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Emily Dickinson

Guten Morgen, Mitternacht

Gedichte & Briefe

1. Ausgabe

Henssel

Die
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Literatu
dichte
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Leben
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Droste'
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von ein
heitsfra
aktuell
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Emily Dickinson 1848

Emily Dickinson

Guten Morgen, Mitternacht

Gedichte und Briefe

Ausgewählt und übertragen
von

Lola Gruenthal

Henssel

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GEDICHTE

Gespicht mit Fehlern

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49

I never lost as much but twice,
And that was in the sod.
Twice have I stood a beggar
Before the door of God!

Angels – twice descending
Reimbursed my store –
Burglar! Banker – Father!
I am poor once more!

54

If I should die,
And you should live –
And time sh'd gurgle on –
And morn sh'd beam –
And noon should burn –
As it has usual done –
If Birds should build as early
And Bees as bustling go –
One might depart at option
From enterprise below!
'Tis sweet to know that stocks will stand
When we with Daisies lie –
That Commerce will continue –
And Trades as briskly fly –
It makes the parting tranquil
And keeps the soul serene –
That gentlemen so sprightly
Conduct the pleasing scene!

Zweimal nahm das Grab mir mehr
Als ich je verlor.
Zweimal stand als Bettlerin
Ich vor Gottes Tor!

Zweimal haben Engel
Den Verlust ersetzt –
Räuber! Bankherr – Vater!
Ich bin arm auch jetzt!

geändert

Sollt' ich sterben
Und du lebst –
Und die Zeit geht sprudelnd hin –
Und der Morgen strahlt –
Und der Mittag glüht –
Wie von Anbeginn –
Wenn Vögel früh am Bauen sind
Und Bienen gleichfalls rege,
Dann löste man aus freier Wahl
Die irdischen Verträge!
Es tröstet, daß die Aktien stehn,
Wenn wir im Grabe liegen,
Daß die Geschäfte weitergehn –
Und flott die Frachten fliegen –
Es macht den Abschied heiter,
Da unsere Seele spürt:
Das muntere Stück auf Erden
Wird glänzend inszeniert!

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103

I have a King, who does not speak –
So – wondering – thro' the hours meek
I trudge the day away –
Half glad when it is night, and sleep,
If, haply, thro' a dream, to peep
In Parlors, shut by day.

And if I do – when morning comes –
It is as if a hundred drums
Did round my pillow roll,
And shouts fill all my Childish sky,
And Bells keep saying 'Victory'
From steeples in my soul!

And if I dont – the little Bird
Within the Orchard, is not heard,
And I omit to pray
'Father, thy will be done' today
For my will goes the other way,
And it were perjury!

108

Surgeons must be very careful
When they take the knife!
Underneath their fine incisions
Stirs the Culprit – *Life!*

135

185

"Faith" is a fine invention
When Gentlemen can *see* –
But *Microscopes* are prudent
In an Emergency.

Mein König hat für mich kein Wort –
So schleppe ich die Stunden fort
Wie eine müde Magd –
Halb froh, bei Nacht zu Bett zu gehn,
Durch Träume Räume zu erspähn,
Die mir der Tag versagt.

Wenn das geschieht – dann kommt der Tag
Mit hundertfachem Trommelschlag,
Als wär's ein Freudensturm.
Mein Kinderhimmel schallt von Schrein,
Die Seele ruft: ‚Der Sieg ist dein'
Aus ihrem Glockenturm!

Wenn nicht – dann dringt kein Vöglein mehr
Vom Garten ein in mein Gehör –
Ich spreche kein Gebet:
Dein Wille, Herr, geschieht heut nicht,
Weil ihm mein Wille widerspricht
Und Meineid Sünde wär!

Ärzte sollten sehr behutsam
Ihre Messer heben!
Unter ihren feinen Schnitten
Zuckt der Sünder Leben!

Der Glaube als Erfindung dient
Den Herrn, sofern sie klar sehn;
Doch Umsicht lehrt das Mikroskop,
Wenn wir uns in Gefahr sehn.

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193

I shall know why – when Time is over –
And I have ceased to wonder why –
Christ will explain each separate anguish
In the fair schoolroom of the sky –

He will tell me what "Peter" promised –
And I – for wonder at his woe –
I shall forget the drop of Anguish
That scalds me now – that scalds me now!

214

I taste a liquor never brewed –
From Tankards scooped in Pearl –
Not all the Vats upon the Rhine
Yield such an Alcohol!

Inebriate of Air – am I –
And Debauchee of Dew –
Reeling – thro endless summer days –
From inns of Molten Blue –

When "Landlords" turn the drunken Bee
Out of the Foxglove's door –
When Butterflies – renounce their "drams" –
I shall but drink the more!

Till Seraphs swing their snowy Hats –
And Saints – to windows run –
To see the little Tippler
Leaning against the – Sun –

Ich werde wissen warum – wenn die Zeit vorbei ist –
Und ich nicht mehr frage nach dem Warum –
Christus wird jede einzelne Qual erklären
In seinem lichten himmlischen Klassenraum –

Er wird mir erzählen, was Petrus versprach –
Und ich – bewundernd um sein Weh bemüht –
Ich werde den Tropfen Qual vergessen,
Der heut noch glüht – der heut noch glüht!

Ich koste nie gebrauten Trank –
Aus perlendem Pokal
Kein Faß am ganzen Rhein enthält
Solch einen Alkohol!

Lusttrunken von der Luft bin ich –
Und sinnberauscht vom Tau –
Durch Sommertage taumle ich –
Stammgast im Schmelzendblau –

Jagt selbst der Wirt vom „Fingerhut“ –
Die Biene vor die Tür
Entsagt der Schmetterling dem Schnaps –
Ich trink noch mehr dafür!

Bis Heilige an den Fenstern stehn –
Und Engel – weißbemützt –
Sich drängen – mich beschwipst zu sehn,
Aufs Sonnenlicht – gestützt –

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249

Wild Nights – Wild Nights!
Were I with thee
Wild Nights should be
Our luxury!

Futile – the Winds –
To a Heart in port –
Done with the Compass –
Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden –
Ah, the Sea!
Might I but moor – Tonight –
In Thee!

252

I can wade Grief –
Whole Pools of it –
I'm used to that –
But the least push of Joy
Breaks up my feet –
And I tip – drunken –
Let no Pebble – smile –
'Twas the New Liquor –
That was all!

Power is only Pain –
Stranded, thro' Discipline,
Till Weights – will hang –
Give Balm – to Giants –
And they'll wilt, like Men –
Give Himmaleh –
They'll Carry – Him!

Wilde Nächte – Wilde Nächte!
Mit dir zu sein –
Wilde Nächte wären Luxus
Für uns allein!

Nutzlos – die Winde –
Für ein Herz im Port –
Fort mit dem Kompaß –
Die Karte fort!

Rudernd in Eden –
Ach, das Meer!
Daß ich in dir – heut nacht –
Verankert wär'!

Durch Leid zu waten –
Durch ganze Lachen –
Bin ich gewohnt –
Doch jeder Freudenstoß
Bricht mir den Fuß –
Ich strauchle – trunken –
Lächle nicht – Kieselstein –
Es war der neue Trank –
Nichts als das!

Stärke ist auch nur Schmerz –
Gesträhnt durch Disziplin,
Bis er Gewichte hält –
Gib Balsam den Titanen,
Sie werden menschlich-schlaff –
Gib Himmalaya –
Sie tragen ihn!

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254

“Hope” is the thing with feathers –
That perches in the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops – at all –

And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard –
And sore must be the storm –
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm –

I’ve heard it in the chillest land –
And on the strangest Sea –
Yet, never, in Extremity,
It asked a crumb – of Me.

258

278

A Shady friend – for Torrid days –
Is easier to find –
Than one of higher temperature
For Frigid – hour of Mind –

The Vane a little to the East –
Scares Muslin souls – away –
If Broadcloth Hearts are firmer –
Than those of Organdy –

Who is to blame? The Weaver?
Ah, the bewildering thread!
The Tapestries of Paradise
So notelessly – are made!

„Hoffnung“ ist das Federding, das
In der Seele schwingt –
Und die Lieder ohne Worte –
Ohne Ende singt –

Das man – süßer noch – im Lärme
Schwerer Stürme hört –
Ist ein Vöglein, dessen Wärme
Keinem sich verwehrt –

Ich hört’ es in dem kält’sten Land –
Und auf dem fernsten Meer –
Doch wenn es selbst verhungert wär’,
Kein Krümchen nahm’s von mir.

Ein kühler Freund – in schwüler Zeit –
Ist eher bei der Hand –
Als der mit höh’rem Wärmegrad
Bei eisigem Geistesstand.

Nach Osten zeigt der Wetterhahn –
Und Sommerseelen fliehn –
Wenn Wolltuchherzen fester sind –
Als die aus Musselin –

Wen trifft die Schuld? Den Weber?
Ach, der verstrickte Zwirn!
Die Wirkerein im Paradies
Verwirren unser Hirn!

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280

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
And Mourners to and fro
Kept treading – treading – till it seemed
That Sense was breaking through –

And when they all were seated,
A Service, like a Drum –
Kept beating – beating – till I thought
My Mind was going numb –

And then I heard them lift a Box
And creak across my Soul
With those same Boots of Lead, again,
Then Space – began to toll,

As all the Heavens were a Bell,
And Being, but an Ear,
And I, and Silence, some strange Race
Wrecked, solitary, here –

And then a Plank in Reason, broke,
And I dropped down, and down –
And hit a World, at every plunge,
And Finished knowing – then –

288

I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Are you – Nobody – too?
Then there's a pair of us!
Don't tell! they'd banish us – you know!

How dreary – to be – Somebody!
How public – like a Frog –
To tell your name – the livelong June –
To an admiring Bog!

gründet

Mein Hirn war ein Begräbnisort,
Und eine Trauerschar,
Die stampfte, stampfte – bis in mir
Der Sinn zertreten war.

Und als sie alle sich gesetzt,
Begann die Andacht, hart
Wie eine Trommel – Schlag auf Schlag,
Bis mein Gemüt erstarrt'.

Dann trugen sie den Sarg heraus,
Und bleigestiefelt drang
Ihr Knirschen durch die Seele mir,
Dann ward der Raum zu Klang,

Als wär' der Himmel Glockenlaut
Und nur ein Ohr das Sein,
Gescheitert ich und Schweigen hier,
Ein fremder Stamm, allein –

Dann brach ein Balken im Verstand,
Und ich fiel tief und tief,
Und stieß an Welten mich im Sturz,
Und Wissen hörte auf –

Ich bin Niemand! Wer bist du?
Noch ein Niemand mehr dazu?
Schon sind wir ein Paar im Land!
Still, sonst werden wir verbannt!

Wie öde – Irgendwer – zu sein!
Gemein – dem Frosch gleich – stumpf
Den eignen Namen auszuschrein –
Für den Applaus im Sumpf!

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301

I reason, Earth is short –
And Anguish – absolute –
And many hurt,
But, what of that?

I reason, we could die –
The best Vitality
Cannot excel Decay,
But, what of that?

I reason, that in Heaven –
Somehow, it will be even –
Some new Equation, given –
But, what of that?

303

The Soul selects her own Society –
Then – shuts the Door –
To her divine Majority –
Present no more –

Unmoved – she notes the Chariots – pausing –
At her low Gate –
Unmoved – an Emperor be kneeling
Upon her Mat –

I've known her – from an ample nation –
Choose One –
Then – close the Valves of her attention –
Like Stone –

314
319
320
323
334

Mich dünkt die Erde kurz –
Und unbegrenzt die Qual –
Verwundet viele;
Was liegt daran?

Mich dünkt der Tod gewiß –
Das stärkste Lebensband
Hält dem Verfall nicht stand;
Was liegt daran?

Mich dünkt, im Himmel oben –
Wird alles aufgewogen –
Die Gleichung neu gezogen –
Was liegt daran?

Die Seele, die sich selbst zu Gaste lädt –
Schließt dann die Tür –
Zu ihrer göttlichen Majorität –
Fehlt keiner mehr.

Gelassen – sieht sie Equipagen
Vorm Gitter stehn –
Gelassen – einen Herrscher kniend
Um Einlaß flehn –

Einst wählte sie – aus ihres Volkes Fülle –
Ein Sein –
Dann schloß sie der Empfänglichkeit Ventile
Wie Stein –

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391

A Visitor in Marl –
Who influences Flowers –
Till they are orderly as Busts –
And Elegant – as Glass –

Who visits in the Night –
And just before the Sun –
Concludes his glistening interview –
Caresses – and is gone –

But whom his fingers touched –
And where his feet have run –
And whatsoever Mouth he kissed –
Is as it had not been –

335
341

410

The first Day's Night had come –
And grateful that a thing
So terrible – had been endured –
I told my Soul to sing –

She said her Strings were snapt –
Her Bow – to Atoms blown –
And so to mend her – gave me work
Until another Morn –

And then – a Day as huge
As Yesterdays in pairs,
Unrolled it's horror in my face –
Until it blocked my eyes –

My Brain – begun to laugh –
I mumbled – like a fool –
And tho' 'tis Years ago – that Day –
My Brain keeps giggling – still.

Ins Erdreich kommt ein Gast,
der auf die Blumen wirkt,
Bis sie formell wie Büsten sind –
Und elegant wie Glas.

Er ist ein Nachtbesuch,
Der kurz vor Sonnenlicht
Sein glitzernd Zwiegespräch beschließt
Mit Streicheln – und entweicht.

Doch wen er angerührt –
Und was sein Fuß gestreift –
Und jeder Mund, den er geküßt –
Ist nicht mehr wie zuvor.

Es kam die Nacht des ersten Tags –
Und dankbar, daß ein Ding
So schreckvoll überstanden war –
Sprach ich zur Seele: Sing!

Ihr Saitenspiel zerbrach –
Der Bogen barst entzwei –
So ließ sie mich ihr Flickwerk tun –
Bis wieder Morgen sei –

Dann kam ein Tag, so groß
Wie eine Gesternschar –
Und warf sein Graun mir ins Gesicht –
Bis nichts mehr sichtbar war –

Da lachte mein Gehirn –
Ich lallte wie ein Narr –
Das war vor Jahren – doch mein Hirn
Hört nicht zu kichern auf.

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And Something's odd – within –
That person that I was –
And this One – do not feel the same –
Could it be Madness – this?

425

Good Morning – Midnight –
I'm coming Home –
Day – got tired of Me –
How could I – of Him?

Sunshine was a sweet place –
I liked to stay –
But Morn – did'nt want me – now –
So – Goodnight – Day!

I can look – cant I –
When the East is Red?
The Hills – have a way – then –
That puts the Heart – abroad –

You – are not so fair – Midnight –
I chose – Day –
But – please take a little Girl –
He turned away!

435

Much Madness is divinest Sense –
To a discerning Eye –
Much Sense – the starkest Madness –
'Tis the Majority
In this, as All, prevail –
Assent – and you are sane –
Demur – you're straightway dangerous –
And handled with a Chain –

Und eins ist wunderlich:
Das Wesen, das ich war –
Gleicht nicht dem Wesen, das ich bin –
Ob das – der Wahnsinn ist?

geändert

Guten Morgen – Mitternacht!
Ich komme heim –
Müde ward der Tag von mir –
Nicht ich von ihm.

Sonnenschein war sel'ger Ort –
Ich hätt' gern gewacht –
Doch der Morgen wollt' mich nicht –
Nun denn – Tag – gut' Nacht!

