermann do you happen to know if the Hitler Youth place is open on Sunday afternoons? - It is? - Thanks a lot, I'll ask them.

*She hangs up. They sit in silence.*

THE MAN: What do you think he overheard?

THE WIFE: You were talking about the paper. You shouldn't have said what you did about the Brown House. He's so patriotic about that kind of thing.

THE MAN: What am I supposed to have said about the Brown House?

THE WIFE: You remember perfectly well. That things weren't all snowy white in there.

THE MAN: Well, nobody can take that as an attack, can they? Saying things aren't all white, or snowy white rather, as I qualified it – which makes a difference, quite a substantial one at that – well, it's more a kind of jocular remark like the man in the street makes in the vernacular, sort of, and all it really means is that probably not absolutely everything even there is always exactly as the Führer would like it to be. I quite deliberately emphasised that this was only 'probably' so by using the phrase, as I very well remember, 'I'm told' things aren't *all* – and that's another obvious qualification – so snowy white there. 'I'm told'; that doesn't mean it's necessarily so. How could I say things aren't snowy white? I haven't any proof. Wherever there are human beings there are imperfections. That's all I was suggesting, and in very qualified form. And in any case there was a certain occasion when the Führer himself expressed the same kind of criticisms a great deal more strongly.

THE WIFE: I don't understand you. You don't need to talk to me in that way.

THE MAN: I'd like to think I don't. I wish I knew to what extent you gossip about all that's liable to be said between these four walls in the heat of the moment. Of course I wouldn't dream of accusing you of casting ill-considered aspersions on your husband, any more than I'd think my boy capable for one moment of doing anything to harm his own father. But doing harm and doing it wittingly are unfortunately two very different matters.

THE WIFE: You can stop that right now! What about the kind of things you say yourself? Here am I worrying myself silly whether you make that remark about life in Nazi Germany



being intolerable before or after the one about the Brown House.

THE MAN: I never said anything of the sort.

THE WIFE: You're acting absolutely as if I were the police. All I'm doing is racking my brains about what the boy may have overheard.

THE MAN: The term Nazi Germany just isn't in my vocabulary.

THE WIFE: And that stuff about the warden of our block and how the papers print nothing but lies, and what you were saying about civil defence the other day – when does the boy hear a single constructive remark? That just doesn't do any good to a child's attitude of mind, it's simply demoralising, and at a time when the Führer keeps stressing that Germany's future lies in Germany's youth. He really isn't the kind of boy to rush off and denounce one just like that. It makes me feel quite ill.

THE MAN: He's vindictive, though.

THE WIFE: What on earth has he got to be vindictive about?

THE MAN: God knows, but there's bound to be something. The time I confiscated his tree-frog perhaps.

THE WIFE: But that was a week ago.

THE MAN: It's that kind of thing that sticks in his mind, though.

THE WIFE: What did you confiscate it for, anyway?

THE MAN: Because he wouldn't catch any flies for it. He was letting the creature starve.

THE WIFE: He really is run off his feet, you know.

THE MAN: There's not much the frog can do about that.

THE WIFE: But he never came back to the subject, and I gave him ten pfennigs only a moment ago. He only has to want something and he gets it.

THE MAN: Exactly. I call that bribery.

THE WIFE: What do you mean by that?

THE MAN: They'll simply say we were trying to bribe him to keep his mouth shut.

THE WIFE: What do you imagine they could do to you?

THE MAN: Absolutely anything. There's no limit. My God!

And to think I'm supposed to be a teacher. An educator of our youth. Our youth scares me stiff.

THE WIFE: But they've nothing against you.

THE MAN: They've something against everyone. Everyone's suspect. Once the suspicion's there, one's suspect.

THE WIFE: But a child's not a reliable witness. A child hasn't the faintest idea what it's talking about.

THE MAN: So you say. But when did they start having to have witnesses for things?

THE WIFE: Couldn't we work out what you could have meant by your remarks? Then he could just have misunderstood you.

THE MAN: Well, what did I say? I can't even remember. It's all the fault of that damned rain. It puts one in a bad mood. Actually I'm the last person to say anything against the moral resurgence the German people is going through these days. I foresaw the whole thing as early as the winter of 1932.

THE WIFE: Karl, there just isn't time to discuss that now. We must straighten everything out right away. There's not a minute to spare.

THE MAN: I don't believe Karl-Heinrich's capable of it.

THE WIFE: Let's start with the Brown House and all the filth.

THE MAN: I never said a word about filth.

THE WIFE: You said the paper's full of filth and you want to cancel it.

THE MAN: Right, the paper. But not the Brown House.

THE WIFE: Couldn't you have been saying that you won't stand for such filth in the churches? And that you think the people now being tried could quite well be the same as used to spread malicious rumours about the Brown House suggesting things weren't all that snowy white there? And that they ought to have started looking into their own place instead? And what you were telling the boy was that he should stop fiddling with the wireless and read the paper because you're firmly of the opinion that the youth of the Third Reich should have a clear view of what's happening round about them.

THE MAN: It wouldn't be any use.

THE WIFE: Karl, you're not to give up now. You should be strong, like the Führer keeps on . . .

THE MAN: I'm not going to be brought before the law and have my own flesh and blood standing in the witness box and giving evidence against me.

THE WIFE: There's no need to take it like that.

THE MAN: It was a great mistake our seeing so much of the Klimbtsches.

THE WIFE: But nothing whatever has happened to him.

THE MAN: Yes, but there's talk of an inquiry.

THE WIFE: What would it be like if everybody got in such a panic as soon as there was talk of an inquiry?

THE MAN: Do you think our block warden has anything against us?

THE WIFE: You mean, supposing they asked him? He got a box of cigars for his birthday the other day and his Christmas box was ample.

THE MAN: The Gaufts gave him fifteen marks.

THE WIFE: Yes, but they were still taking the socialist paper in 1932, and as late as May 1933 they were hanging out the old nationalist flag.

*The phone rings.*

THE MAN: That's the phone.

THE WIFE: Shall I answer it?

THE MAN: I don't know.

THE WIFE: Who could be ringing us?

THE MAN: Wait a moment. If it rings again, answer it.

*They wait. It doesn't ring again.*

THE MAN: We can't go on living like this!

THE WIFE: Karl!

THE MAN: A Judas, that's what you've borne me. Sitting at the table listening, gulping down the soup we've given him and noting down whatever his father says, the little spy.

THE WIFE: That's a dreadful thing to say.

*Pause.*

THE WIFE: Do you think we ought to make any kind of preparations?

THE MAN: Do you think he'll bring them straight back with him?

THE WIFE: Could he really?

THE MAN: Perhaps I'd better put on my Iron Cross.

THE WIFE: Of course you must, Karl.

*He gets it and puts it on with shaking hands.*

THE WIFE: But they've nothing against you at school, have they?

THE MAN: How's one to tell? I'm prepared to teach whatever they want taught; but what's that? If only I could tell . . . How am I to know what they want Bismarck to have been like? When they're taking so long to publish the new text books. Couldn't you give the maid another ten marks? She's another who's always listening.