Zuschaun darf ich doch – nicht wahr –
Wenn der Osten glüht?
Die Hügel haben dann den Zug –
Der das Herz entführt –

Du bist nicht so schön – Mitternacht –
Ich lieb' den Tag –
Doch – nimm du das kleine Ding –
Das er nicht mag!

Wahnsinn ist oft der höchste Sinn –
Für den, der ihn versteht –
Und Sinn – der tollste Wahnsinn oft –
Nur die Majorität
Entscheidet hier wie überall –
Wer zustimmt – ist gesund –
Wer abweicht – ist gefährlich – und
Braucht Ketten wie ein Hund –

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441

This is my letter to the World
That never wrote to Me –
The simple News that Nature told –
With tender Majesty

Her Message is committed
To Hands I cannot see –
For love of Her – Sweet – countrymen –
Judge tenderly – of Me

449

I died for Beauty – but was scarce
Adjusted in the Tomb
When One who died for Truth, was lain
In an adjoining Room –

He questioned softly "Why I failed"?
"For Beauty", I replied –
"And I – for Truth – Themself are One –
We Brethren, are", He said –

And so, as Kinsmen, met a Night –
We talked between the Rooms –
Until the Moss had reached our lips –
And covered up – our names –

Ich schreibe diesen Brief der Welt,
Die nie an mich gedacht –
Was schlicht mir die Natur erzählt –
Mit milder Herrschermacht.

Die Botschaft wird an Hände,
Die ich nie sah, gesandt –
Seid ihr zuliebe – mild mit mir –
Ihr guten Herrn im Land!

Ich starb für Schönheit – und war kaum
Zurechtgelegt im Grab,
Als Einen, der für Wahrheit starb,
Man mir zum Nachbarn gab –

Er fragte sanft, was mir gefehlt.
„Die Schönheit", sagte ich –
„Und mir – die Wahrheit – sie sind eins –
Das macht uns brüderlich."

Und so, verschwistert in der Nacht –
Sprachen wir durchs Gelaß –
Bis Moos auf unsern Namen wuchs –
Und uns die Lippen schloß –

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508

I'm ceded – I've stopped being Theirs –
The name They dropped upon my face
With water, in the country church
Is finished using, now,
And They can put it with my Dolls,
My childhood, and the string of spools,
I've finished threading – too –

Baptized, before, without the choice,
But this time, consciously, of Grace –
Unto supremest name –
Called to my Full – The Crescent dropped –
Existence's whole Arc, filled up,
With one small Diadem.

My second Rank – too small the first –
Crowned – Crowing – on my Father's breast –
A half unconscious Queen –
But this time – Adequate – Erect,
With Will to choose, or to reject,
And I choose, just a Crown –

516

Beauty – be not caused – It Is –
Chase it, and it ceases –
Chase it not, and it abides –
Overtake the Creases

In the Meadow – when the Wind
Runs his fingers thro' it –
Deity will see to it
That You never do it –

Ich bin nicht mehr ihr Eigentum:
Der Name, den der Pfarrer mir
Mit Wasser ins Gesicht gesprengt,
Der ist jetzt abgebraucht.
Legt ihn zu meiner Kinderzeit,
Den Puppen und der Spulenschnur,
Die zieh ich nicht mehr auf.

Zuvor die Taufe ohne Wahl,
Doch bei Bewußtsein dieses Mal –
Zu höchstem ausersehn –
Zu vollem Sein – der Halbmond fiel –
Des Daseins ganzen Bogen füllt
Ein kleines Diadem.

Mein zweiter Rang – zuerst zu klein –
Krähend – an Vaters Brust – gekrönt –
Halb unbewußte Königin –
Doch diesmal – aufrecht – unverzagt,
Nach meiner freien Wahl befragt,
Wähl ich die Krone mir –

ke. Änderung

Schönheit ist nicht „weil" – SIE ist –
Such sie nicht zu halten –
Such sie nicht – und sie verweilt –
Überhol die Falten

In den Wiesen – wenn der Wind
Seine Finger durchführt –
Gottes Allmacht sorgt dafür,
Daß kein Mensch sie anrührt –

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531

We dream – it is good we are dreaming –
It would hurt us – were we awake –
But since it is playing – kill us,
And we are playing – shriek –

What harm? Men die – externally –
It is a truth – of Blood –
But we – are dying in Drama –
And Drama – is never dead –

Cautious – We jar each other –
And either – open the eyes –
Lest the Phantasm – prove the Mistake –
And the livid Surprise

Cool us to Shafts of Granite –
With just an Age – and Name –
And perhaps a phrase in Egyptian –
It's prudenter – to dream –

536

The Heart asks Pleasure – first –
And then – Excuse from Pain –
And then – those little Anodynes
That deaden suffering –

And then – to go to sleep –
And then – if it should be
The will of it's Inquisitor
The privilege to die –

Wir träumen – wie gut, daß wir träumen –
Wenn wir wach wären – tät es uns weh!
Doch es spielt ja nur mit uns – Töten,
Und wir, wir spielen – Schrein –

Was tut's? Im äußeren Sterben
Ist Wahrheit blutig-rot –
Wir aber sterben im Drama –
Und das Drama ist niemals tot –

Gib acht – Wir stoßen einander –
Und öffnen die Augen zugleich –
Daß nicht das Wahnbild wirklich wird –
Und der bleifahle Streich

Uns zu Granit erstarren läßt –
Darauf nur ein Name – ein Jahr –
Und vielleicht ein ägyptisches Zeichen –
Im Traum ist keine Gefahr –

Das Herz sucht Lust – zuerst –
Und dann – Erlaß vom Leid –
Und dann – ein Stillungsmittel,
Das jeden Schmerz betäubt –

Und dann – zur Ruh zu gehn –
Und dann – in letzter Not –
So es sein Inquisitor will,
Das Anrecht auf den Tod –

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540

I took my Power in my Hand –
And went against the World –
'Twas not so much as David – had –
But I – was twice as bold –

I aimed my Pebble – but Myself
Was all the one that fell –
Was it Goliah – was too large –
Or was myself – too small?

569

I reckon – when I count at all –
First – Poets – Then the Sun –
Then Summer – Then the Heaven of God –
And then – the List is done –

But, looking back – the First so seems
To Comprehend the Whole –
The Others look a needless Show –
So I write – Poets – All –

Their Summer – lasts a Solid Year –
They can afford a Sun
The East – would deem extravagant –
And if the Further Heaven –

Be Beautiful as they prepare
For Those who worship Them –
It is too difficult a Grace –
To justify the Dream –

587

Ich forderte die Welt heraus –
Zum Zweikampf zog's mich hin
Zwar nicht so stark wie David einst –
War ich zweimal so kühn –

Ich zielte meinen Kiesel – doch
Es fiel nur ich allein –
War Goliath – zu groß für mich –
War ich für ihn – zu klein?

Erst zähl ich Dichter – Sonne dann –
Wenn ich schon zählen soll –
Dann Sommer – dann das Himmelreich –
Dann – ist die Liste voll –

Im Rückblick scheint's – das Erste schließt
Das Ganze ein in sich –
Und überflüssig wird der Rest –
Nur Dichter – schreibe ich –

Ihr Sommer währt ein volles Jahr –
Bei ihrer Sonnenpracht
Ergreift den Orient Bettlerneid –
Wär' selbst der fernere Himmel

So schön wie der, den sie für uns
Zur Andacht hier erbaun –
Die Gnade wär zu schwer verdient –
Sie lohnte nicht den Traum –

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640

I cannot live with You –
It would be Life –
And Life is over there –
Behind the Shelf

The Sexton keeps the Key to –
Putting up
Our Life – His Porcelain –
Like a Cup –

Discarded of the Housewife –
Quaint – or Broke –
A newer Sevres pleases –
Old Ones crack –

I could not die – with You –
For One must wait
To shut the Other's Gaze down –
You – could not –

And I – Could I stand by
And see You – freeze –
Without my Right of Frost –
Death's privilege?

Nor could I rise – with You –
Because Your Face
Would put out Jesus' –
That New Grace

Glow plain – and foreign
On my homesick Eye –
Except that You than He
Shone closer by –

Ich kann nicht leben mit dir –
Es wäre das Leben –
Und das Leben steht drüben
Hinter dem Brett –

Aufgestellt vom Sakristan –
Verwahrt mit dem Schlüssel –
Unser Leben – sein Porzellan –
Wie eine Schüssel –

Fortgetan von der Hausfrau –
Unmodern – oder zerschlagen –
Ein neueres Sèvres macht Freude –
Altes wird sprüngig –

Ich kann nicht sterben – mit dir –
Denn man muß warten,
Des Andern Blick zu schließen –
Du – kannst es nicht –

Und ich – Kann ich dabeistehn
Und dich erstarren sehn –
Ohne mein Recht auf Frost –
Des Todes Privileg?

Noch kann ich auferstehn – mit dir –
Denn dein Gesicht
Verdeckte Jesus' –
Das neue Gnadenlicht

Bestrahlte fremd und fahl
Mein Aug', das dich vermißt –
Wenn näher nicht als seins
Dein Leuchten ist –

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They'd judge Us – How –
For You – served Heaven – You know,
Or sought to –
I could not –

Because You saturated Sight –
And I had no more Eyes
For sordid excellence
As Paradise

And were You lost, I would be –
Though My Name
Rang loudest
On the Heavenly fame –

And were You – saved –
And I – condemned to be
Where You were not –
That self – were Hell to Me –

So We must meet apart –
You there – I – here –
With just the Door ajar
That Oceans are – and Prayer –
And that White Sustenance –
Despair –

650

Pain – has an Element of Blank –
It cannot recollect
When it begun – or if there were
A time when it was not –

It has no Future – but itself –
Its Infinite contain
Its Past – enlightened to perceive
New Periods – of Pain.

Man wird uns richten – Wie –
Du dientest Gott – vielmehr,
Versuchtest du's –
Ich konnt' es nicht –

Denn du durchtränktest die Sicht
Und hast mich blind gemacht
Für den schäbigen Glanz
Paradiesischer Pracht.

Und wärst du verloren, wär' ich es –
Auf himmlischen Wiesen –
So laut sie dort
Meinen Namen priesen.

Und wärest du – erlöst –
Und man verdammte mich
Zu sein, wo du nicht bist –
Die Hölle wär' mein Ich –

So sehn wir uns getrennt –
Du dort – ich – hier –
Dem Türspalt zugewandt,
Der Meer ist – und Gebet –
Und der Verzweiflung weißes
Elixir –

geändert

Das Leid besteht zum Teil aus Nichts –
Es bleibt ihm unbekannt,
Wann es begann – noch ob die Zeit
Vor seiner Zeit bestand –

Es hat als Zukunft nur sich selbst –
Sein Endlossein verleiht
Vergangenem ein Vorgefühl
Von neuer Leidenszeit.

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657

I dwell in Possibility –
A fairer House than Prose –
More numerous of Windows –
Superior – for Doors –

Of Chambers as the Cedars –
Impregnable of Eye –
And for an Everlasting Roof
The Gables of the Sky –

Of Visitors – the fairest –
For Occupation – This –
The spreading wide my narrow Hands
To gather Paradise –

geändert

Ich wohne in der Möglichkeit –
Ihr Haus ist im Vergleich
Viel schöner – tür- und fensterreich –
Als die Alltäglichkeit –

Mit Zimmern wie die Zedern –
Geschützt vor jeder Schau –
Und als ein dauerhaftes Dach
Des Himmels Giebelbau –

Mit dem erlesensten Besuch –
Mein einziges Tagwerk dies –
Die schmalen Hände weit gespreizt,
Greif ich das Paradies –

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661

Could I but ride indefinite
As doth the Meadow Bee
And visit only where I liked
And No one visit me

And flirt all Day with Buttercups
And marry whom I may
And dwell a little everywhere
Or better, run away

With no Police to follow
Or chase Him if He do
Till He should jump Peninsulas
To get away from me –

I said "But just to be a Bee"
Upon a Raft of Air
And row in Nowhere all Day long
And anchor "off the Bar"

What Liberty! So Captives deem
Who tight in Dungeons are.

Könnt' ich doch schweben unbegrenzt
Wie es der Biene paßt
Und nur besuchen wen ich mag
Und hätte keinen Gast

Und Butterblumen-Liebelein
Und überall ein Haus
Und einen eignen Mann dazu –
Noch lieber rückt' ich aus

Von keiner Polizei verfolgt,
Wagt's einer, jag ich ihn,
Bis er das Festland meiden muß,
um sich mir zu entziehn –

Ich sagte, „Biene nur zu sein"
Auf einem Floß aus Luft,
Im Nirgends rudern tagelang
Und ankern „uferlos" –

Welch höchste Freiheit! So erscheint's
Gefangenen in der Gruft.

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670

One need not be a Chamber – to be Haunted –
One need not be a House –
The Brain – has Corridors surpassing
Material Place –

Far safer of a Midnightmeeting
External Ghost –
Than an Interior – Confronting –
That cooler – Host.

Far safer, through an Abbey – gallop –
The Stones a'chase –
Than Moonless – One's A'self encounter –
In lonesome place –

Ourself – behind Ourself – Concealed –
Should startle – most –
Assassin – hid in our Apartment –
Be Horror's least –

The Prudent – carries a Revolver –
He bolts the Door –
O'erlooking a Superior Spectre –
More near –

683

The Soul unto itself
Is an imperial friend –
Or the most agonizing Spy –
An Enemy – could send –

Secure against it's own –
No treason it can fear –
Itself – it's Sovreign – of itself
The Soul should stand in Awe –

Man muß kein Haus sein – heimgesucht zu werden –
Man muß kein Zimmer sein –
Im Hirn – die Korridore übertreffen
Den festen Bau –

Weit sicherer ein Verkehr mit Geistern
Um Mitternacht –
Als jenem kühleren Hausherrn zu begegnen –
Der in uns wacht.

Weit sicherer, durch ein Kloster jagen –
Gehetzt vom Stein –
Als unser eigenes Ich vor uns zu sehen –
Mondlos, allein –

Wir selbst – von unserm Selbst verdeckt –
Welch letzter Graus –
Der Mörder wär geringster Schreck –
In unserem Haus –

Wer Vorsicht übt – die Tür verschließt –
Revolver trägt –
Sieht nicht, wie nah ein mächt'geres Gespenst
Sich regt –

Die Seele ist sich selbst
Ein souveräner Freund –
Doch auch der grausamste Spion –
Entsandt von einem Feind –

Gesichert gegen sich –
Erschreckt sie kein Verrat –
Die Seele sollte ehrfurchtsvoll
Vor sich – als Herrscher – stehn –

geändert

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686

They say that "Time assuages" –
Time never did assuage –
An actual suffering strengthens
As Sinews do, with age –

Time is a Test of Trouble –
But not a Remedy –
If such it prove, it prove too
There was no Malady –

690

Victory comes late –
And is held low to freezing lips –
Too rapt with frost
To take it –
How sweet it would have tasted –
Just a Drop –
Was God so economical?
His Table's spread too high for Us –
Unless We dine on tiptoe –
Crumbs – fit such little mouths –
Cherries – suit Robins –
The Eagle's Golden Breakfast strangles – Them –
God keeps His Oath to Sparrows –
Who of little Love – know how to starve –

Man sagt, „die Zeit bringt Linderung" –
Die Zeit hat nie gelindert –
Den Sehnen gleich wächst wahres Leid
Im Alter unvermindert –

Die Zeit ist Prüfstein unserer Not –
Jedoch kein Heilungstrank –
Beweist sie das, beweist sie auch,
Der Kranke war nie krank –

u. f.

Der Sieg kommt spät –
Und wird erstarrten Lippen vorgehalten –
Die zu vereist sind,
Ihn zu kosten –
Wie süß hätt' er geschmeckt –
Ein Tropfen nur!
War Gott so sparsam?
Sein Tisch ist viel zu hoch für uns gedeckt –
Wir müßten auf den Zehenspitzen speisen!
Krumen – passen in den kleinsten Mund –
Kirschen – in Drosselkehlen –
Des Adlers goldnes Frühstück würgte sie!
Gottes Eid gilt für die Spatzen –
Die an wenig Liebe zu darben wissen –

686

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693

As if the Sea should part
And show a further Sea –
And that – a further – and the Three
But a presumption be –

Of Periods of Seas –
Unvisited of Shores –
Themselves the Verge of Seas to be –
Eternity – is Those –

~~711~~ 712

Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility –

We passed the School, where Children strove
At Recess – in the Ring –
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
We passed the Setting Sun –

Or rather – He passed Us –
The Dews drew quivering and chill –
For only Gossamer, my Gown –
My Tippet – only Tulle –

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –
The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – in the Ground –

Als teilte sich das Meer
Und zeigt ein weiteres Meer –
Und das ein weiteres – und die drei
Nur Vorbereitung wär'n

Für Meere Zeit um Zeit –
Von keinem Strand erreicht –
Ein jeder Rand von neuem Meer –
Das wäre Ewigkeit

Weil ich nicht anhielt vor dem Tod –
Hielt er sich mir bereit –
Sein Wagen trug uns beide nur –
Und die Unsterblichkeit.

geändert

Es ging im Trab – ihm eilt' es nicht –
Ich hatte meine Mühn
Und Müßigkeiten abgetan,
Weil er so höflich schien –

Am Schulhof kamen wir vorbei
Mit Kinderringelreihn –
Vorbei an Feldern starren Korns –
Am Sonnenuntergang –

Vielmehr – der ging an uns vorbei –
Der Tau war frostig kühl –
Ein dünner Hauch nur mein Gewand –
Mein Umhang – nur aus Tüll –

Wir rasteten vor einem Haus,
Das schwoll im Erdengrund –
Das Dach war kaum zu sehn – das Sims
Verborgen unterm Grund –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity –

713
(741)
(742)
764
748
756

Presentiment – is that long Shadow – on the Lawn
Indicative that Suns go down –

The Notice to the startled Grass
That Darkness – is about to pass –

769

One and One – are One –
Two – be finished using –
Well enough for Schools –
But for Minor Choosing –

Life – just – Or Death –
Or the Everlasting –
More – would be too vast
For the Soul's Comprising –

771

None can experience stint
Who Bounty – have not known –
The fact of Famine – could not be
Except for Fact of Corn –

Want – is a meagre Art
Acquired by Reverse –
The Poverty that was not Wealth –
Cannot be Indigence.

Jahrhunderte ist's her – doch kurz
Scheint seit dem Tag die Zeit –
Da ich geahnt – die Pferde gehn
In Richtung Ewigkeit –

Vorahnung – ist der lange Schatten – auf dem Grün –
Der anzeigt, daß die Sonnen untergehn –

Bekanntmachung an den bestürzten Garten –
Einbruch der Dunkelheit ist zu erwarten –

Eins und eins – sind eins –
Zwei – zuviel der Zahlen –
Gut genug für Schulgebrauch –
Doch für Einzelwahlen

Leben – oder Tod –
Oder Ewigbleiben –
Keine Seele kann
Größeres einverleiben –

Wer Fülle nicht gekannt,
Weiß nicht, was Mangel ist –
Der Hunger wird erst wirklich durch
Des Weizens Wirklichkeit –

Not ist die karge Kunst,
Durch Rückwärtsgang erlernt –
Die Armut, die nicht Reichtum war –
Heißt nicht Bedürftigkeit.

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784

Bereaved of all, I went abroad –
No less bereaved was I
Upon a New Peninsula –
The Grave preceded me –

Obtained my Lodgings, ere myself –
And when I sought my Bed –
The Grave it was reposed upon
The Pillow for my Head –

I waked, to find it first awake –
I rose – It followed me –
I tried to drop it in the Crowd –
To lose it in the Sea –

In Cups of artificial Drowse
To steep it's shape away –
The Grave – was finished – but the Spade
Remained in Memory –

827

The Only News I know
Is Bulletins all Day
From Immortality.

The Only Shows I see –
Tomorrow and Today –
Perchance Eternity –

The Only One I meet
Is God – The Only Street –
Existence – This traversed

If Other News there be –
Or Admirabler Show –
I'll tell it You –

Z. 1 geändert

Beraubt des Letzten zog ich fort –
Allein die Trauer blieb
Mir treu auf neuem Inselland –
Das Grab kam mir zuvor –

Bezog mein Obdach schon vor mir –
Und als ich müd vom Tag
Zu Bette ging, war es das Grab,
Das auf dem Kissen lag –

Erwachend fand ich es schon wach –
Beim Aufstehn folgt' es mir –
Verließ mich in der Menge nicht –
Verlor sich nicht im Meer –

In Bechern voll von trunknem Schlaf
Blieb seine Form bestehn –
Das Grab – war fertig – doch im Hirn
Hört' ich den Spaten gehn –

Die einz'ge Neuigkeit für mich
Ist der alltägliche Bericht
Von der Unsterblichkeit.

Das einz'ge Schauspiel, das ich seh –
Heißt manchmal Morgen, manchmal Heut –
Vielleicht auch Ewigkeit.

Und einzig Gott begegnet mir –
Die einz'ge Straße – Dasein Hier –
Hab ich die überquert

Und andere Neuigkeit gehört –
Ein Spiel gesehn von größerem Wert –
Sag ich Bescheid –

861

Split the Lark – and you'll find the Music –
Bulb after Bulb, in Silver rolled –
Scantily dealt to the Summer Morning
Saved for your Ear when Lutes be old.

Loose the Flood – you shall find it patent –
Gush after Gush, reserved for you –
Scarlet Experiment! Sceptic Thomas!
Now, do you doubt that your Bird was true?

870

Finding is the first Act
The second, loss,
Third, Expedition for
the "Golden Fleece"

Fourth, no Discovery –
Fifth, no Crew –
Finally, no Golden Fleece –
Jason – sham – too.

875

I stepped from Plank to Plank
A slow and cautious way
The Stars about my Head I felt
About my Feet the Sea.

I knew not but the next
Would be my final inch –
This gave me that precarious Gait
Some call Experience.

Spalte die Lerche – du findest die Töne –
Knolle für Knolle – in Silber geballt –
Spärlich verteilt an den Sommermorgen,
Bewahrt für dein Ohr, wenn die Laute verschallt.

Löse die Flut – du siehst, sie ergießt sich –
Strom über Strom, dir allein offenbar –
Blutige Probe! Ungläubiger Thomas!
Erkennst du den Vogel endlich als wahr?

2. Strophe geändert

Der erste Akt heißt: Finden,
Der zweite: Verlust,
Der dritte: Ausfahrt und Suche
Nach dem „Goldenen ~~Fließ~~" – Vlies

Der vierte: Keine Entdeckung,
Der fünfte: Kein Mann am Bug –
Das Ende: Kein Goldenes ~~Fließ~~ – Vlies
Jason selbst – Betrug.

Ich trat von Steg zu Steg,
Bedacht auf die Gefahr –
Die Sterne fühlt' ich um mein Haupt,
Um meinen Fuß das Meer.

Nicht wissend, ob der nächste Schritt
Für mich der letzte sei –
Das gab mir jenen schwanken Gang,
Den man Erfahrung nennt.

8

884

An Everywhere of Silver
With Ropes of Sand
To keep it from effacing
The Track called Land.

887

We outgrow love, like other things
And put it in the Drawer –
Till it an Antique fashion shows –
Like Costumes Grandsires wore.

891

898

How happy I was if I could forget
To remember how sad I am
Would be an easy adversitiy
But the recollecting of Bloom

Keeps making November difficult
Till I who was almost bold
Lose my way like a little Child
And perish of the cold.

910

Ein Überall aus Silber
Mit Seilen aus Sand –
Damit es nicht verwische
Die Spur namens Land.

Wir entwachsen der Liebe wie jedem Ding
Und legen sie in die Kommode –
Bis sie uns so antik erscheint
Wie Kostüme der Großvätermode.

Könnt' ich vergessen, wie glücklich ich war
Zu bedenken wie traurig ich bin
Wäre ein leichtes Mißgeschick
Doch das erinnerte Blühn

Macht den November doppelt schwer
Bis ich die fast kühn war zuvor
Verloren geh wie ein kleines Kind
Das in der Kälte erfror.

985

The Missing All, prevented Me
From missing minor Things.
If nothing larger then a World's
Departure from a Hinge
Or Sun's extinction, be observed
'Twas not so large that I
Could lift my Forehead from my work
For Curiosity.

1017

To die – without the Dying
And live – without the Life
This is the hardest Miracle
Propounded to Belief.

1045
1050 ?
1052
1056
1059

1065

Let down the Bars, Oh Death –
The tired Flocks come in
Whose bleating ceases to repeat
Whose wandering is done –

Thine is the stillest night
Thine the securest Fold
Too near Thou art for seeking Thee
Too tender, to be told.

geändert

Verlust des Ganzen schützte mich
Vor minderem Verlust.
Wenn weiter nichts als eine Welt
Aus ihren Angeln fährt
Oder das Sonnenlicht erlischt,
Wär das kein Anlaß mir,
Von meiner Arbeit aufzuschaun
Aus reiner Wißbegier.

Zu sterben – ohne daß man stirbt
Und leben – ohne Leben,
Dies wird als schwerstes Wunderwerk
Dem Glauben aufgegeben.

Öffne die Gitter, Tod –
Die müde Herde kehrt heim
Ihr Blöken ist verklungen
Ihr Wandern ist vorbei –

Dein ist die stillste Nacht
Dein der sicherste Hort
Zu nah bist du dem Suchenden
Zu zart für unser Wort.

1067
1069

1104

The Crickets sang
And set the Sun
And Workmen finished, one by one
Their Seam the Day upon.

The low Grass loaded with the Dew,
The Twilight stood as Strangers do –
With Hat in Hand, polite and new
To stay as if, or go.

A Vastness, as a Neighbor, came –
A Wisdom without Face or Name –
A Peace, as Hemispheres at Home –
And so, the Night became.

1129

Tell all the Truth but tell it slant –
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise
As Lightning to the Children eased
With explantation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind –

1205-
1208
1212

1270

Is Heaven a Physician?
They say that He can heal –
But Medicine Posthumous
Is unavailable –
Is Heaven an Exchequer?
They speak of what we owe –
But that negotiation
I'm not a Party to –

Die Grille sang,
Die Sonne schwand,
Handwerker säumten, Band für Band,
Den letzten Tagesrand.

Das Gras sank tief, vom Tau bedeckt,
Das Zwielicht stand wie Fremde stehn –
Gezogenen Huts, neu und korrekt
Im Bleiben oder Gehn.

Als Nachbar kam Unendlichkeit –
Und Weisheit als Unkenntlichkeit –
Und Friede als ein häuslich All –
Dann war die Nacht bereit.

geändert

Sag alles wahr, doch sag es schräg –
Im Umweg liegt Gewinn:
Für schwachen Glücksbedarf zu scharf
Der Wahrheit Wundersinn.
Wie Blitz, durch mildes Wort erklärt,
Vertrauter wird dem Kind,
Muß Wahrheit blenden nach und nach,
Sonst würde jeder blind.

Ist Gott ein Arzt? Man redet
Von seiner Heilungskraft –
Doch gibt es keine Medizin,
Die Tote leben macht –
Ist Gott Finanzminister?
Man sagt, wir schulden viel –
Jedoch bei dieser Transaktion
Halt ich mich aus dem Spiel –

1333

A little Madness in the Spring
Is wholesome even for the King,
But God be with the Clown –
Who ponders this tremendous scene –
This whole Experiment of Green
As if it were his own!

1365
1472
1503
1506

1510

How happy is the little Stone
That rambles in the Road alone,
And doesn't care about Careers
And Exigencies never fears –
Whose Coat of elemental Brown
A passing Universe put on,
And independent as the Sun
Associates or glows alone,
Fulfilling absolute Decree
In casual simplicity –

1543?

1627
1714
1715

1718

Drowning is not so pitiful
As the attempt to rise.
Three times, 'tis said, a sinking man
Comes up to face the skies,
And then declines forever
To that abhorred abode,
Where hope and he part company –
For he is grasped of God.
The Maker's cordial visage,
However good to see,
Is shunned, we must admint it,
Like an adversitiy.

Ein leichter Frühlingswahnsinn tut
Sogar dem König selber gut,
Doch Gott sei mit dem Clown,
Der die gewalt'gen Szenerien –
Experiment aus lauter Grün –
Als eigenes Werk bestaunt!

Wie glücklich ist der kleine Stein,
Der seiner Wege geht allein
Und sich nicht kümmert um Karrieren,
Die Angst nicht kennt, sich zu bewähren –
Den unscheinbaren braunen Mantel trägt,
Den ihm die Welt zufällig angelegt,
Und wie die Sonne frei beschließt,
Ob er mit andern, ob allein genießt,
Der, unbefangen wie er ist und schlicht,
Dem Obersten Gesetz entspricht –

Ertrinken ist so kläglich nicht
Wie der Versuch, emporzustreben.
Dreimal darf ein Versinkender
Sein Haupt zum Himmel heben,
Eh er auf ewig niedergeht
Zu der verhaßten Rast,
Wo sich die Hoffnung ihm entzieht –
Weil Gott ihn dort umfaßt.
Des Schöpfers trautes Antlitz,
So gern man es auch sieht,
Gleicht, wenn wir es bekennen,
Dem Unheil, das man flieht.

1732

My life closed twice before its close;
It yet remains to see
If Immortality unveil
A third event to me,

So huge, so hopeless to conceive
As these that twice befell.
Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.

1755

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few.

1770

Mein Leben schloß sich zweimal vor dem Schluß;
Noch ist's nicht zu ersehn
Ob mir Unsterblichkeit bestimmt
Als drittes ein Geschehn,

So groß, ungreifbar hoffnungslos
Wie jene zwei vorher.
Wer Trennung schon vom Himmel kennt,
Braucht keine Hölle mehr.