THE WIFE *nodding*: And what about the picture of Hitler; shouldn't we hang it above your desk? It'd look better.

THE MAN: Yes, do that.

*The wife starts taking down the picture.*

THE MAN: Suppose the boy goes and says we deliberately rehung it, though, it might look as if we had a bad conscience.

*The wife puts the picture back on its old hook.*

THE MAN: Wasn't that the door?

THE WIFE: I didn't hear anything.

THE MAN: It was.

THE WIFE: Karl!

*She embraces him.*

THE MAN: Keep a grip on yourself. Pack some things for me.

*The door of the flat opens. Man and wife stand rigidly side by side in the corner of the room. The door opens and enter the boy, a paper bag in his hand. Pause.*

THE BOY: What's the matter with you people?

THE WIFE: Where have you been?

*The boy shows her the bag, which contains chocolate.*

THE WIFE: Did you simply go out to buy chocolate?

THE BOY: Whatever else? Obvious, isn't it?

*He crosses the room munching, and goes out. His parents look enquiringly after him.*

THE MAN: Do you suppose he's telling the truth?

*The wife shrugs her shoulders.*

II

The black shoes

These widows and orphans you're seeing  
Have heard Him guaranteeing  
A great time by and by.  
Meanwhile they must make sacrifices  
As the shops all put up their prices.  
That great time is pie in the sky.

*Bitterfeld, 1935. Kitchen in a working-class flat. The mother is peeling potatoes. Her thirteen-year-old daughter is doing homework.*

THE DAUGHTER: Mum, am I getting my two pfennigs?

THE MOTHER: For the Hitler Youth?

THE DAUGHTER: Yes.

THE MOTHER: I haven't any money left.

THE DAUGHTER: But if I don't bring my two pfennigs a week I won't be going to the country this summer. And our teacher said Hitler wants town and country to get to know each other. Town people are supposed to get closer to the farmers. But I'll have to bring along my two pfennigs.

THE MOTHER: I'll try to find some way of letting you have them.

THE DAUGHTER: Oh lovely, Mum. I'll give a hand with the 'taters. It's lovely in the country, isn't it? Proper meals there. Our gym teacher was saying I've got a potato belly.

THE MOTHER: You've nothing of the kind.

THE DAUGHTER: Not right now. Last year I had. A bit.

THE MOTHER: I might be able to get us some offal.

THE DAUGHTER: I get my roll at school; that's more than you do. Bertha was saying when she went to the country last

year they had bread and goose dripping. Meat too sometimes. Lovely, isn't it?

THE MOTHER: Of course.

THE DAUGHTER: And all that fresh air.

THE MOTHER: Didn't she have to do some work too?

THE DAUGHTER: Of course. But lots to eat. Only the farmer was a nuisance, she said.

THE MOTHER: What'd he do?

THE DAUGHTER: Oh, nothing. Just kept pestering her.

THE MOTHER: Aha.

THE DAUGHTER: Bertha's bigger than me, though. A year older.

THE MOTHER: Get on with your homework.

*Pause, then:*

THE DAUGHTER: But I won't have to wear those old black shoes from the welfare, will I?

THE MOTHER: You won't be needing them. You've got your other pair, haven't you?

THE DAUGHTER: Just that those have got a hole.

THE MOTHER: Oh dear, when it's so wet.

THE DAUGHTER: I'll put some paper in, that'll do it.

THE MOTHER: No, it won't. If they've gone they'll have to be resoled.

THE DAUGHTER: That's so expensive.

THE MOTHER: What've you got against the welfare pair?

THE DAUGHTER: I can't stand them.

THE MOTHER: Because they look so clumsy?

THE DAUGHTER: So you think so too.

THE MOTHER: Of course they're older.

THE DAUGHTER: Have I *got* to wear them?

THE MOTHER: If you can't stand them you needn't wear them.

THE DAUGHTER: I'm not being vain, am I?

THE MOTHER: No. Just growing up.

*Pause, then:*

THE DAUGHTER: Then can I have my two pfennigs, Mum? I do so want to go.

THE MOTHER *slowly*: I haven't the money for that.

## Labour service

By sweeping away class barriers  
 The poor are made fetchers and carriers  
 In Hitler's Labour Corps.  
 The rich serve a year alongside them  
 To show that no conflicts divide them.  
 Some pay would please them more.

*The Lüneburger Heide, 1935. A Labour Service column at work. A young worker and a student are digging together.*

THE STUDENT: What did they put that stocky little fellow from Column 3 in clink for?

THE YOUNG WORKER *grinning*: The group leader was saying we'll learn what it's like to work and he said, under his breath like, he'd as soon learn what it's like to get a pay packet. They weren't pleased.

THE STUDENT: Why say something like that?

THE YOUNG WORKER: Because he already knows what it's like to work, I should think. He was down the pits at fourteen.

THE STUDENT: Look out, Tubby's coming.

THE YOUNG WORKER: If he looks our way I can't just dig out half a spit.

THE STUDENT: But I can't shovel away more than I'm doing.

THE YOUNG WORKER: If he cops me there'll be trouble.

THE STUDENT: No more cigarettes from me, then.

THE YOUNG WORKER: He'll cop me sure enough.

THE STUDENT: And you want to go on leave, don't you? Think I'm going to pay you if you can't take a little risk like that?

THE YOUNG WORKER: You've already had your money's worth and more.

THE STUDENT: But I'm not going to pay you.

THE GROUP LEADER *comes and watches them*: Well, Herr Doktor, now you can see what working is really like, can't you?

THE STUDENT: Yes, Herr Group Leader.

*The young worker digs half a spit of earth. The student pretends to be shovelling like mad.*

THE GROUP LEADER: You owe it all to the Führer.

THE STUDENT: Yes, Herr Group Leader.

THE GROUP LEADER: Shoulder to shoulder and no class barriers; that's his way. The Führer wants no distinctions made in his labour camps. Never mind who your dad is. Carry on! *He goes.*

THE STUDENT: I don't call that half a spit.

THE YOUNG WORKER: Well, I do.

THE STUDENT: No cigarettes for today. Better remember there are an awful lot of people want cigarettes just as much as you.

THE YOUNG WORKER *slowly*: Yes, there are an awful lot of people like me. That's something we often forget.

13

## Workers' playtime

Then the media, a travelling circus  
 Come to interview the workers  
 With microphone in hand  
 But the workers can't be trusted  
 So the interview is adjusted  
 To fit what Goebbels has planned.

*Leipzig 1934. Foreman's office in a factory. A radio announcer bearing a microphone is chatting to three workers; a middle-aged worker, an old worker and a woman worker. In the background are a gentleman from the office and a stocky figure in SA uniform.*

THE ANNOUNCER: Here we are with flywheels and driving belts in full swing all around us, surrounded by our comrades working as busily as ants, joyously doing their bit to provide our beloved fatherland with everything it



requires. This morning we are visiting the Fuchs spinning mills. And in spite of the hard toil and the tensing of every muscle here we see nothing but joyous and contented faces on all sides. But let us get our comrades to speak for themselves. *To the old worker*: I understand you've been working here for twenty-one years, Mr . . .