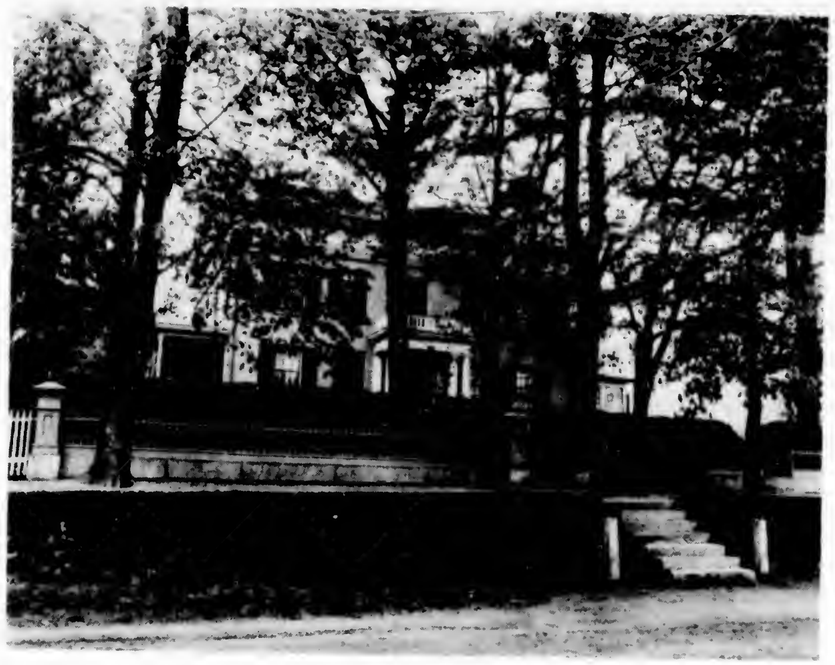
Man macht eine Prärie mit einem Klee und einer Biene,
Einem Klee und einer Biene
Und Phantasie.
Die Phantasie tut's auch allein,
Sollten Bienen selten sein.

(Gedankenstriche und Gedankensprünge)

Die Anordnung der Gedichte in der vorliegenden Auswahl bezieht sich auf die numerierte Folge in der Harvard-Ausgabe *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* und umfaßt die Periode von 1849 bis 1882. Die Rechtschreibung und Interpunktion der Originalfassungen wurden unverändert beibehalten.

Über die Bedeutung von Emily Dickinsons Gedankenstrichen gibt es fast ebenso viel verschiedene Theorien wie über die Identität ihrer vermeintlichen Liebhaber. Auch hier sind die Resultate bisher unergiebig geblieben. Doch gehören die Gedankenstriche zu Emily wie die Sommersprossen auf ihrem Busen, die sie in ihrem aggressiven Gedicht "Rearrange a Wife's Affection" als unverkennbare persönliche Merkmale erwähnt. Sie fordern den Leser heraus, den Gedankensprüngen der Dichterin zu folgen, manchmal vor einer unerwarteten Wendung kurz den Atem anzuhalten, Verbindungsbrücken zwischen scheinbar unüberbrückbaren Gegensätzen herzustellen und gelegentlich – am Ende eines Gedichts – den Ausgang offenzulassen. Natürlich bleibt es dem Leser freigestellt, diesen und anderen Spekulationen seine eigenen hinzuzufügen.

not included in 2nd edition



Haus der Dickinsons von 1840–1855

ZUM BRIEFWECHSEL ZWISCHEN EMILY DICKINSON UND THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON

Als Emily Dickinson am 15. April 1862 ihren ersten Brief (ohne formelle Anrede) an "Mr Higginson" schrieb, war er eine berühmte Persönlichkeit, nicht nur als Schriftsteller und Kritiker, sondern auch als revolutionärer Kämpfer für die Sklavenbefreiung und als ehemaliger Prediger, der in seiner Antrittspredigt (1852) gesagt hatte: „Wir brauchen mehr Radikalismus in unserer Religion und mehr Religion in unserem Radikalismus." Sein Auftreten auf den verschiedensten öffentlichen Schauplätzen wurde regelmäßig in der Tageszeitung "Springfield Republican" kommentiert und von einem großen Publikum verfolgt. Dazu gehörte auch Emily Dickinson, trotz ihrer Beteuerung, daß sie keine anderen Nachrichten erreichten als der „alltägliche Bericht von der Unsterblichkeit".

Ein Aufsatz von Higginson über die Kunst des Schreibens in der Aprilnummer des *Atlantic Monthly* hatte viele unbekannte Schriftsteller dazu ermutigt, ihm ihre Manuskripte einzusenden. Wie er an den Herausgeber des *Atlantic* schrieb, befand sich unter dem Material nichts, was zur Veröffentlichung geeignet gewesen wäre. Trotzdem: Emily Dickinsons erregter, dringlicher Appell und die Originalität ihrer beigefügten Gedichte hatten sein Interesse geweckt. Er antwortete ihr fast umgehend und bat sie um weitere Gedichte sowie um ein Bild von sich und einige biographische Angaben. Sie benutzte ihre erprobte „schräge" Wahrheitsmethode, beantwortete seine Fragen mit neuen rätselhaften Anspielungen oder gar nicht und behauptete, sie habe „vor diesem Winter kein Gedicht geschrieben" und der Gedanke an Veröffentlichung läge ihr „so fern . . . wie das Firmament der Fischflosse". Sie nannte Higginson ihren Mentor und unterzeichnete ihre Briefe mit "your scholar" („Ihre Schülerin"). (Das englische Wort "scholar" ist grammatikalisch neutral und hat die zusätzliche Bedeutung von Gelehrsamkeit; es kann als Bezeichnung für einen Gelehrten wie für einen „Belehrten" benutzt werden). Sie bat ihn um seine Freundschaft und Hilfe, und er ging darauf ein. Die Freundschaft entwickelte sich in einer für beide unerwarteten Weise, aber die wohlgemeinte Kritik, die er an ihrer dichterischen Ausdrucksform übte, wurde von ihr lediglich mit Dank zur Kenntnis genommen, ohne zu den von ihrem Lehrmeister erwünschten Resultaten zu führen.

Ihr Brief vom August 1862 erweckt fast den Eindruck, als hätte sie sich wirklich bemüht, sich seinen Anforderungen anzupassen. „Sind die [Gedichte] hier ordentlicher?" fragt sie, und „Wollen Sie mir helfen, mich zu bessern?" Sie ist anscheinend bereit, orthographische Fehler zu korrigieren, aber ihr persönlicher Stil bleibt unkorrigierbar. Bei aller scheinbaren Bescheidenheit dem Lehrer gegenüber, tritt sie ihm immer wieder mit erstaunlicher Überlegenheit entgegen. Was sie für sich als wichtig und notwendig erkannte (die „Botschaft der Natur", die sie weitergibt), bedarf keiner anderen Autorität. Die wiederholt gemachte Erfahrung, daß ihre Sprache nicht die ihrer Zeitgenossen war, führte sie dazu, ihren „Brief an die Welt" für spätere Zeiten aufzubewahren.

Emilys Bruder Austin sagte nach ihrem Tod, sie habe vor Higginson „posiert", das heißt, ihm etwas vorgespielt. Doch das trifft nur bedingt zu. Obwohl es ihr nicht schwerfiel, in wechselnden Rollen und Verkleidungen vor ihren Freunden zu erscheinen, darf man ihr glauben, wenn sie an Higginson schrieb: „Sie wußten nicht, daß Sie mir das Leben gerettet haben" – und ihn später ihren „sichersten Freund" nannte, zu dem sie immer flüchten konnte.

In der modernen Literaturkritik wurde Higginson noch bis Ende der sechziger Jahre ziemlich einstimmig als Vertreter des bornierten, spießerischen Pharisäertums angegriffen. Man warf ihm vor, daß er Emily Dickinsons Genie nicht sofort entdeckt und es mit der Welt geteilt hatte. Diese Kritik ist ungerecht, denn sie entstellt die Tatsachen. Higginsons persönliche Aufzeichnungen und Äußerungen sind unmittelbare Beweise dafür, wie stark er sich von der Wirkung ihres Genies ergriffen fühlte und wie unbehaglich ihm dabei zumute war. Er versuchte, sie in die „normale" Welt seiner literarischen Salons einzuführen und sie damit gesellschaftsfähig zu machen. Aber auch wenn es ihm gelungen wäre, ihre Widerstände gegen diese Art von „Menagerien" zu überwinden, er hätte, selbst mit dem großen Einfluß seiner Persönlichkeit, ihr nicht das Ansehen verschaffen können, das ihr in vollem Ausmaß erst in diesem Jahrhundert zuteil wurde. Daß er nach ihrem Tod den Mut aufbrachte, sich als Vorkämpfer für ihr Werk einzusetzen und den oft höhnischen Angriffen vieler seiner Kollegen mit bewundernswerter Standhaftigkeit zu begegnen, ist eine Leistung, mit der die Geschichte von Emily Dickinsons Ruhm beginnt.

15. April 1862

Mr Higginson,

Sind Sie zu schwer beschäftigt, um zu sagen, ob mein Vers lebt?

Der Geist ist sich selbst so nah – er kann nicht klar sehen – und ich habe keinen, den ich fragen kann –

Sollten Sie glauben, daß er atmet – und hätten Sie die Muße, es mir zu sagen, ich würde tiefe Dankbarkeit empfinden –

Wenn ich im Irrtum bin – wollten Sie mir das sagen – es würde meine Achtung vor Ihnen erhöhen –

Ich füge meinen Namen bei – und bitte Sie – sehr geehrter Herr – mir zu sagen, was wahr ist?

Daß Sie mich nicht verraten werden – darum brauche ich Sie nicht zu bitten – denn die Ehre ist ihr eigenes Unterpfand –

Anstelle einer Unterschrift fügte ED eine Karte bei, auf die sie ihren Namen schrieb. Dieser erste Brief an Higginson ist der Beginn einer Korrespondenz, die bis zum letzten Monat vor ihrem Tod anhielt. Der äußere Anlaß war ein Leitartikel von Higginson im *Atlantic Monthly*, "Letter to a Young Contributor" (Brief an einen jungen Einsender), in dem er schreibenden Anfängern praktische Ratschläge gab. Der Brief an Higginson enthielt vier Gedichte von ED.

25. April 1862

Mr Higginson,

Ihre Freundlichkeit verdiente einen früheren Dank – aber ich war krank – und schreibe heute auf meinem Kissen.

Ich danke Ihnen für die Operation – sie war nicht so schmerzhaft wie ich erwartete. Ich bringe Ihnen andere [Gedichte] – wie Sie es verlangen – obwohl sie vielleicht nicht anders sind –

Solange mein Gedanke unbekleidet ist – sehe ich den Unterschied, aber wenn ich ihnen etwas anziehe – ist einer wie der andere, starr und stumm.

Sie fragten, wie alt ich sei? Ich habe vor diesem Winter kein Gedicht geschrieben – bis auf eins oder zwei – verehrter Herr –

Ich hatte einen Schrecken – seit September – über den ich mit niemand sprechen konnte – und so singe ich wie der Knabe am Friedhof – weil ich mich fürchte – Sie fragen nach meinen Büchern – An Dichtern – habe ich Keats – und Mr und Mrs Browning. An Prosa – Mr Ruskin – Sir Thomas Browne – und die Offenbarungen. Ich bin zur Schule gegangen – aber in Ihrem Sinne hatte ich

keine Ausbildung. Als kleines Mädchen hatte ich einen Freund, der mich Unsterblichkeit lehrte – aber er selbst wagte sich zu nah heran – und kam nie zurück – Bald nachdem mein Lehrer gestorben war – und viele Jahre lang war mein Lexikon mein einziger Gefährte – Dann fand ich einen anderen – aber er wollte mich nicht als Schülerin – so verließ er das Land.

Sie fragen nach meinen Gefährten. Die Hügel – Herr – und der Sonnenuntergang – und ein Hund – so groß wie ich, den mir mein Vater kaufte – Sie sind besser als menschliche Wesen – weil sie wissen – aber nichts verraten – und der Lärm im Teich am Mittag – übertrifft mein Klavier. Ich habe einen Bruder und eine Schwester – Meine Mutter hält nichts vom Denken – und Vater ist zu beschäftigt mit seinen Gerichtsakten, um zu merken, was wir tun – Er kauft mir viele Bücher – aber bittet mich, sie nicht zu lesen – denn er fürchtet, daß sie den Geist zerrütten. Alle sind gläubig – außer mir – und reden jeden Morgen eine Eklipse an – die sie ihren „Vater" nennen. Aber ich fürchte, meine Geschichte ermüdet Sie – Ich würde gerne lernen – Können Sie mir sagen, wie man wächst – oder ist das nicht mitteilbar – wie Melodie – oder Hexenkunst?

Sie sprechen von Mr Whitman – Ich habe sein Buch nie gelesen – hörte aber, daß er schändlich sei –

Ich habe Miss Prescott's "Circumstance" gelesen, aber es hat mich in der Dunkelheit verfolgt – deshalb wich ich ihr aus –

Zwei Redakteure von Zeitschriften kamen diesen Winter in meines Vaters Haus – und fragten, was meine Meinung sei – und als ich sie fragte „Warum?", sagten sie, ich sei knauserig – und sie wollten sie [die Meinung] der Welt mitteilen –

Ich selbst konnte mein Selbst nicht messen –

Meine Größe erschien mir – klein – Ich las Ihre Kapitel im *Atlantic* – und empfand Achtung vor Ihnen – Ich war sicher, Sie würden eine vertrauliche Frage nicht zurückweisen –

Ist dies – mein Herr – was Sie von mir hören wollten?

In Freundschaft

E – Dickinson.

Higginsons Artikel im *Atlantic Monthly* zitiert Ruskin und erwähnt Sir Thomas Brownes eindringlichen Stil. John Ruskin (1819–1900), englischer Kunstkritiker und Vertreter einer sozialen Reformbewegung, veröffentlichte 1843 den ersten Band seiner fünfbändigen Geschichte der modernen Malerei

("Modern Painters"), die ihn zum einflußreichsten Kritiker seiner Zeit machte. Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682), englischer Arzt und Schriftsteller, verband in seinen Werken religiöse Betrachtungen und Skeptizismus.

ED's „Freund, der [sie] Unsterblichkeit lehrte", war, wie man annimmt, Benjamin Franklin Newton, ein Jura-Praktikant, der von 1847 bis 1849 bei ihrem Vater arbeitete. Er war neun Jahre älter als sie und hatte einen entscheidenden Einfluß auf ihre frühe Entwicklung. (Siehe auch Anmerkung auf Seite 89.)

Walt Whitman (1819–1892) hatte 1855 mit der Veröffentlichung seines ersten Gedichtbandes „Grashalme" ("Leaves of Grass") großes allgemeines Aufsehen erregt.

"Circumstance" („Der Umstand") war eine im *Atlantic* vom Mai 1860 veröffentlichte Erzählung der damals sehr beliebten Schriftstellerin Harriet Prescott Spofford.

7. Juni 1862

Lieber Freund,

Ihr Brief brachte keine Trunkenheit, weil ich Rum schon vorher gekostet hatte – Domingo kommt nur einmal – doch haben mich wenig Freuden so tief berührt wie Ihr Urteil, und wollte ich Ihnen zu danken versuchen, würden die Tränen meine Zunge hemmen –

Mein sterbender Lehrer sagte mir, er würde leben wollen bis ich ein Dichter geworden wäre, aber der Tod war für mich ein Aufruhr, den ich kaum beherrschen konnte – damals – und noch lange danach – wenn ein plötzliches Licht auf den Obstgärten oder eine neue Mode des Windes meine Aufmerksamkeit erregte – fühlte ich eine Lähmung in mir – die von den Versen nur gelindert wird –

Ihr zweiter Brief überraschte mich und machte mich einen Augenblick schwanken – Ich hatte ihn nicht erwartet – Ihr erster brachte keine Schande, denn die Wahrhaftigen schämen sich nicht – Ich dankte Ihnen für Ihre Gerechtigkeit – aber konnte die Schellen nicht fallen lassen, deren Geklingel meinen schweren Schritt dämpfte – Vielleicht wirkte der Balsam besser, weil Sie mich erst bluten ließen.