THE OLD WORKER: Sedelmaier.

THE ANNOUNCER: Mr Sedelmaier. Tell me, Mr Sedelmaier, how is it that we see nothing but these happy, joyous faces on every side?

THE OLD WORKER *after a moment's thought*: There's a lot of jokes told.

THE ANNOUNCER: Really? Right, so a cheerful jest or two makes work seem child's play, what? The deadly menace of pessimism is unknown under National Socialism, you mean. Different in the old days, wasn't it?

THE OLD WORKER: Aye.

THE ANNOUNCER: That rotten old Weimar republic didn't give the workers much to laugh about you mean. What are we working for, they used to ask.

THE OLD WORKER: Aye, that's what some of them say.

THE ANNOUNCER: I didn't quite get that. Oh, I see, you're referring to the inevitable grouses, but they're dying out now they see that kind of thing's a waste of time because everything's booming in the Third Reich now there's a strong hand on the helm once again. That's what you feel too - *to the woman worker* - isn't it, Miss . . .

THE WOMAN WORKER: Schmidt.

THE ANNOUNCER: Miss Schmidt. And which of these steel mammoths enjoys your services?

THE WOMAN WORKER *reciting*: And then we also work at decorating our place of work which gives us great pleasure. Our portrait of the Führer was purchased thanks to voluntary contributions and we are very proud of him. Also of the geranium plants which provide a magical touch of colour in the greyness of our working environment, by suggestion of Miss Kinze.

THE ANNOUNCER: So you decorate your place of work with flowers, the sweet offspring of the fields. And I imagine

there've been a good few other changes in this factory since Germany's destiny took its new turning?

GENTLEMAN FROM THE OFFICE *prompting*: Wash rooms.

THE WOMAN WORKER: The wash rooms were the personal idea of Mr Bäuschle our managing director for which we would like to express our heartfelt thanks. Anybody who wants to wash can do so in these fine washrooms so long as there isn't too much of a crowd fighting for the basins.

THE ANNOUNCER: Everybody wants to be first, what? So there's always a jolly throng?

THE WOMAN WORKER: Only six taps for 552 of us. So there are lots of quarrels. It's disgraceful how some of them behave.

THE ANNOUNCER: But it's all sorted out perfectly happily. And now we are going to hear a few words from Mr – if you'd be so good as to tell me your name?

THE WORKER: Mahn.

THE ANNOUNCER: Mr Mahn. Right, Mr Mahn, would you tell us what moral effect the great increase in the workforce here has had on your fellow workers?

THE WORKER: How do you mean?

THE ANNOUNCER: Well, are all of you happy to see the wheels turning and plenty of work for everybody?

THE WORKER: You bet.

THE ANNOUNCER: And everybody once more able to take his wage packet home at the end of the week, that's not to be sneezed at either.

THE WORKER: No.

THE ANNOUNCER: Things weren't always like that. Under that rotten old republic many a comrade had to plod his weary way to the public welfare and live on charity.

THE WORKER: 18 marks 50. No deductions.

THE ANNOUNCER *with a forced laugh*: Ha. Ha. A capital joke! Not much to deduct, was there?

THE WORKER: No. Nowadays they deduct more.

*The gentleman from the office moves forward uneasily, as does the stocky man in SA uniform.*

THE ANNOUNCER: So there we are, everybody's once again got bread and work under National Socialism. You're

absolutely right, Mr – what did you say your name was? Not a single wheel is idle, not a single shaft needs to rust up in Adolf Hitler's Germany. *He roughly pushes the worker away from the microphone.* In joyful cooperation the intellectual worker and the manual worker are tackling the reconstruction of our beloved German Fatherland. Heil Hitler!

14

## The box

The coffins the SA carry  
 Are sealed up tight, to bury  
 Their victims' raw remains.  
 Here's one who wouldn't give in  
 He fought for better living  
 That we might lose our chains.

*Essen 1934. Working-class flat. A woman with two children. A young worker and his wife, who are calling on them. The woman is weeping. Steps can be heard on the staircase. The door is open.*

THE WOMAN: He simply said they were paying starvation wages, that's all. And it's true. What's more, our elder girl's got lung trouble and we can't afford milk. They couldn't possibly have harmed him, could they?

*The SA men bring in a big box and put it on the floor.*

SA MAN: Don't make a song and dance about it. Anybody can catch pneumonia. Here are the papers, all present and correct. And don't you go doing anything silly, now.

*The SA men leave.*

A CHILD: Mum, is Dad in there?

THE WORKER *who has gone over to the box*: That's zinc it's made of.

THE CHILD: Please can we open it?

THE WORKER *in a rage*: You bet we can. Where's your toolbox?

THE YOUNG WOMAN: Don't you open it, Hans. It'll only make them come for you.

THE WORKER: I want to see what they did to him. They're frightened of people seeing that. That's why they used zinc. Leave me alone!

THE YOUNG WOMAN: I'm not leaving you alone. Didn't you hear them?

THE WORKER: Don't you think we ought to just have a look at him?

THE WOMAN *taking her children by the hand and going up to the zinc box*: There's still my brother, they might come for him, Hans. And they might come for you too. The box can stay shut. We don't need to see him. He won't be forgotten.

15

## Release

Questioned in torture cellars  
 These men were no tale-tellers.  
 They held out all through the night.  
 Let's hope they didn't go under  
 But their wives and friends must wonder  
 What took place at first light.

*Berlin, 1936. Working-class kitchen. Sunday morning. Man and wife. Sound of military music in the distance.*

THE MAN: He'll be here any minute.

THE WIFE: None of you know anything against him, after all.

THE MAN: All we know is that they let him out of the concentration camp.

THE WIFE: So why don't you trust him?

THE MAN: There've been too many cases. They put so much pressure on them in there.

THE WIFE: How's he to convince you?

THE MAN: We'll find out where he stands all right.

THE WIFE: Might take time.

THE MAN: Yes.

THE WIFE: And he might be a first-rate comrade.

THE MAN: He might.

THE WIFE: It must be dreadful for him when he sees everybody mistrusting him.

THE MAN: He knows it's necessary.

THE WIFE: All the same.

THE MAN: I can hear something. Don't go away while we're talking.

*There is a ring. The man opens the door, the released man enters.*

THE MAN: Hullo, Max.

*The released man silently shakes hands with the man and his wife.*

THE WIFE: Would you like a cup of coffee with us? We're just going to have some.

THE RELEASED MAN: If it's not too much trouble.

*Pause.*

THE RELEASED MAN: You got a new cupboard.

THE WIFE: It's really an old one, cost eleven marks fifty. Ours was falling to pieces.

THE RELEASED MAN: Ha.

THE MAN: Anything doing in the street?

THE RELEASED MAN: They're collecting.

THE WIFE: We could do with a suit for Willi.

THE MAN: Hey, I'm not out of work.

THE WIFE: That's just why we could do with a suit for you.

THE MAN: Don't talk such nonsense.

THE RELEASED MAN: Work or no work, anybody can do with something.

THE MAN: You found work yet?

THE RELEASED MAN: They say so.

THE MAN: At Seimens?

THE RELEASED MAN: There or some other place.

THE MAN: It's not as hard as it was.

THE RELEASED MAN: No.

*Pause.*

THE MAN: How long you been inside?

THE RELEASED MAN: Six months.

THE MAN: Meet anyone in there?

THE RELEASED MAN: No one I knew. *Pause.* They're sending them to different camps these days. You could land up in Bavaria.

THE MAN: Ha.

THE RELEASED MAN: Things haven't changed much outside.

THE MAN: Not so as you'd notice.

THE WIFE: We live a very quiet life, you know. Willi hardly ever sees any of his old friends, do you, Willi?

THE MAN: Ay, we keep pretty much to ourselves.

THE RELEASED MAN: I don't suppose you ever got them to shift those rubbish bins from the hallway?

THE WIFE: Goodness, you remember that? Ay, he says he can't find anywhere else for them.

THE RELEASED MAN *as the wife is pouring him a cup of coffee:* Just give me a drop. I don't want to stay long.

THE MAN: Got any plans?

THE RELEASED MAN: Selma told me you looked after her when she was laid up. Thanks very much.

THE WIFE: It was nothing. We'd have told her to come over in the evening more, only we've not even got the wireless.

THE MAN: Anything they tell you is in the paper anyway.

THE RELEASED MAN: Not that there's much in the old rag.

THE WIFE: As much as there is in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, though.

THE RELEASED MAN: And in the *Völkischer Beobachter* there's just as much as there is in the old rag, eh?

THE MAN: I don't read that much in the evenings. Too tired.

THE WIFE: Here, what's wrong with your hand? All screwed up like that and two fingers missing?

THE RELEASED MAN: Oh, I had a fall.

THE MAN: Good thing it was your left one.

THE RELEASED MAN: Ay, that was a bit of luck. I'd like a word with you. No offence meant, Mrs Mahn.

THE WIFE: None taken. I've just got to clean the stove.

*She gets to work on the stove. The released man watches her, a thin smile on his lips.*

THE MAN: We've got to go out right after dinner. Has Selma quite recovered?

THE RELEASED MAN: All but for her hip. Doing washing is bad for her. Tell me . . . *He stops short and looks at them. They look at him. He says nothing further.*

THE MAN *hoarsely*: What about a walk round the Alexanderplatz before dinner? See what's doing with their collection?

THE WIFE: We could do that, couldn't we?

THE RELEASED MAN: Sure.

*Pause.*

THE RELEASED MAN *quietly*: Hey, Willi, you know I've not changed.

THE MAN *lightly*: Course you haven't. They might have a band playing there. Get yourself ready, Anna. We've finished our coffee. I'll just run a comb through my hair. *They go into the next room. The released man remains seated. He has picked up his hat. He is aimlessly whistling. The couple return, dressed to go out.*

THE MAN: Come on then, Max.

THE RELEASED MAN: Very well. But let me just say: I find it entirely right.

THE MAN: Good, then let's go.

*They go out together.*

## 16

## Charity begins at home

With banners and loud drumming  
The Winter Aid come slumming  
Into the humblest door.  
They've marched round and collected  
The crumbs the rich have rejected  
And brought them to the poor.

Their hands, more used to beatings  
Now offer gifts and greetings.  
They conjure up a smile.

Their charity soon crashes  
 Their food all turns to ashes  
 And chokes the uttered 'Heil!'

*Karlsruhe 1937. An old woman's flat. She is standing at a table with her daughter while the two SA men deliver a parcel from the Winter Aid Organisation.*

THE FIRST SA MAN: Here you are, Ma, a present from the Führer.

THE SECOND SA MAN: So you can't say he's not looking after you properly.

THE OLD WOMAN: Thanks very much, thanks very much. Look, Erna, potatoes. And a woollen sweater. And apples.

THE FIRST SA MAN: And a letter from the Führer with something in it. Go on, open it.

THE OLD WOMAN *opening the letter*: Five marks! What d'you say to that, Erna?

THE SECOND SA MAN: Winter Aid.

THE OLD WOMAN: You must take an apple, young man, and you too, for bringing these things to me, and up all those stairs too. It's all I got to offer you. And I'll take one myself.

*She takes a bite at an apple. All eat apples with the exception of the young woman.*

THE OLD WOMAN: Go on, Erna, you take one too, don't just stand there. That shows you things aren't like your husband says.

THE FIRST SA MAN: What does he say, then?

THE YOUNG WOMAN: He doesn't say anything. The old lady's wandering.

THE OLD WOMAN: Of course it's just his way of talking, you know, it don't mean any harm, just the way they all talk. How prices have gone up a bit much lately. *Pointing at her daughter with the apple*: And she got her account book and actually reckoned food had cost her 123 marks more this year than last. Didn't you, Erna? *She notices that the SA man seems to have taken this amiss*. But of course it's just because we're rearming, isn't it? What's the matter, I said something wrong?



THE FIRST SA MAN: Where do you keep your account book, young woman?

THE SECOND SA MAN: And who are you in the habit of showing it to?

THE YOUNG WOMAN: It's at home. I don't show it to no one.

THE OLD WOMAN: You can't object if she keeps accounts, how could you?

THE FIRST SA MAN: And if she goes about spreading alarm and despondency, are we allowed to object then?

THE SECOND SA MAN: What's more I don't remember her saying 'Heil Hitler' all that loudly when we came in. Do you?

THE OLD WOMAN: But she *did* say 'Heil Hitler' and I say the same. 'Heil Hitler'!

THE SECOND SA MAN: Nice nest of Marxists we've stumbled on here, Albert. We'd better have a good look at those accounts. Just you come along and show us where you live. *He seizes the young woman by the arm.*

THE OLD WOMAN: But she's in her third month. You can't . . . that's no way for you to behave. After bringing the parcel and taking the apples. Erna! But she *did* say 'Heil Hitler', what am I do do, Heil Hitler! Heil Hitler!

*She vomits up the apple. The SA lead her daughter off.*

THE OLD WOMAN *continuing to vomit*: Heil Hitler!

## 17

## Two bakers

Now come the master bakers  
Compelled to act as fakers  
And made to use their art  
On substitute ingredients –  
Spuds, bran and blind obedience.  
It lands them in the cart.

*Landsberg, 1936. Prison yard. Prisoners are walking in a*

*circle. Now and again two of them talk quietly to each other downstage.*

THE ONE: So you're a baker too, new boy?

THE OTHER: Yes. Are you?

THE ONE: Yes. What did they get you for?

THE OTHER: Look out!

*They again walk round the circle.*

THE OTHER: Refusing to mix potatoes and bran in my bread.