Ich lächle bei Ihrem Vorschlag, ich solle vorläufig nichts „veröffentlichen" – weil das meinen Gedanken so fern ist wie das Firmament der Fischflosse –

Wenn der Ruhm mir gehörte, könnte ich ihm nicht entfliehen – wenn nicht, würde mich der längste Tag auf der Jagd überholen – und die Anerkennung meines Hundes ginge mir verloren – Mein barfüßiger Rang ist besser –

Sie finden meinen Gang sprunghaft – Ich bin in Gefahr – Herr –
Sie finden, mir fehlt die Kontrolle – Ich habe kein Tribunal.
Würden Sie Zeit haben, der „Freund" zu sein, den ich, wie Sie meinen, brauche? [. . .]

Wenn ich Ihnen bringen dürfte, was ich mache – nicht so oft, daß es Sie stören würde – und Sie fragen könnte, ob ich's klar gesagt habe – wär' das für mich Kontrolle –

Der Seemann, der den Nord nicht sieht – muß seinem Kompaß traun –

Der „Hand im Dunkeln mir gereicht", halt' ich die meine hin und kehre um – Ich habe jetzt nichts Angelsächsisches –

Als bät' ich um Almosen nur,
Und die erstaunte Hand
Bekommt ein Königreich geschenkt,
Und ich steh wie gebannt –
Als fragte ich den Orient,
Wird mir ein Tag gewährt –
Und er hebt seinen Purpurdamm,
Daß mich sein Licht zerstört!

Wollen Sie wirklich mein Lehrmeister sein, Mr Higginson?
In Freundschaft
E Dickinson –

Die Wendung „Ich habe nichts Angelsächsisches" (I have no Saxon) bedeutet: die Sprache versagt mir, wie aus einem Gedichtentwurf hervorgeht, in dem sie "English language" als Alternative für "Saxon" erwägt.

Juli 1862

Glauben Sie mir auch ohne eines? Ich habe kein Portrait, aber ich bin klein wie der Zaunkönig, und mein Haar ist dreist wie die Kastanienklette – und meine Augen sind wie der Sherry in dem Glas, das der Gast stehen läßt – Genügt Ihnen das?

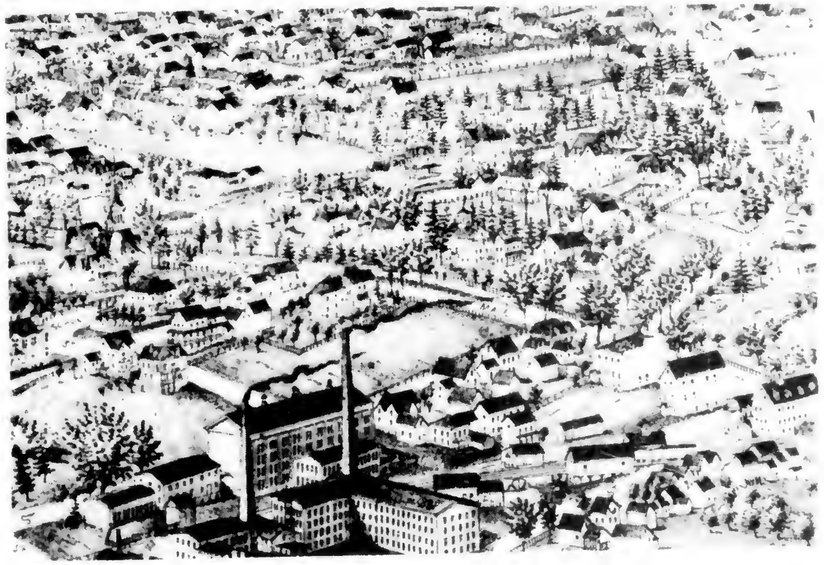
Vater ist oft besorgt darüber – Er sagt, der Tod könnte eintreffen, und er hat Abdrücke von allen anderen – aber von mir

hat er keinen, doch ich habe festgestellt, daß das Lebendige in wenigen Tagen von diesen Dingen abfällt und verhüte die Schande – Sie werden das nicht als Laune ansehen –

Sie sagten „Dunkel". Ich kenne den Schmetterling – und die Eidechse – und die Orchidee –

Sind das nicht *Ihre* Landsleute?

Ich bin glücklich, Ihre Schülerin zu sein und werde die Freundlichkeit verdienen, die ich nicht vergelten kann.



Amherst um 1875

Wenn Sie wirklich zustimmen, trage ich jetzt vor

Wollen Sie mir meine Fehler sagen, so offen als sprächen Sie zu sich selbst, denn lieber will ich zusammenzucken als sterben. Man ruft den Chirurgen nicht, um den Knochen zu loben, sondern um ihn einzurenken, mein Herr, und der innere Bruch ist kritischer. Und dafür, verehrter Lehrmeister, verspreche ich Ihnen – Gehorsam – die Blüte aus meinem Garten und jede Dankbarkeit, die ich kenne. Vielleicht lächeln Sie über mich. Das würde mich nicht hindern – Der Außenkreis ist meine Angelegenheit – Eine Unkenntnis, nicht der Gebräuche, aber mit der Morgenröte ertappt zu werden – oder vom Sonnenuntergang entdeckt – und ich das einzige Känguruh inmitten all der Schönheit, das, verehrter Herr,

bedrückt mich, und ich meinte, daß Unterweisung mich befreien könnte.

Da Sie so viele Obliegenheiten haben, abgesehen von meinem Wachstum – werden Sie selbst bestimmen, wie oft ich kommen soll – ohne zur Last zu fallen. Und wenn Sie irgendwann – bereuen, mich empfangen zu haben, oder wenn ich mich aus anderem Stoff erweise als Sie annahmen – müssen Sie mich verbannen –

Wenn ich mich als Vertreterin der Verse ausgebe – heißt das nicht, daß ich es bin – sondern eine angenommene Person. Sie haben recht mit der „Vollkommenheit."

Das Heute macht das Gestern minderwertig.

Sie sprachen von „Pippa geht vorüber" – Ich habe nie zuvor jemanden von „Pippa geht vorüber" sprechen hören.

Sie sehen, ich lebe in Unwissenheit.

Ihnen zu danken verwirrt mich. Sind Sie allmächtig? Wenn ich eine Freude hätte, die Sie nicht haben, würde es mich beglücken, sie Ihnen zu bringen.

Ihre Schülerin

Robert Browning (1812–1889), englischer Dichter, verheiratet mit Elizabeth Barrett Browning, die von ED sehr bewundert wurde. Robert Brownings "Pippa Passes" war 1841 erschienen.

„Der Außenkreis ist meine Angelegenheit" (My Business is Circumference) ist eine der von ED häufig zitierten Formulierungen, die den Biographen der Dichterin zu den verschiedensten Auslegungen Anlaß gegeben hat. Der Begriff "Circumference", der in vielen ihrer Gedichte auftaucht, hat in seinem gewöhnlichen Gebrauch die Bedeutung von „Peripherie" oder „äußere Grenze eines Kreises". Für ED gehört er zu den magischen Worten, mit denen sie die „Alltäglichkeit" in die „Möglichkeit" verwandelt. Vgl. das Gedicht S. 36/37.

August 1862

Lieber Freund –

Sind die hier ordentlicher? Ich danke Ihnen für die Wahrheit –

Ich hatte keinen Herrscher in meinem Leben und kann mich nicht selbst regieren, und wenn ich meine beschränkten Kräfte zu ordnen suche – explodieren sie – und ich bleibe dürftig und verkohlt zurück –

Ich glaube, Sie nannten mich „eigensinnig". Wollen Sie mir helfen, mich zu bessern?

Ich nehme an, daß der Stolz, der uns mitten im Wald den Atem anhalten läßt, nicht unser eigener ist –

Sie sagen, ich gestehe die kleinen Fehler ein und übergehe die großen – Weil ich die Orthographie sehen kann – aber die unsichtbare Unwissenheit [zu entdecken] ist die Aufgabe meines Lehrers –

Warum ich „den Verkehr mit Männern und Frauen meide" – sie sprechen laut über heilige Dinge – und verwirren meinen Hund – Er und ich haben nichts gegen sie einzuwenden, wenn sie auf ihrer Seite bleiben. Ich glaube, Carlo würde Ihnen gefallen – Er ist stumm und tapfer – Ich glaube, Sie würden den Kastanienbaum mögen, dem ich auf meinem Weg begegnete. Er tauchte plötzlich vor mir auf – und ich dachte, der Himmel steht in Blüte –

Dann gibt es ein geräuschloses Geräusch im Obstgarten – das ich andere Leute hören lasse – Sie sagten mir in einem Brief, Sie könnten mich „jetzt" nicht besuchen, und ich gab keine Antwort, nicht weil ich keine hatte, sondern weil ich nicht glaubte, so eine weite Reise wert zu sein –

Ich bitte nicht um eine so große Freude, damit Sie sie mir nicht versagen –

Sie schreiben „Jenseits Ihres Wissens." Sie würden keinen Scherz mit mir treiben, weil ich Ihnen glaube – aber verehrter Lehrer – meinen Sie's im Ernst? Alle Leute sagen „Was?" zu mir, aber ich hielt das für eine Redensart –

Als ich als kleines Mädchen oft im Wald war, sagte man mir, daß die Schlange mich beißen würde, daß ich eine giftige Blume pflücken könne oder daß Waldgeister mich entführen würden, aber ich ging weiter und traf niemanden außer Engeln, die viel mehr Scheu vor mir zeigten als ich vor ihnen, deshalb halte ich nichts von dem Betrug, den viele üben.

Ich werde Ihre Lehre beachten – obwohl ich sie nicht immer verstehe.

Ich hatte eine Zeile in einem Vers unterstrichen – weil ich sie fand, nachdem ich ihn geschrieben hatte – und nie bewußt eine Farbe anrühre, die ein anderer gemischt hat –

Ich gebe sie nicht auf, weil sie mir gehört.

Haben Sie ein Bild von Mrs Browning? Ich habe drei geschickt bekommen – Wenn Sie keins besitzen, wollen Sie eins von mir?

Ihre Schülerin

Dieser Brief enthielt zwei Gedichte.

Februar 1863

Lieber Freund,

Ich hatte nicht geglaubt, daß planetarische Kräfte vernichten – sondern, daß sie einem Austausch von Gebieten oder Welten unterliegen –

Ich hätte Sie gern gesehen, bevor Sie unwahrscheinlich wurden. Der Krieg ist für mich ein abgelegener Ort – Sollte es noch weitere Sommer geben, würden Sie vielleicht kommen?

Ich entdecke, daß Sie fort waren, durch Zufall, wie ich entdecke, daß Welten oder Jahreszeiten nicht mehr da sind, ohne die Ursache zu erfahren – aber ich nehme an, es ist ein Verrat des Fortschritts – der im Gehen vergehen läßt. Carlo – ist noch geblieben – und ich hab ihm gesagt –

Gewinn braucht Prüfung durch Verlust –
Erst dann wird er Gewinn –

Mein langhaariger Verbündeter stimmte dem bei –

Vielleicht lehrte mich der Tod – Ehrfurcht vor meinen Freunden – er traf so scharf und früh, denn seitdem ist meine Liebe für sie zerbrechlich geworden – ich trage sie mit mehr ängstlicher Vorsicht als friedlicher Zuversicht. Ich hoffe, Sie werden die Grenze des Krieges überschreiten, und obwohl ich nicht zum Gebet erzogen bin – wenn in der Kirche der Gottesdienst für unsere Waffen gehalten wird, schließe ich Sie ein [...] Ich dachte heute – als ich feststellte, daß das „Übernatürliche" nichts anderes ist als das Natürliche – enthüllt:

Die „Offenbarung" ist bereit,
Nur unser Auge nicht –

Aber ich fürchte, ich halte Sie auf –

Sollten Sie, bevor Sie dies erreicht, Unsterblichkeit erfahren, wer wird mich von dem Tausch verständigen? Wenn Sie, in Ehren, den Tod vermeiden können, so bitte ich Sie inständig – verehrter Herr – Er würde trauernd hinterlassen

Ihren Gnom –

Ich hoffe, die „Prozession der Blumen" war keine Vorahnung.

Higginson war im November 1862 als Befehlshaber des ersten Regiments von schwarzen Soldaten nach South Carolina gegangen und im Dezember zum Oberst ernannt worden. Anscheinend erfuhr ED diese Tatsachen durch Zeitungsartikel im *Springfield Republican*. Die „Prozession der Blumen" war ein Aufsatz von Higginson, der im Dezember 1862 im *Atlantic Monthly* erschien. Für die Unterschrift konnte Higginson keine Erklärung geben.

Cambridge, Anfang Juni 1864

Lieber Freund,

Sind Sie in Gefahr –

Ich wußte nicht, daß Sie verwundet wurden. Wollen Sie mir mehr darüber sagen? Mr Hawthorne ist gestorben.

Ich bin krank seit September und seit April in Boston in Behandlung bei einem Arzt – Er läßt mich nicht fort, doch ich arbeite in meinem Gefängnis und mache mir meine eigenen Gäste –

Carlo ist nicht mitgekommen, weil er im Gefängnis sterben würde, und die Berge konnte ich nicht tragen, so nahm ich nur die Götter mit –

Ich wünsche mir, Sie zu sehen, mehr noch als vor meiner Krankheit – Sagen Sie mir etwas über Ihre Gesundheit?

Ich bin überrascht und beunruhigt, seit ich Ihre Zeilen erhielt –

Die einz'ge Neuigkeit für mich
Ist der alltägliche Bericht
Von der Unsterblichkeit.

Können Sie meinen Bleistift lesen?

Der Arzt hat mir die Feder weggenommen.

Ich lege die Adresse eines [an mich geschriebenen] Briefes bei, falls meine Zeichen versagen – Von Ihrer Genesung zu wissen – würde mir mehr bedeuten als die eigene –

E – Dickinson

Higginson war im Juli 1863 verwundet worden und verließ die Armee im Mai 1864. ED fuhr am 4. Februar 1864 nach Boston, um einen Arzt wegen eines Augenleidens zu konsultieren. Anscheinend verordnete er eine längere Behandlung unter seiner Aufsicht. Sie verbrachte sieben Monate, gemeinsam mit ihren Kusinen Louise und Frances Norcross, in einer Pension in Cambridge bei Boston. Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), amerikanischer Schriftsteller, der durch seinen ersten Roman, „Der scharlachrote Buchstabe", berühmt wurde.

Anfang 1866

Lieber Freund.

Wen mein Hund verstanden hat, kann anderen nicht entgehen. (Whom my dog understood could not elude others.)

Ich würde mich freuen, Sie zu sehen, aber das erscheint mir als eine geisterhafte Freude – unerfüllbar. Boston ist für mich ungewiß.

Ich hatte versprochen, meinen Arzt für ein paar Tage im Mai zu besuchen, aber Vater ist dagegen, weil er mich aus Gewohnheit braucht.

Ist der Weg nach Amherst weiter?