And you? How long've you been in?

THE ONE: Two years.

THE OTHER: And what did they get you for? Look out!

*They again walk round the circle.*

THE ONE: Mixing bran in my bread. Two years ago they still called that adulteration.

THE OTHER: Look out!

## 18

### The farmer feeds his sow

You'll notice in our procession

The farmer's sour expression:

They've underpriced his crop.

But what his pigs require

Is milk, whose price has gone higher.

It makes him blow his top.

*Aichach, 1937. A farmyard. It is night. The farmer is standing by the pigsty giving instructions to his wife and two children.*

THE FARMER: I wasn't having you mixed up in this, but you found out and now you'll just have to shut your trap. Or else your dad'll go off to Landsberg gaol for the rest of his born days. There's nowt wrong in our feeding our cattle when they're hungry. God doesn't want any beast to starve. And soon as she's hungry she squeals and I'm not having a sow squealing with hunger on my farm. But they won't let me feed her. Cause the State says so. But I'm feeding her

just the same, I am. Cause if I don't feed her she'll die on me, and I shan't get any compensation for that.

**THE FARMER'S WIFE:** Too right. Our grain's our grain. And those buggers have no business telling us what to do. They got the Jews out but the State's the worst Jew of them all. And the Reverend Father saying 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.' That's his way of telling us go ahead and feed our cattle. It weren't us as made their four-year plan, and we weren't asked.

**THE FARMER:** That's right. They don't favour the farmers and the farmers don't favour them. I'm supposed to deliver over my grain and pay through the nose for my cattle feed. So that that spiv can buy guns.

**THE FARMER'S WIFE:** You stand by the gate, Toni, and you, Marie, run into the pasture and soon as you see anyone coming give us a call.

*The children take up their positions. The farmer mixes his pig-swill and carries it to the sty, looking cautiously around him. His wife looks cautiously too.*

**THE FARMER pouring the swill into the sow's trough:** Go on, have a good feed, love. Heil Hitler! When a beast's hungry there ain't no State.

## 19

## The old militant

Behold several million electors.  
 One hundred per cent in all sectors  
 Have asked to be led by the nose.  
 They didn't get real bread and butter  
 They didn't get warm coats or fodder  
 They *did* get the leader they chose.

*Calw (Württemberg), 1938. A square with small shops. In the background a butcher's, in the foreground a dairy. It is a dark winter's morning. The butcher's is not open yet. But the dairy's lights are on and there are a few customers waiting.*

A PETIT-BOURGEOIS: No butter again today, what?

THE WOMAN: It'll be all I can afford on my old man's pay, anyway.

A YOUNG FELLOW: Stop grumbling, will you? Germany needs guns, not butter, no question about that. He spelled it out.

THE WOMAN *backing down*: Quite right too.

*Silence.*

THE YOUNG FELLOW: D'you think we could have reoccupied the Rhineland with butter? Everyone was for doing it the way we did, but catch them making any sacrifices.

A SECOND WOMAN: Keep your hair on. All of us are making some.

THE YOUNG FELLOW *mistrustfully*: What d'you mean?

THE SECOND WOMAN *to the first*: Don't you give something when they come round collecting?

*The first woman nods.*

THE SECOND WOMAN: There you are. She's giving. And so are we. Voluntary-like.

THE YOUNG FELLOW: That's an old story. Not a penny to spare when the Führer needs a bit of backing, as it were, for his mighty tasks. It's just rags, what they give the Winter Aid. They'd give 'em the moths if they could get away with it. We know the kind we got to deal with. That factory owner in number twelve went and gave us a pair of worn-out riding boots.

THE PETIT-BOURGEOIS: No foresight, that's the trouble.

*The dairywoman comes out of her shop in a white apron.*

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Won't be long now. *To the second woman*: Morning, Mrs Ruhl. Did you hear they came for young Lettner last night?

THE SECOND WOMAN: What, the butcher?

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Right, his son.

THE SECOND WOMAN: But he was in the SA.

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Used to be. The old fellow's been in the party since 1929. He was away at a livestock sale yesterday or they'd have taken him off too.

THE SECOND WOMAN: What're they supposed to have done?

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Been overcharging for meat. He was

hardly getting nothing on his quota and had to turn customers away. Then they say he started buying on the black market. From the Jews even.

THE YOUNG FELLOW: Bound to come for him, weren't they?

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Used to be one of the keenest of the lot, he did. He shopped old Zeisler at number seventeen for not taking the *Völkischer Beobachter*. An old militant, that's him.

THE SECOND WOMAN: He'll get a surprise when he comes back.

THE DAIRYWOMAN: *If* he comes back.

THE PETIT-BOURGEOIS: No foresight, that's the trouble.

THE SECOND WOMAN: Looks as if they won't open at all today.

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Best thing they can do. The police only have to look round a place like that and they're bound to find something, aren't they? With stock so hard to get. We get ours from the cooperative, no worries so far. *Calling out*: There'll be no cream today. *General murmur of disappointment*. They say Lettner's raised a mortgage on the house. They counted on its being cancelled or something.

THE PETIT-BOURGEOIS: They can't start cancelling mortgages. That'd be going a bit too far.

THE SECOND WOMAN: Young Lettner was quite a nice fellow.

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Old Lettner was always the crazy one. Went and shoved the boy in the SA, just like that. When he'd sooner have been going out with a girl, if you ask me.

THE YOUNG FELLOW: What d'you mean, crazy?

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Crazy, did I say? Oh, he always went crazy if anyone said anything against the Idea, in the old days. He was always speaking about the Idea, and down with the selfishness of the individual.

THE PETIT-BOURGEOIS: They're opening up, after all.

THE SECOND WOMAN: Got to live, haven't they?

*A stout woman comes out of the butcher's shop, which is now half-lit. She stops on the pavement and looks down the street for something. Then she turns to the dairywoman.*

THE BUTCHER'S WIFE: Good morning, Mrs Schlichter. Have

you seen our Richard? He should have been here with the meat well before now.

*The dairywoman doesn't reply. All of them just stare at her. She understands, and goes quickly back into the shop.*

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Act as though nothing's happened. It all blew up day before yesterday when the old man made such a stink you could hear him shouting right across the square. They counted that against him.

THE SECOND WOMAN: I never heard a word about that, Mrs Schlichter.

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Really? Didn't you know how he refused to hang that plaster ham they brought him in his shop window? He'd gone and ordered it cause they insisted, what with him hanging nothing in his window all week but the slate with the prices. He said: I've got nothing left for the window. When they brought that dummy ham, along with a side of veal, what's more, so natural you'd think it was real, he shouted he wasn't hanging any make-believe stuff in his window as well as a lot more I wouldn't care to repeat. Against the government, all of it, after which he threw the stuff into the road. They had to pick it up out of the dirt.

THE SECOND WOMAN: Ts, ts, ts, ts.

THE PETIT-BOURGEOIS: No foresight, that's the trouble.

THE SECOND WOMAN: How can people lose control like that?