Sie würden einen winzigen Gastgeber finden, aber ein ausgedehntes Willkommen –

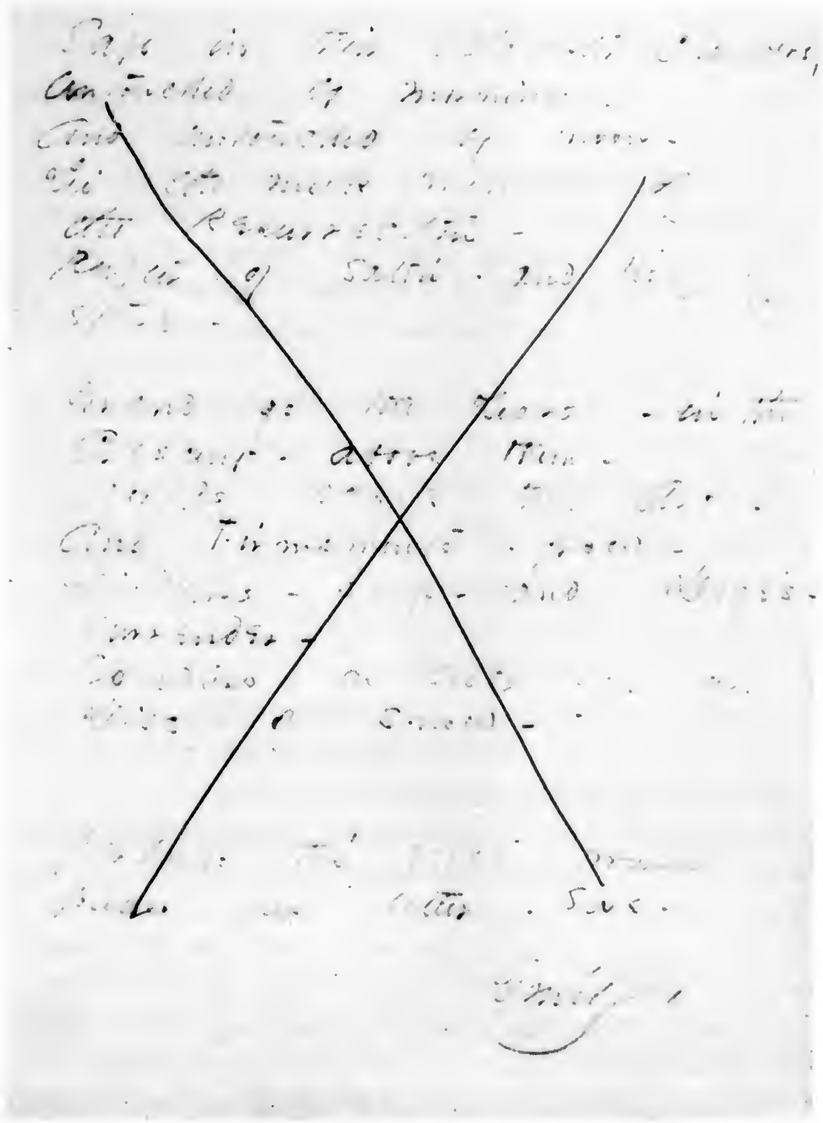
Falls Sie meiner Schlange begegnen und glauben, ich täuschte Sie, man hat sie mir gestohlen – und außerdem durch die Interpunktion in der dritten Zeile zerstört. Die dritte und die vierte gehören zusammen – Ich hatte Ihnen gesagt, ich ließe nichts drucken – Ich fürchtete, Sie würden mich für wichtigtuerisch halten. Wenn ich Sie weiter inständig bitte, mich zu belehren, ist Ihnen das unangenehm?

Ich werde geduldig sein – beständig, nie Ihr Messer zurückweisen, und wenn meine Langsamkeit Sie reizt, so wußten Sie doch längst vor mir:

Kein Leben ist ein Rund,
Es sei denn klein –
Das eilt zum Kreise hin,
Taucht auf, geht ein –

Die großen reifen spät
Und fallen nicht so schnell –
Der Hesperiden Sommertag
Bleibt lange hell.

Dickinson



Gedicht an Sue um 1861

Dieser Brief enthielt ein weiteres Gedicht und einen Zeitungsausschnitt aus dem *Springfield Weekly Republican* mit einem Gedicht von ED. Sie bezieht sich auf einen Brief von Higginson, der den Wunsch aussprach, sie zu sehen und sie „ausweichend" nannte. Das veröffentlichte Gedicht ('A narrow Fellow in the Grass") wurde von dem Herausgeber Samuel Bowles, einem Freund der Dickinson-Familie, der in ED's Briefen und in ihrem Leben eine bedeutende Rolle spielte, mit dem Titel „Die Schlange" versehen.

9. Juni 1866

Lieber Freund

Bitte danken Sie der Dame. Es ist sehr lieb von ihr, an mich zu denken.

Ich muß Boston aufgeben. Vater will es so. Er läßt mich gern in seiner Begleitung reisen, aber ist dagegen, daß ich Besuche mache.

Darf ich Sie als meinen Gast dem Gasthaus von Amherst anvertrauen? Wenn ich Sie einmal gesehen habe, wird es mir eine größere Freude sein, mich zu bessern, denn dann werde ich wissen, was meine Fehler sind.

Ihre Meinung gibt mir ein ernstes Gefühl. Ich wäre gerne so, wie Sie mich sehen.

Danke, ich wünschte, Carlo wäre hier.

> Die Zeit ist Prüfstein unsrer Not,
> Jedoch kein Heilungstrank –
> Beweist sie das, beweist sie auch,
> Der Kranke war nie krank.

Aber ich habe den Hügel, meinen Rest von Gibraltar.

Die Natur, so scheint es mir, spielt auch ohne Freund.

Sie erwähnen die Unsterblichkeit.

Das ist das Überschwemmungsthema. Man sagte mir, das Ufer sei der sicherste Ort für den flossenlosen Geist. Ich gehe selten auf Entdeckungen aus, seit mein stummer Verbündeter [nicht mehr da ist], aber die „unendliche Schönheit" – von der Sie sprechen, kommt zu nah zum Suchen.

Um der Verzauberung zu entgehen, muß man immer fliehen.

Das Paradies steht frei.

Wer auch immer wird das Paradies bewohnen, unbekümmert um Adam und den Widerruf.

Dickinson

Dieser Brief, der zunächst durch den äußerst sparsamen Gebrauch von Gedankenstrichen auffällt, ist eine Antwort auf Higginsons Drängen, nach Boston zu kommen, ihre zweite Absage. Vier Gedichte sind beigefügt. Carlo, der „stumme Verbündete", war im Januar gestorben. „Bitte danken Sie der Dame" bezieht sich auf Higginsons Frau Mary, die anscheinend durch ihren Mann ihr Beileid ausgedrückt hatte. „Das Überschwemmungsthema" (the Flood subject) ist Gegenstand vieler literaturkritischer Untersuchungen im Zusammenhang mit ED's Unsterblichkeitsvorstellungen.

Juni 1869

Lieber Freund

Ein Brief ist für mich immer wie Unsterblichkeit, denn darin ist der Geist allein ohne körperlichen Freund. Im Gespräch sind wir abhängig von Ton und Haltung, deshalb liegt eine Art geisterhafte Kraft in dem Gedanken, der allein einhergeht – Ich würde Ihnen gern für Ihre große Freundlichkeit danken, aber ich versuche nie die Worte anzuheben, die ich nicht halten kann.

Sollten Sie nach Amherst kommen, so würde es mir vielleicht gelingen, wenngleich Dankbarkeit der schüchterne Reichtum derjenigen ist, die nichts haben. Ich bin sicher, daß Sie die Wahrheit sprechen, weil edle Menschen das tun, aber Ihre Briefe überraschen mich immer. Mein Leben ist zu einfach und streng, um andere in Verlegenheit zu setzen.

„Von Engeln gesehen", dafür bin ich kaum verantwortlich.

Es ist schwer, an einem so schönen Ort nicht eine erfundene Form anzunehmen, aber der Prüfung strenge Korrektur ist allen gestattet. (It is difficult not to be fictitious in so fair a place, but test's severe repairs are permitted all.)

Ich erinnere mich, daß ich als kleines Mädchen jene merkwürdige Stelle hörte und die „Kraft" vorzog, ohne damals zu wissen, daß das „Reich" und die „Herrlichkeit" dazu gehörten.

Sie bemerkten, daß ich alleine lebe – Für den Auswanderer ist Heimat ein leeres Wort, es sei denn die eigene. Sie sagen freundlicherweise, daß Sie mich sehen möchten. Wenn Sie sich die Mühe machen wollten, nach Amherst zu kommen, würde ich mich sehr freuen, aber ich trete nicht über meines Vaters Boden hinaus in ein anderes Haus oder eine andere Stadt.

Unsere größten Handlungen sind uns nicht bewußt.

Sie wußten nicht, daß Sie mir das Leben gerettet haben. Ihnen persönlich zu danken, war seitdem einer meiner wenigen Wünsche. Das Kind, das um meine Blume bittet, „Willst du?" sagt es – „Willst du?" – so weiß auch ich nicht, wie ich anders bitten soll um das, was ich mir wünsche.

Sie werden verzeihen, was ich hier sage, weil mich kein anderer unterrichtet hat?

Dickinson

Dies ist ED's dritter Brief, in dem sie eine Aufforderung, nach Boston zu kommen, ablehnt und ihre zweite Einladung an Higginson, nach Amherst zu kommen. Der folgende Brief von Higginson, datiert vom 11. Mai 1869, geht diesem voraus.

[von T. W. Higginson]

Manchmal nehme ich mir Ihre Verse und Briefe vor, liebe Freundin, und wenn ich ihre seltsame Kraft spüre, ist es nicht verwunderlich, daß es mir schwerfällt zu schreiben und daß lange Monate darüber vergehen. Ich habe das größte Bedürfnis, Sie zu sehen, immer mit dem Gefühl, daß vielleicht, wenn ich Sie einmal bei der Hand nehmen könnte, ich Ihnen etwas bedeuten möge; aber inzwischen hüllen Sie sich in diesen feurigen Dunst & ich kann Sie nicht erreichen, sondern mich nur ergötzen an den seltenen sprühenden Lichterfunken. Jedes Jahr denke ich, daß ich es irgendwie einrichten werde, nach Amherst zu fahren & Sie zu sehen: aber das ist schwer, denn ich habe viele Verpflichtungen für Vortragsreisen & kann selten zum Vergnügen fahren. Ich würde gerne zu irgendeiner annehmbaren Zeit nach Boston gehen, um Sie zu treffen. Ich habe immer die gleiche Beziehung zu Ihnen, & mein Interesse an allem, was Sie mir schicken, läßt niemals nach. Ich würde gerne recht oft von Ihnen hören, aber ich bin immer ängstlich, weil ich fürchte, was ich *schreibe*, könnte schlecht gezielt sein & vorbeitreffen an dem feinen Rand Ihres Denkens. Ich fürchte, ich könnte so leicht daneben treffen. Dennoch, wie Sie sehen, bemühe ich mich. Ich glaube, wenn ich Sie einmal sehen und mich davon überzeugen könnte, daß Sie wirklich sind, würde es mir besser gelingen. [...]

Es ist schwer zu verstehen, wie Sie so allein leben können und Gedanken von solch einer Qualität in Ihnen auftauchen, & jetzt ist Ihnen sogar die Gesellschaft Ihres Hundes entzogen worden. Jedoch, man wird sich überall isoliert fühlen, wenn man über einen bestimmten Punkt hinausdenkt oder so leuchtende Geistesblitze hat, wie sie bei Ihnen auftauchen – deshalb macht vielleicht der Ort keinen großen Unterschied.

Sie müssen doch manchmal nach Boston kommen? Alle Damen tun das. Ich frage mich, ob es möglich wäre, Sie zu den Treffen

herzulocken, die jeden Monat am dritten Montag bei Mrs. Sargent, 13 Chestnut St., um 10 Uhr früh stattfinden, wobei jemand einen Aufsatz liest & andere reden oder zuhören. Nächsten Montag liest Mr Emerson, & um 3 Uhr 30 findet ein Treffen des Frauenklubs in 3 Tremont Place statt, wo ich einen Aufsatz über Griechische Göttinnen lese. Das sollte eine günstige Zeit für Sie sein, obwohl ich es noch besser fände, wenn Sie an einem Tag kämen, an dem ich nicht so in Anspruch genommen bin – denn mir liegt mehr daran, Sie zu sehen als Sie zu unterhalten. Ich werde auch während der Jubiläumswoche am 25.* und 28. Juni in Boston sein, – oder würde das Musikfestspiel im Juni Sie dorthin locken? Sie sehen, ich meine es ernst. Oder brauchen Sie keine Seeluft im Sommer? Schreiben Sie und erzählen Sie mir etwas in Prosa oder in Versen & ich werde in Zukunft weniger heikel sein & lieber etwas Ungeschicktes schreiben als gar nichts.

Immer Ihr Freund
[Unterschrift abgeschnitten]

*An dem Tag findet ein zusätzliches Treffen bei Mrs. Sargent statt & Mr. Weiss wird einen Essay lesen. Ich bin berechtigt, Sie einzuladen & Sie können einfach klingeln und hereinspazieren.

Higginson nimmt mit diesem Brief als erster den schriftlichen Kontakt nach einer dreijährigen Unterbrechung der Korrespondenz wieder auf.

16. August 1870

Lieber Freund

Ich werde zu Hause sein und mich freuen.

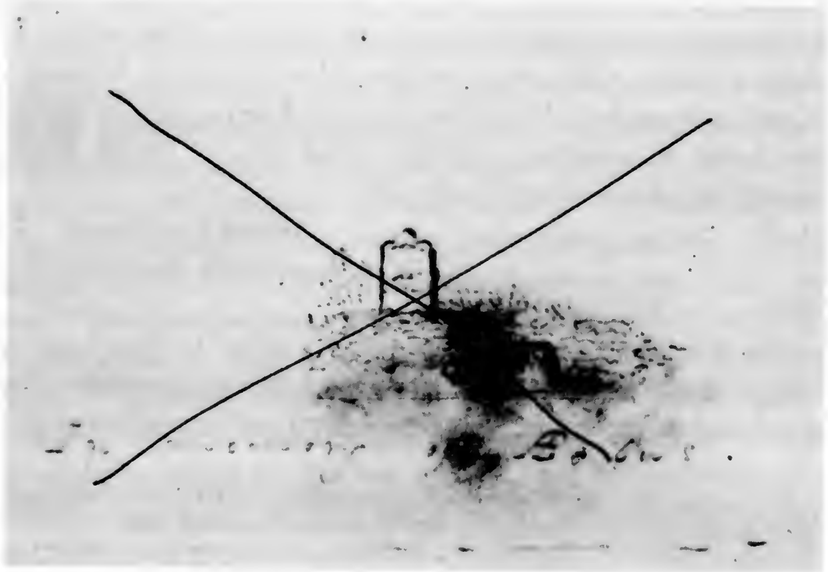
Ich dachte, Sie sagten am 15. Das Unglaubliche überrascht uns nie, weil es das Unglaubliche ist.

E. Dickinson

Dieser kurze Brief, der anscheinend persönlich im *Amherst House* abgegeben wurde, ist eine Antwort auf Higginsons Anfrage, nachdem er dort angekommen war, ob er sie besuchen könne. Sie hatte ihn am Tag zuvor erwartet. Den folgenden Brief schrieb Higginson am selben Abend nach seinem Besuch an seine Frau Mary. Er datierte ihn Amherst, Dienstag, 10 Uhr abends:

[Auszug]

Ein Schritt wie das Trippeln eines Kindes & herein glitt eine kleine unscheinbare Frau, deren rötliche Haare wie zwei glatte Bänder ihr Gesicht umrahmten, ein bißchen wie das von Belle Dove; nicht unansehnlicher – ohne besondere Züge – in einem sehr schlichten und vorzüglich reinen weißen Piquékleid & einem blauen netzartigen Wollschal. Sie kam mir mit zwei Lilien entgegen, die sie mir mit einer kindlichen Geste in die Hand gab &



Geschenk von Emily Dickinson an John L. Graves

sagte: ‚Dies ist meine Einführung', mit einer leisen, ängstlichen, atemlosen, kindlichen Stimme – und fügte flüsternd hinzu: ‚Verzeihen Sie, daß ich Angst habe; ich sehe nie fremde Menschen und weiß kaum, was ich sage – aber sie fing bald zu sprechen an & fuhr danach unaufhörlich fort – & sehr ehrerbietig – manchmal innehaltend, um mich zu bitten, an ihrer Stelle zu sprechen – aber schnell wieder neu beginnend [...] Sie sagte vieles, was Du närrisch finden würdest und ich weise fand – und auch manches, was Dir gefallen hätte. Ich werde einige ihrer Aussprüche später hinzufügen. [...] [Der Brief wurde am nächsten Tag fortgesetzt]

Ich kam um 2 Uhr zurück [ins *Amherst House*] & fahre um 9 ab. E. D. hat die ganze Nacht von *Dir* geträumt (nicht von mir) & erhielt erst am nächsten Tag meinen Brief, der meine Ankunft ankündigte! Sie erfuhr von Dir nur durch meine Erwähnung in meiner Notiz über Charlotte Hawes.

[Aussprüche von ED]

„Frauen reden: Männer schweigen: deshalb graut es mir vor Frauen."

„Mein Vater liest nur am Sonntag – er liest *einsame* & *strenge* Bücher."

„Wenn ich ein Buch lese [und] dabei mein ganzer Körper so kalt wird, daß kein Feuer mich wärmen kann, weiß ich, *das* ist Dichtung. Wenn ich körperlich das Gefühl habe, als würde mir der Schädel entfernt, weiß ich, *das* ist Dichtung. Nur auf diese Weise kann ich es wissen. Gibt es eine andere?"

„Wie können die meisten Menschen ohne irgendwelche Gedanken leben? Es gibt viele Menschen auf der Welt (Sie müssen sie auf der Straße bemerkt haben). Wie leben die? Woher nehmen sie die Kraft, am Morgen ihre Kleider anzuziehen?"

„Als ich den Gebrauch meiner Augen verlor, war es ein Trost zu bedenken, daß es so wenig wirkliche *Bücher* gibt, so daß ich leicht jemanden finden könnte, um mir alle vorlesen zu lassen."

„Die Wahrheit ist so eine *seltene* Sache, es ist ein Genuß, sie auszusprechen."

„Das Leben ist für mich Ekstase – Gefühl des Daseins ist Glück genug."

Ich fragte sie, ob es ihr nie an Betätigung fehle, da sie nie ausgeht & nie Besuch empfängt. „Es ist mir nie eingefallen, daß ich je in aller Zukunft den geringsten Ansatz zu solch einem Bedürfnis verspüren könnte" (& fügte hinzu) „Ich glaube, ich habe mich nicht stark genug ausgedrückt."

Sie bäckt alles Brot, denn ihr Vater mag nur ihr selbstgebackenes, & sagt „Menschen müssen Pudding haben", so verträumt dabei, als spräche sie von Kometen – so macht sie welche.

[Am nächsten Tag schrieb Higginson wieder an seine Frau und fügte weitere Notizen über ED bei. Er datierte den Brief: Mittwochmittag:]

[...] Beim Abschied sagte sie zu mir: „Die Dankbarkeit ist das einzige Geheimnis, das sich nicht enthüllen kann."

[...] Heute früh sah ich Mr. Dickinson kurz – dünn, trocken & wortkarg – Ich sah, was für ein Leben sie gehabt hat. Dr. S. sagt, ihre Schwester ist stolz auf sie.

Hier ist ED wieder:

„Können Sie mir sagen, was Zuhause ist?"

„Ich hatte nie eine Mutter. Ich nehme an, eine Mutter ist jemand, zu dem man läuft, wenn man in Not ist."

„Ich konnte nie die Uhr lesen, bevor ich 15 war. Mein Vater dachte, er hätte es mir beigebracht, aber ich verstand es nicht & traute mich das nicht zu sagen & traute mich nicht, jemand anderen zu fragen, aus Angst, er könne es erfahren."

Ihr Vater war nicht streng, scheint mir, aber distanziert. Er wollte sie [die Kinder] nichts anderes lesen lassen als die Bibel. Eines Tages brachte ihr Bruder „Kavanagh" nach Hause, versteckte es [das Buch] unter der Klavierdecke & verständigte sie durch Zeichen & sie lasen es: ihr Vater fand es schließlich und war ärgerlich. Vielleicht geschah es vorher, daß einer seiner Studenten erstaunt darüber war, daß sie nie von Mrs. Child gehört hatten & ihnen Bücher brachte & sie in einem Gebüsch vor der Tür versteckte. Sie waren damals kleine Dinger in kurzen Kleidern, deren Füße beim Sitzen nicht auf den Boden reichten. Nach dem ersten Buch dachte sie, außer sich vor Begeisterung: „Das also ist ein Buch! Und es gibt mehr davon!"

„Ist es Vergessenheit oder Versunkensein, wenn die Dinge sich aus unserem Geist entfernen?"

Major Hunt interessierte sie mehr als irgendein anderer Mann, den sie je gesehen hatte. Sie erinnerte sich an zwei Dinge, die er sagte – daß ihr großer Hund „die Kraft der Anziehung verstand" & wie er sagte, er würde wiederkommen „in einem Jahr. Wenn ich eine kürzere Zeit nenne, wird es länger sein."

Als ich sagte, ich würde *irgendwann* wiederkommen, sagte sie: „Sagen Sie, nach langer Zeit. Irgendwann ist gar nichts."

Nach langer Unfähigkeit, ihre Augen zu benutzen, las sie Shakespeare & dachte, wozu braucht man irgendein anderes Buch?

Ich war nie mit jemandem zusammen, der meine Nervenkräfte so erschöpfte. Ohne daß ich sie anrührte, zehrte sie an mir. Ich bin froh, daß ich nicht in ihrer Nähe lebe. Sie fand mich oft *müde* und schien sehr aufmerksam anderen gegenüber zu sein.

Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880), amerikanische Autorin und Verfechterin der Sklavenbefreiung, veröffentlichte u.a. eine Kinderzeitschrift und ein Kochbuch "The Frugal Housewife" („Die sparsame Hausfrau"), das sich im Dickinson-Haushalt befand.

„Kavanagh", 1849 erschienener Roman des amerikanischen Dichters und Schriftstellers Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882). Das Buch, dessen Hauptfiguren sich mit den „Lieben und Leiden" des Künstlers auseinandersetzen, enthält viele Stellen einer philosophischen Rhetorik, die in ihrem Exemplar von ED unterstrichen und am Rand angestrichen sind.

Major Edward Hunt war der erste Mann von Helen Hunt Jackson, der 1863 bei einem Unfall ums Leben kam. Die Bemerkung von Higginson, daß er sie „mehr interessierte als irgendein anderer Mann" wird inzwischen allgemein als Mißverständnis angesehen, das möglicherweise auf einer ihrer überschwänglichen Äußerungen beruhte. Helen Hunt (1830-1885) wurde von Higginson als „eine der begabtesten Dichterinnen in Amerika" bezeichnet; sie war die erste, die ein unmittelbares Interesse und Verständnis für ED's Gedichte zeigte und sich immer wieder bemühte, sie zum Veröffentlichen zu überreden.

[Zwanzig Jahre später schrieb Higginson in der Zeitschrift *Atlantic Monthly* (Oktober 1891) über seine erste Begegnung mit ED:]

Der Eindruck, den ich zweifellos hatte, war der einer übermäßigen Spannung und eines unnormalen Lebens. Vielleicht hätte ich mit der Zeit über diese ziemlich überspannte Beziehung hinwegkommen können, die nicht mein Wunsch, sondern ihre Bedürfnisse uns aufgezwungen hatten. Sicher wäre ich äußerst froh gewesen, wenn es mir gelungen wäre, sie [die Beziehung] auf die Stufe der einfachen Wahrheit und alltäglichen Kameradschaftlichkeit zu bringen; aber es war keineswegs einfach. Ihr Wesen war ein viel zu großes Rätsel für mich, als daß ich es in dem Interview von einer Stunde hätte lösen können, und mein Instinkt sagte mir, daß der leiseste Versuch eines direkten Kreuzverhörs sie veranlassen würde, sich in ihr Schneckenhaus zurückzuziehen; ich konnte nur stillsitzen und zuschauen, wie man es im Wald tut; ich mußte meinen Vogel ohne Gewehr erkennen, wie es Emerson empfiehlt.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), amerikanischer Essayist und Dichter, Exponent der transzendentalen Philosophie, der bis Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts als bedeutendster geistiger Repräsentant seines Landes angesehen wurde. Er war gelegentlich in ED's Elternhaus und in dem benachbarten Haus ihres Bruders Austin zu Gast, ohne daß sie selbst ihm begegnete.

26. September 1870

Genug ist eine so große Süßigkeit, daß ich glaube, es kommt nie vor – nur armselige Fälschungen – Sagenhaft für mich wie die Männer der Offenbarung, die „nicht mehr Hunger leiden sollen." Selbst das Mögliche hat seinen unauflöslichen Bestandteil –

Nachdem Sie gegangen waren, nahm ich Macbeth und wandte mich nach "Birnam Wood". Kam zweimal „nach Dunsinane" – so dachte ich und ging an meine Arbeit.

Meine Erinnerung hat Ihr Kommen als einen ernsten, süßen Geschmack aufbewahrt und es jetzt zu dem Unwirklichen gelegt –

„Ungefähres" wird verändert –
Geister kamen „und nicht du."

Die Vene kann der Schlagader nicht danken – aber daß sie tief in deren Schuld steht, muß selbst der Schwerfälligste zugeben, und so auch ich, die sich bemüht, deren Mühen lautlos bleibt.

Sie stellen große Fragen wie nebenbei. Sie zu beantworten, wären Ereignisse. (To answer them would be events.) Ich glaube, ich kann Ihnen vertrauen.

Ich bitte Sie, mir alle meine Unwissenheit zu vergeben.

Ich finde keine Anerkennung so wohltuend wie Ihre Geringschätzung.

Sprechen Sie, wenn auch nur um Ihr gehorsames Kind zu tadeln.

Sie haben mir von Mrs. Lowell's Gedichten erzählt.

Würden Sie mir sagen, wo ich sie finden kann oder sind sie nicht zu besichtigen?

Auch einen Ihrer Aufsätze, vielleicht den einzigen von Ihnen, den ich nicht kenne. Er war über ein „Türschloß".

Wollen Sie mir darüber schreiben? Wenn ich zuviel verlange, lehnen Sie es bitte ab – Die Kürze des Lebens hat mich kühn gemacht.

Die Ferne ist heute abend nah (Abroad is close tonight), und ich brauche nur die Hände zu heben, um die „Höhen Abrahams" zu berühren.

Dickinson

Das Zitat ist aus Offenbarung 7: 16: „Sie wird nicht mehr hungern noch dürsten ..." Higginson hatte zwei Aufsätze für eine Frauenzeitschrift, *The Woman's Journal*, geschrieben, beide über das Thema Frauenrechte, der erste betitelt „Die unverschlossene Tür" ("The Door Unlatched") und der zweite „Das unverschlossene Tor" ("The Gate Unlatched"), die beide 1870 erschienen waren. Maria White Lowell (1821-1853), verheiratet mit dem anerkannten amerikanischen Dichter und Literaturkritiker James Russel Lowell (1819-1891), mit dem sie sich gemeinsam aktiv für die Sklavenbefreiung einsetzte. Ihre eigenen Gedichte wurden, wie die von ED, zuerst in einer kleinen Auswahl nach ihrem Tod gedruckt und erst sehr viel später (1907 und 1936) in vollständigen Ausgaben veröffentlicht.

Ende 1872

Zu leben ist so aufregend, es läßt nur wenig Raum für andere Beschäftigungen, obwohl Freunde, wenn möglich, ein noch schöneres Ereignis sind.

Ich bin glücklich, daß Sie die langersehnte Reise gemacht haben und beruhigt – daß meinem Meister weder Unfall noch Tod zugestoßen sind.

Stets neu den eigenen Besitz
Zu speichern ist gescheit
In Anbetracht der Dimension
Von anderer Möglichkeit.

Ich habe Ihren Namen oft in rühmlicher Erwähnung gesehen und beneidete eine für mich so enthaltsame Gelegenheit. (... and envied an occasion so abstinent to me.) Ich danke Ihnen, daß Sie in Amherst waren. Wenn Sie wiederkommen könnten, wäre es noch viel besser – aber der schönste Wunsch ist der vergebliche.

Als ich Sie zuletzt sah, war es Mächtiger Sommer – Jetzt ist das Gras aus Glas, die Wiese Stukkatur und „Stille Wasser" sind im Teich, wo der Frosch trinkt.

Dieses Verhalten des Jahres tut weh, fast wie Musik – die sich verändert, wenn sie uns am meisten wohltut. Danke für die „Lektion".

Ich werde sie studieren, obwohl bisher

Der Zirkusschau für mich
Mein Nachbar glich.

Ihre Schülerin

Higginson war im April 1872 nach Europa gefahren und im Juli zurückgekommen. Während dieser Zeit war sein Name häufig im *Springfield Republican* erwähnt worden. Am 3. Dezember 1873 hielt Higginson einen Vortrag in Amherst, und bei der Gelegenheit besuchte er ED zum zweiten (und letzten) Mal. Am 9. Dezember schrieb er an seine Schwestern: „[...] Ich sah meine exzentrische Dichterin Miss Emily Dickinson, die niemals den Umkreis ihres Vaterhauses verläßt & nur mich & ein paar andere Menschen sieht. Sie sagt, ‚es gibt immer eine Sache, für die man dankbar sein muß – daß man, man selbst ist & nicht jemand anders,' aber Mary findet das eigentümlich unangebracht in E. D.'s Fall. Sie [E. D.] kam hereingeschwebt, weiß gekleidet, mit einer *Daphne odora* für mich & sagte leise flüsternd ‚Wie lange werden Sie bleiben?' Ich fürchte, Marys andere Bemerkung ‚Oh, warum hängen sich die Verrückten so an dich?' trifft weiter zu. Ich werde Euch einige ihrer Gedichte vorlesen, wenn Ihr kommt."

Juli 1874

An dem letzten Nachmittag, da mein Vater lebte, hatte ich, ohne jede Vorahnung, das Bedürfnis, bei ihm zu sein, und ich erfand eine Abwesenheit für Mutter, während Vinnie schlief. Er schien sich besonders zu freuen, weil ich meistens mit mir allein blieb, und als sich der Nachmittag verzog, sagte er, er „wünschte, er nähme kein Ende."

Seine Freude machte mich beinah verlegen, und als mein Bruder kam, schlug ich ihnen einen Spaziergang vor. Am nächsten Morgen weckte ich ihn für den Zug – und sah ihn nicht wieder.

Sein Herz war rein und fürchterlich, und ich glaube, es existiert keins, das ihm gleicht.

Ich bin froh, daß es die Unsterblichkeit gibt – aber ich hätte sie lieber selbst erprobt – bevor ich ihn übergab.

Mr. Bowles war bei uns – Außer ihm habe ich niemanden gesehen. Ich habe Sie herbeigewünscht, seit mein Vater starb, und wenn Sie eine unbesetzte Stunde hätten, wäre das beinah unschätzbar. Ich danke Ihnen für jede Freundlichkeit.