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Particularly such a smooth operator.

*At this moment someone turns on a second light in the butcher's shop.*

THE DAIRYWOMAN: Look at that!

*She points excitedly at the half-lit shop window.*

THE SECOND WOMAN: There's something in the window.

THE DAIRYWOMAN: It's old Lettner. In his coat too. But what's he standing on? *Suddenly calls out:* Mrs Lettner!

THE BUTCHER'S WIFE: What is it?

*The dairywoman points speechlessly at the shop window. The butcher's wife glances at it, screams and falls down in a faint. The second woman and the dairywoman hurry over to her.*

THE SECOND WOMAN *back over her shoulder*: He's hung himself in his shop window.

THE PETIT-BOURGEOIS: There's a sign round his neck.

THE FIRST WOMAN: It's the slate. There's something written on it.

THE SECOND WOMAN: It says 'I voted for Hitler'.

20

## The Sermon on the Mount

The Church's Ten Commandments

Are subject to amendments

By order of the police.

Her broken head is bleeding

For new gods are succeeding

Her Jewish god of peace.

*Lübeck 1937. A fisherman's kitchen. The fisherman is dying. By his bed stand his wife and, in SA uniform, his son. The pastor is there.*

THE DYING MAN: Tell me: is there really anything afterwards?

THE PASTOR: Are you then troubled by doubts?

THE WIFE: He's kept on saying these last four days that there's so much talking and promising you don't know what to believe. You mustn't think badly of him, your Reverence.

THE PASTOR: Afterwards cometh eternal life.

THE DYING MAN: And that'll be better?

THE PASTOR: Yes.

THE DYING MAN: It's got to be.

THE WIFE: He's taken it out of himself, you know.

THE PASTOR: Believe me, God knows it.

THE DYING MAN: You think so? *After a pause*: Up there, I suppose a man'll be able to open his mouth for once now and again?

THE PASTOR *slightly confused*: It is written that faith moveth mountains. You must believe. You will find it easier then.

THE WIFE: Your Reverence, you mustn't think he doesn't believe. He always took Communion. *To her husband, urgently*: Here's his Reverence thinking you don't believe. But you do believe, don't you?

THE DYING MAN: Yes . . .

*Silence.*

THE DYING MAN: There's nothing else then.

THE PASTOR: What are you trying to say by that? There's nothing else then?

THE DYING MAN: Just: there's nothing else then. Eh? I mean, suppose there had been anything?

THE PASTOR: But what could there have been?

THE DYING MAN: Anything at all.

THE PASTOR: But you have had your dear wife and your son.

THE WIFE: You had us, didn't you?

THE DYING MAN: Yes . . .

*Silence.*

THE DYING MAN: I mean: if life had added up to anything . . .

THE PASTOR: I'm not quite sure I understand you. You surely don't mean that you only believe because your life has been all toil and hardship?

THE DYING MAN *looks round until he catches sight of his son*: And is it going to be better for them?

THE PASTOR: For youth, you mean? Let us hope so.

THE DYING MAN: If the boat had had a motor . . .

THE WIFE: You mustn't worry about that now.

THE PASTOR: It is not a moment to be thinking of such things.

THE DYING MAN: I've got to.

THE WIFE: We'll manage all right.

THE DYING MAN: But suppose there's a war?

THE WIFE: Don't speak about that now. *To the pastor*: These last times he was always talking to the boy about war. They didn't agree about it.

*The pastor looks at the son.*

THE SON: He doesn't believe in our future.

THE DYING MAN: Tell me: up there, does *he* want war?



THE PASTOR *hesitating*: It says: Blessed are the peacemakers.

THE DYING MAN: But if there's a war . . .

THE SON: The Führer doesn't want a war!

*The dying man makes a wide gesture of the hand, as if shoving that away.*

THE DYING MAN: So if there's a war . . .

*The son wants to say something.*

THE WIFE: Keep quiet now.

THE DYING MAN *to the pastor, pointing at his son*: You tell him that about the peacemakers.

THE PASTOR: We are all in the hand of God, you must not forget.

THE DYING MAN: You telling him?

THE WIFE: But his Reverence can't do anything to stop war, be reasonable. Better not talk about it nowadays, eh, your Reverence?

THE DYING MAN: You know: they're a swindling lot. I can't buy a motor for my boat. Their aeroplanes get motors all right. For war, for killing. And when it's stormy like this I can't bring her in because I haven't a motor. Those swindlers! War's what they're after! *He sinks back exhausted.*

THE WIFE *anxiously fetches a cloth and a bowl of water, and wipes away his sweat*: You mustn't listen. He doesn't know what he's saying.

THE PASTOR: You should calm yourself, Mr Claasen.

THE DYING MAN: You telling him about the peacemakers?

THE PASTOR *after a pause*: He can read for himself. It's in the Sermon on the Mount.

THE DYING MAN: He says it's all written by a Jew and it doesn't apply.

THE WIFE: Don't start on that again! He doesn't mean it like that. That's what he hears the others saying.

THE DYING MAN: Yes. *To the pastor*: Does it apply?

THE WIFE *with an anxious glance at her son*: Don't make trouble for his Reverence, Hannes. You shouldn't ask that.

THE SON: Why shouldn't he ask that?

THE DYING MAN: Does it apply or not?

THE PASTOR: It is also written: Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

*The dying man sinks back. His wife lays the damp cloth on his forehead.*

21

## The motto

Their boys learn it's morally healthy  
 To lay down one's life for the wealthy:  
 It's a lesson that's made very clear.  
 It's far harder than spelling or figures  
 But their teachers are terrible floggers  
 So they're fearful of showing fear.

*Chemnitz, 1937. Meeting room of the Hitler Youth. A squad of boys, mostly with gasmasks slung round their necks. A small group are looking at a boy with no mask who is sitting by himself on a bench and helplessly moving his lips as if learning something.*

THE FIRST BOY: He still hasn't got one.

THE SECOND BOY: His old lady won't buy him one.

THE FIRST BOY: But she must know he'll get into trouble.

THE THIRD BOY: If she ain't got the cash...

THE FIRST BOY: And old Fatty's got a down on him in any case.

THE SECOND BOY: He's back to learning it: 'The Motto'.

THE FOURTH BOY: That's four weeks he's been trying to learn it, and it's just a couple of verses.

THE THIRD BOY: He's known it off for ages.

THE SECOND BOY: He only gets stuck cause he's frightened.

THE FOURTH BOY: That's terribly funny, don't you think?

THE FIRST BOY: Devastating. *He calls:* D'you know it, Pschierer?

*The fifth boy looks up, distracted, gets the meaning and nods. Then he goes on learning.*

THE SECOND BOY: Old Fatty only keeps on at him cause he's got no gasmask.

THE THIRD BOY: The way he tells it, it's because he wouldn't go to the pictures with him.

THE FOURTH BOY: That's what I heard too. D'you think it's true?

THE SECOND BOY: Could be, why not? I wouldn't go to the pictures with Fatty either. But he wouldn't start anything with me. My old man wouldn't half kick up a stink.

THE FIRST BOY: Look out, here's Fatty.

*The boys come to attention in two ranks. Enter a somewhat corpulent Scharführer. The Hitler salute.*

THE SCHARFÜHRER: From the right, number!

*They number.*

THE SCHARFÜHRER: Gasmasks – on!

*The boys put on their gasmasks. Some of them have not got one. They simply go through the motions of the drill.*

THE SCHARFÜHRER: We'll start with 'The Motto'. Who's going to recite it for us? *He looks round as if unable to make up his mind, then suddenly:* Pschierer! You do it so nicely.

*The fifth boy steps forward and stands to attention in front of the others.*

THE SCHARFÜHRER: Can you do it, maestro?

THE FIFTH BOY: Yes, sir!

THE SCHARFÜHRER: Right, get cracking! Verse number one!

THE FIFTH BOY:

Thou shalt gaze on death unblinking –

Saith the motto for our age –

Sent into the fray unflinching

Heedless of the battle's rage.

THE SCHARFÜHRER: Don't wet your pants now. Carry on!

Verse number two!

THE FIFTH BOY:

Victory is ours for gaining.

Beat, stab, shoot . . .

*He has got stuck, and repeats these words. One or two of the boys find it difficult not to burst out laughing.*

THE SCHARFÜHRER: So once again you haven't learnt it?

THE FIFTH BOY: Yes, sir!

THE SCHARFÜHRER: I bet you learn something different at home, don't you? *Shouts:* Carry on!

THE FIFTH BOY:

Beat, stab, shoot them so they fall.

Be a German . . . uncomplaining, uncomplaining

Be a German uncomplaining

Die for this . . . die for this, and give your all.

THE SCHARFÜHRER: Now what's so difficult about that?

## 22

## News of the bombardment of Almería gets to the barracks

The soldiers in His armed forces  
Get full meat and pudding courses  
And can also ask for more.  
It helps them to face the firing  
And not to think of enquiring  
Who He is fighting for.

*Berlin, 1937. Corridor in a barracks. Looking around them nervously, two working-class boys are carrying away something wrapped in brown paper.*

THE FIRST BOY: Aren't half worked up today, are they?

THE SECOND BOY: They say it's cause war could break out.

Over Spain.

THE FIRST BOY: White as a sheet, some of them.

THE SECOND BOY: Cause we bombarded Almería. Last night.

THE FIRST BOY: Where's that?

THE SECOND BOY: In Spain, silly. Hitler telegraphed for a German warship to bombard Almería right away. As a punishment. Cause they're reds down there, and reds have

got to be scared shitless of the Third Reich. Now it could lead to war.

THE FIRST BOY: And now they're scared shitless too.

THE SECOND BOY: Right. Scared shitless, that's them.

THE FIRST BOY: What do they want to go bombarding for if they're white as a sheet and scared shitless cause it could lead to war?

THE SECOND BOY: They just started bombarding cause Hitler wants it that way.

THE FIRST BOY: Whatever Hitler wants they want too. The whole lot are for Hitler. Cause he's built up our new armed forces.

THE SECOND BOY: You got it.

*Pause.*

THE FIRST BOY: Think we can sneak out now?

THE SECOND BOY: Better wait, or we'll run into one of those lieutenants. Then he'll confiscate everything and they'll be in trouble.

THE FIRST BOY: Decent of them to let us come every day.

THE SECOND BOY: Oh, they ain't millionaires any more than us, you know. They know how it is. My old lady only gets ten marks a week, and there are three of us. It's just enough for potatoes.

THE FIRST BOY: Smashing nosh they get here. Meatballs today.

THE SECOND BOY: How much d'they give you this time?

THE FIRST BOY: One dollop, as usual. Why?

THE SECOND BOY: They gave me two this time.

THE FIRST BOY: Let's see. They only gave one.

*The second boy shows him.*

THE FIRST BOY: Did you say anything to them?

THE SECOND BOY: No. Just 'good morning' as usual.

THE FIRST BOY: I don't get it. And me too, 'Heil Hitler' as usual.

THE SECOND BOY: Funny. They gave me two dollops.

THE FIRST BOY: Why d'they suddenly do that. I don't get it.

THE SECOND BOY: Nor me. Coast's clear now.

*They quickly run off.*

23

## Job creation

He sees that jobs are provided.  
 The poor go where they are guided:  
 He likes them to be keen.  
 They're allowed to serve the nation.  
 Their blood and perspiration  
 Can fuel His war machine.

*Spandau, 1937. A worker comes home and finds a neighbour there.*

THE NEIGHBOUR: Good evening, Mr Fenn. I just came to see if your wife could lend me some bread. She's popped out for a moment.

THE MAN: That's all right, Mrs Dietz. What d'you think of the job I got?

THE NEIGHBOUR: Ah, they're all getting work. At the new factory, aren't you? You'll be turning out bombers then?

THE MAN: And how.

THE NEIGHBOUR: They'll be needed in Spain these days.

THE MAN: Why specially Spain?

THE NEIGHBOUR: You hear such things about the stuff they're sending. A disgrace, I call it.

THE MAN: Best mind what you say.

THE NEIGHBOUR: You joined them now too?

THE MAN: I've not joined nothing. I get on with my work. Where's Martha gone?

THE NEIGHBOUR: I'd best warn you, I suppose. It could be something nasty. Just as I came in the postman was here, and there was some kind of letter got your wife all worked up. Made me wonder if I shouldn't ask the Schiermanns to lend me that bread.

THE MAN: Cor. *He calls: Martha!*

*Enter his wife. She is in mourning.*

THE MAN: What are you up to? Who's dead then?

THE WIFE: Franz. We got a letter.

*She hands him a letter.*

THE NEIGHBOUR: For God's sake! What happened to him?

THE MAN: It was an accident.

THE NEIGHBOUR *mistrustfully*: But wasn't he a pilot?

THE MAN: Yes.

THE NEIGHBOUR: And he had an accident?

THE MAN: At Stettin. In the course of a night exercise with troops, it says here.

THE NEIGHBOUR: He won't have had no accident. Tell me another.

THE MAN: I'm only telling you what it says here. The letter's from the commandant.

THE NEIGHBOUR: Did he write to you lately? From Stettin?

THE MAN: Don't get worked up, Martha. It won't help.

THE WIFE *sobbing*: No, I know.

THE NEIGHBOUR: He was such a nice fellow, that brother of yours. Like me to make you a pot of coffee?

THE MAN: Yes, if you would, Mrs Dietz.

THE NEIGHBOUR *looking for a pot*: That sort of thing's always a shock.

THE WIFE: Go on, have your wash, Herbert. Mrs Dietz won't mind.

THE MAN: There's no hurry.

THE NEIGHBOUR: So he wrote to you from Stettin?

THE MAN: That's where the letters always came from.

THE NEIGHBOUR *gives a look*: Really? I suppose he'd gone south with the others?

THE MAN: What do you mean, gone south?

THE NEIGHBOUR: Way south to sunny Spain.

THE MAN *as his wife again bursts into sobs*: Pull yourself together, Martha. You shouldn't say that sort of thing, Mrs Dietz.

THE NEIGHBOUR: I just wonder what they'd tell you in Stettin if you went and tried to collect your brother.

THE MAN: I'm not going to Stettin.

THE NEIGHBOUR: They always sweep things under the mat. They think it's heroic of them not to let anything come out. There was a fellow in the boozier bragging about how clever they are at covering up their war. When one of your bombers gets shot down and the blokes inside jump out

with parachutes, the other bombers machine-gun them down in midair – their own blokes – so's they can't tell the Reds where they've come from.

THE WIFE *who is feeling sick*: Get us some water, will you, Herbert, I'm feeling sick.

THE NEIGHBOUR: I really didn't mean to upset you, it's just the way they cover it all up. They know it's criminal all right and that their war can't stand being exposed. Same in this case. Had an accident in the course of an exercise! What are they exercising at? A war, that's what!

THE MAN: Don't talk so loudly in here, d'you mind? *To his wife*: How are you feeling?

THE NEIGHBOUR: You're another of them keeps quiet about it all. There's your answer, in that letter.

THE MAN: Just shut up, would you?

THE WIFE: Herbert!

THE NEIGHBOUR: So now it's 'shut up, would you?'. Because you got a job. Your brother-in-law got one too, didn't he? Had an 'accident' with one of the same things you're making in that factory.

THE MAN: I don't like that, Mrs Dietz. Me working on 'one of the same things'! What are all the rest of them working on? What's your husband working on? Electric bulbs, isn't it? I suppose they're not for war. Just to give light. But what's the light for? To light tanks, eh? Or a battleship? Or one of those same things? He's only making light bulbs, though. My God, there's nothing left that's not for war. How am I supposed to find a job if I keep telling myself 'not for war!?' D'you want me to starve?

THE NEIGHBOUR *subduedly*: I'm not saying you got to starve. Of course you're right to take the job. I'm just talking about those criminals. A nice kind of job creation, I don't think.

THE MAN *seriously*: And better not go around in black like that, Martha. They don't like it.

THE NEIGHBOUR: The questions it makes people ask: that's what they don't like.

THE WIFE *calmly*: You'd rather I took it off?

THE MAN: Yes, if I'm not to lose my job any minute.



THE WIFE: I'm not taking it off.

THE MAN: What d'you mean?

THE WIFE: I'm not taking it off. My brother's dead. I'm going into mourning.

THE MAN: If you hadn't got it because Rosa bought it when Mother died, you wouldn't be able to go into mourning.

THE WIFE *shouting*: Don't anyone tell me I'm not going into mourning! If they can slaughter him I have a right to cry, don't I? I never heard of such a thing. It's the most inhuman thing ever happened! They're criminals of the lowest kind!

THE NEIGHBOUR *while the man sits speechless with horror*:  
But Mrs Fenn!

THE MAN *hoarsely*: If you're going to talk like that we could do more than lose our job.

THE WIFE: Let them come and get me, then! They've concentration camps for women too. Let them just put me in one of those because I dare to mind when they kill my brother! What was he in Spain for?

THE MAN: Shut up about Spain!

THE NEIGHBOUR: That kind of talk could get us into trouble, Mrs Fenn.

THE WIFE: Are we to keep quiet just because they might take your job away? Because we'll die of starvation if we don't make bombers for them? And die just the same if we do? Exactly like my Franz? They created a job for him too. Three foot under. He could as well have had that here.

THE MAN *holding a hand over her mouth*: Shut up, will you? It doesn't help.

THE WIFE: What does help then? Do something that does!

## Consulting the people

And as the column passes  
We call with urgent voices:  
Can none of you say No?

You've got to make them heed you.  
 This war to which they lead you  
 Will soon be your death-blow.

*Berlin. March 13th, 1938. A working-class flat, with two men and a woman. The constricted space is blocked by a flagpole. A great noise of jubilation from the radio, with church bells and the sound of aircraft. A voice is saying 'And now the Führer is about to enter Vienna.'*

THE WOMAN: It's like the sea.

THE OLDER WORKER: Aye, it's one victory after another for that fellow.

THE YOUNGER WORKER: And us that gets defeated.

THE WOMAN: That's right.

THE YOUNGER WORKER: Listen to them shouting. Like they're being given a present.

THE OLDER WORKER: They are. An invasion.

THE YOUNGER WORKER: And then it's what they call 'consulting the people'. 'Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer!' 'A single people, a single empire, a single leader.' 'Willst du das, Deutscher?' 'You're German, are you in favour?' And us not able to put out the least little leaflet about this referendum. Here, in a working-class district like Neukölln.

THE WOMAN: How d'you mean, not able?

THE YOUNGER WORKER: Too dangerous.

THE OLDER WORKER: And just when they've caught Karl. How are we to get the addresses?

THE YOUNGER WORKER: We'd need someone to do the writing too.

THE WOMAN *points at the radio*: He had a hundred thousand men to launch his attack. We need one man. Fine. If he's the only one who's got what's needed, then he'll score the victories.

THE YOUNGER WORKER *in anger*: So we can do without Karl.

THE WOMAN: If that's the way you people feel then we may as well split up.

THE OLDER WORKER: Comrades, there's no use kidding ourselves. Producing a leaflet's getting harder and harder, that's a fact. It's no good acting as if we just can't hear all

that victory din – *pointing at the radio. To the woman:* You've got to admit, anyone hearing that sort of thing might think they're getting stronger all the time. It really does sound like a single people, wouldn't you say?

THE WOMAN: It sounds like twenty thousand drunks being stood free beer.

THE YOUNGER WORKER: For all you know we might be the only people to say so.

THE WOMAN: Right. Us and others like us.

*The woman smoothes out a small crumpled piece of paper.*

THE OLDER WORKER: What have you got there?

THE WOMAN: It's a copy of a letter. There's such a din I can read it out. *She reads:* 'Dear son: Tomorrow I shall have ceased to be. Executions are usually at six a.m. I'm writing now because I want you to know I haven't changed my opinions, nor have I applied for a pardon because I didn't commit any crime. I just served my class. And if it looks as though I got nowhere like that it isn't so. Every man to his post, should be our motto. Our task is very difficult, but it's the greatest one there is – to free the human race from its oppressors. Till that's done life has no other value. Let that out of our sights and the whole human race will relapse into barbarism. You're still quite young but it won't hurt you to remember always which side you are on. Stick with your own class, then your father won't have suffered his unhappy fate in vain, because it isn't easy. Look after your mother, your brothers and sisters too, you're the eldest. Better be clever. Greetings to you all, Your loving Father.'

THE OLDER WORKER: There aren't really that few of us after all.

THE YOUNGER WORKER: What's to go in the referendum leaflet, then?

THE WOMAN *thinking:* Best thing would be just one word:  
NO!