Mein Bruder und meine Schwester danken für Ihre Grüße.

Ihre schöne Hymne, war sie nicht prophetisch? Sie hat an jener Pause im Raum teilgenommen, die ich „Vater" nenne –

„Vinnie" – Lavinia Norcross Dickinson (1833-1899), ED's Schwester, die mit ihr den Haushalt versorgte. Nachdem die Mutter 1875 durch einen Schlaganfall gelähmt worden war, pflegten die Schwestern gemeinsam die Kranke bis zu ihrem Tode 1882.

„Ihre schöne Hymne" bezieht sich auf ein Gedicht von Higginson, das ED schon in einem früheren Brief erwähnt hatte und das in der Juninummer der Zeitschrift *Scribner's Monthly* erschienen war.

Frühjahr 1876

[...] Wenn ich an das einsame Leben meines Vaters denke und an seinen noch einsameren Tod, finde ich diese Entschädigung –

Nimm alles fort –
Das einzig Stehlenswerte bleibt –
Unsterblichkeit.

Mein frühester Freund schrieb mir in der Woche, bevor er starb: „Wenn ich lebe, komme ich nach Amherst – wenn ich sterbe, komme ich bestimmt."

Ist Ihr Haus abgelegener?

Ihre Schülerin

„Mein frühester Freund" war aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach Benjamin Newton, der am 24. März 1853 starb und den ED hier zum dritten Mal in ihren Briefen an Higginson erwähnt. In ihrem Brief an Newtons Pastor, Reverend Edward E. Hale, vom 13. Januar 1854 schrieb sie: „Mr Newton wurde für mich ein behutsamer und doch ernster Lehrer, der mich lehrte, was lesenswert war und mir zeigte, welche Autoren zu bewundern waren, was das Größte und Schönste in der Natur war, und mir jene erhabenere Lehre mitgab, einen Glauben an die unsichtbaren Dinge und an ein neues Leben, das edler und glücklicher ist –

[...] als er von uns ging, war es wie ein älterer Bruder, innig geliebt und betrauert und erinnert. Während er in Worcester lebte, schrieb er mir oft und ich beantwortete seine Briefe ..."

Von der Korrespondenz zwischen ED und Newton ist nichts aufgefunden worden. Es ist daher anzunehmen, daß wichtige Briefe, die Aufschlüsse über ED's frühe dichterische Entwicklung enthielten, schon vor langer Zeit vernichtet wurden.

Die Natur ist ein Haus, in dem Geister umgehen – aber die Kunst – ein Haus, das den Umgang mit Geistern sucht. (Nature is a Haunted House – but Art – a House that tries to be haunted).

Dieser Satz steht für sich auf einer Seite, die möglicherweise einem (hier nicht abgedruckten) Brief beigefügt war.

Juni 1877

Lieber Freund,

Ich finde Sie mit der Dämmerung – denn der Tag ist müde und legt seine vorsintflutliche Wange an den Hügel wie ein Kind.

Die Natur ist jetzt mitteilsam –

[drei Zeilen über Mrs Dickinson und ein vierzeiliges Gedicht]

Der Sommer ist so freundlich, daß ich hoffte, Sie würden kommen. Seit mein Vater starb, ist alles, was ich heilig hielt, so gewachsen, daß der Besitz undeutlich wurde – Als ich ein paar Jahre alt war – nahm man mich zu einer Beerdigung mit, die, wie ich jetzt weiß, besonders bedrückend war, und der Pfarrer fragte „Ist der Arm des Herrn verkürzt, daß er nicht retten kann?"

Er unterstrich das „nicht". Ich verwechselte die Betonung mit einem Zweifel an der Unsterblichkeit, und da ich nicht zu fragen wagte, bedrängt es mich heute noch, obwohl wir wissen, daß der Geist des Herzens leben muß, selbst wenn sein kirchlicher Teil versagt. Würden Sie es mir erklären?

Man sagte mir, daß Sie selbst früher ein Geistlicher waren. Es beruhigt einen Instinkt, wenn ein anderer es auch gefühlt hat. Ich habe Ihre „Decoration" wieder gelesen. Sie haben sie vielleicht vergessen.

[vier Gedichtzeilen]

Bitte grüßen Sie Mrs – Higginson –

Ihre Schülerin.

NORTH SHORE ANIMAL LEAGUE
Port Washington, NY 11050

Mrs ındheit ED sich vorher erkundigt
hatte ı chnete, war lange krank gewesen.
„Dec von Higginson.

September 1877

Li

Tod, um durch ihn verringert
uflich außer uns selbst. Ich bin
ch hatte Bedenken, Ihnen zu
n lieber allein, weil das der
gen sprachen mit liebevoller
Achtung von Ihnen, und zu [illegible], daß man Ihrer innig gedenkt, ist vielleicht nicht all zu störend. Menschlich sein, ist mehr als göttlich sein, denn als Christus göttlich war, war er nicht zufrieden, bis er menschlich wurde.

Nichts ist so stark in meiner Erinnerung wie die Begegnung mit Ihnen –

Ich hoffe, Sie kommen –

Ich danke Ihnen, daß Sie mir von Ihrer Freundin sprachen.

Ich wollte wissen –

Sie erinnerte mich an Thermopylae – Hat sie gelitten – außer, daß sie Sie verlassen mußte? Das war vielleicht die Endsumme des Todes – Für die Hand, die ich niemals halten durfte, lege ich die meine bei und bleibe zärtlich

die ihre (Her's)

Soll ich den Ausschnitt behalten oder ist er zu heilig?

Mary Higginson war am 2. September 1877 gestorben. Higginson hatte ED eine Todesanzeige geschickt.

ED verband den Namen *Thermophylae* mit der Vorstellung von heroischer Tapferkeit im Angesicht des sicheren Todes. Sie benutzt dasselbe Bild in einem späteren Brief an Mabel Loomis Todd. Es ~~ist eine Anspielung auf die Grabschrift des Simonides für die Spartaner, die bei Thermopylae fielen: „Wanderer, kommst du nach Sparta, verkündige dorten, daß du uns liegen gesehen, wie das Gesetz es befahl."~~

Frühherbst 1877

Lieber Freund,

Mein Denken ist so erfüllt von Ihnen, daß ich nicht umhin kann, wieder zu schreiben, zu fragen, ob Sie außer Gefahr sind?

Die Gefahr besteht nicht zu Anfang, denn dann sind wir bewußtlos, aber in den späteren – langsameren Tagen –

Suchen Sie nicht die Rettung – sondern lassen Sie die Erlösung zu Ihnen kommen – und sie wird Sie finden – Die Liebe ist ihre eigene Rettung, denn wir – selbst in unseren erhabensten Momenten, sind nichts als ihr schwankendes Sinnbild –

Ihre Schülerin –

NACHWORT

„Wenn der Ruhm mir gehörte", schreibt Emily Dickinson an ihren „Mentor" und Freund Thomas Wentworth Higginson, „könnte ich ihm nicht entfliehen". In den hundert Jahren seit ihrem Tod hat der Ruhm sie von allen Seiten mit so gewaltigen – und zum Teil mißtönenden – Fanfarenklängen verfolgt, daß man ihr und sich selbst ein sicheres Versteck wünscht, um ihre eigene Stimme ungestört hören zu können. Besonders seit ihrer Neuentdeckung in den fünfziger Jahren ist diese „heimliche" Dichterin, die jede Veröffentlichung als „Auktion des Menschengeistes" bezeichnete, zum Allgemeingut geworden, das literarischen, biographischen, kulturhistorischen, linguistischen, feministischen und psychologischen Experten als unerschöpfliches Untersuchungsfeld dient. An erster Stelle steht hierbei natürlich die amerikanische Spezialliteratur mit mehr als dreißig Monographien und unzähligen Aufsätzen in literarischen und akademischen Zeitschriften, sowie Einzelkapiteln in allgemein literaturhistorischen Werken. Diese ungeheure Menge an Sekundärliteratur aus den letzten dreißig Jahren ist zum Teil darauf zurückzuführen, daß vor der Veröffentlichung der Harvard-Gesamtausgabe das Werk von Emily Dickinson nur in sehr fragmentarischer und fragwürdiger Form im Druck vorlag und sich dadurch einer umfassenden objektiven Untersuchung entzog.*

In dieser Zeit der Dickinson-„Renaissance" entstanden eine Anzahl wichtiger biographischer und literarischer Studien, die noch heute als Standardwerke auf dem Gebiet der Dickinson-Forschung gelten und auf die ich an anderer Stelle zurückkommen werde. Im Gegensatz zu diesen ernsten und unvoreingenommenen Arbeiten findet man eine Fülle von Material, bei dem man zunehmend den Eindruck gewinnt, daß die meisten Spezialisten auf diesem Gebiet mit einer vorgeformten Auffassung an ihr Werk gehen, wobei jeder *die* Emily Dickinson entdeckt, die seiner ursprünglichen Vorstellung entspricht.

* *The Poems of Emily Dickinson,* ed. Thomas H. Johnson (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1955)
The Letters of Emily Dickinson, ed. Thomas H. Johnson, Theodora Ward (Loc. cit., 1958)

Hier sei auf einige Beispiele der modernen „Psychobiographien" hingewiesen, die vielleicht eher die Bezeichnung Pseudobiographien verdienten. Dazu gehört das schon 1951 erschienene Buch "The Riddle of Emily Dickinson" von Rebecca Patterson, in dem die Autorin die Behauptung aufstellt, daß Emily Dickinsons Liebesgedichte an eine Frau gerichtet waren, eine Theorie, die ursprünglich wenig Anklang fand; sie wurde jedoch in den siebziger Jahren im Rahmen von Frauenstudien und sexuellen Unabhängigkeitsbewegungen wieder aufgegriffen, was zu weiteren Untersuchungen über Dickinsons weibliche Liebesobjekte führte. Eine andere moderne Auffassung wurde von Dr. John Cody vertreten, einem praktizierenden Psychoanalytiker, der anhand einer Reihe von Gedichten, ohne die chronologische Folge ihrer Entstehung zu berücksichtigen, das eindeutig klinische Bild einer sich allmählich entwickelnden psychotischen Erkrankung feststellt und die Gedichte mit den Produkten von Geisteskranken vergleicht. In seiner ausführlichen Analyse des Falles Dickinson sieht er die Ursache ihrer geistigen Störung vor allem in dem frühen Mangel an mütterlicher Liebe und dem damit verbundenen unbewältigten Ödipuskomplex.

Während er ihre Dichtung größtenteils als Resultat einer kompensatorischen Sublimierungsfunktion betrachtet, macht er nebenbei die Feststellung, daß „ihre Gedichte oft ein direktes Ventil für sie waren, wodurch sie eine Form von Erleichterung fand, die bei gewöhnlichen Menschen durch Weinen, Wutausbrüche und hysterische Anfälle ausgelöst wird[1]."

Mehr traditionell orientierte (meist amerikanische, aber auch europäische) Interpreten haben sich seit Jahren darum bemüht, Emily Dickinson in die Reihe der Transzendentalisten, der metaphysischen Dichter, der Imagisten, Mystiker, Surrealisten und nicht zuletzt auch Existentialisten einzuordnen, wobei ihr bedeutende Persönlichkeiten aus den entsprechenden Epochen als gleichwertige Partner gegenübergestellt wurden.

Es ist amüsant zu beobachten, wie verändert das Dickinson-Porträt im Rahmen verschiedener Kulturen erscheint. Zu einer Zeit, als Emily Dickinson noch immer von vielen ihrer "sweet countrymen" eine mangelnde Beherrschung der zivilisierten dichterischen Sprachregeln vorgeworfen wurde, hatten französische

Kritiker und Dichter wie André Maurois und Alain Bosquet durch Aufsätze und Übersetzungen ein aufnahmefähiges Publikum für sie gewonnen. Der Mallarmé-Spezialist Robert Goffin vergleicht ihr Genie mit dem des großen französischen Symbolisten und betont, wie viele andere französische Interpreten, den leidenschaftlich erotischen Charakter und die sexuelle Symbolik ihrer Dichtung. Dasselbe Gedicht ("I like to see it lap the miles"), das Goffin als Musterbeispiel sprachlicher Originalität und erotischer Vieldeutigkeit zitiert, wurde von dem amerikanischen Dichter und Kritiker Yvor Winters in einem berühmt gewordenen und immer wieder nachgedruckten Aufsatz als Ausdruck „alberner Verspieltheit" mit den vernichtenden Worten abgelehnt: „Das Gedicht ist abscheulich[2]." Auch das geringschätzige Urteil von R. P. Blackmur, einem ebenfalls einflußreichen Kritiker und Dichter aus der ersten Hälfte dieses Jahrhunderts, wird, obwohl es inzwischen als überholt gilt, heute noch in der Literaturgeschichte zitiert: „Sie war weder eine professionelle Dichterin noch eine Amateurin: sie war eine private Dichterin, die unermüdlich schrieb, wie andere Frauen kochen oder stricken[3]." (Man denkt hierbei unwillkürlich an Codys Analyse.)

Abgesehen von wenigen Ausnahmen, darunter vor allem eine wichtige Untersuchung von Hans Galinsky[4], hat sich die Literaturkritik in Deutschland bisher nur sehr sporadisch und in vorwiegend essayistischer Form mit Emily Dickinson befaßt. Umso häufiger wird ihr Name im Zusammenhang mit Heine, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche und Rilke genannt. Auch Emily Dickinson als „die amerikanische Droste" zu bezeichnen, hat im Laufe der Jahre nichts wesentliches zum Verständnis ihrer Persönlichkeit beigetragen. Daß selbst Gottfried Benn, zu gelegentlichen Vergleichen herangezogen wird, beruht offensichtlich ausschließlich auf einer gemeinsamen Vorliebe für Gedankenstriche.

Wo bleibt die wirkliche Emily Dickinson?

Es liegt nahe, zu behaupten, daß Emily Dickinsons Gedichte und Briefe die einzigen authentischen Aufzeichnungen über die wesentlichen Ereignisse enthalten, die ihr Schicksal bestimmten. Aber schon bei dieser „naheliegenden" Behauptung fühlt man sich zurechtgewiesen von ihren Worten: "Tell all the Truth but tell it slant –", mit denen sie, wie an vielen anderen Stellen, jede direkte Aussage verweigert. Immer wieder führt sie den Leser unmittelbar

an den Schauplatz ihres inneren Erlebens und läßt ihn, auf seine eigene Erlebnisfähigkeit vertrauend, teilnehmen, ohne ihm dabei einen Einblick in die persönlichen Hintergründe zu gestatten. Die schonungslose, oft schamlose Offenheit und Präzision im Ausdruck ihrer Gefühle – bei ebenso schonungsloser Beseitigung aller ursächlichen Gegebenheiten – trägt sicherlich zu der universellen Wirkung ihres Werkes bei; gleichzeitig liegt darin ein ständiger Anreiz zu neuen und manchmal verstiegenen Interpretationen.

1974 erschien die umfassendste, aufschlußreichste und umfangreichste (über 800 Seiten) Dickinson-Biographie unserer Zeit: "The Life of Emily Dickinson" von Richard B. Sewall, ein Werk, das alle nachweisbaren Tatsachen, Ereignisse und Personen im Zusammenhang mit Emily Dickinson aufs gründlichste untersucht und sich außerdem mit den Theorien, Vermutungen und Legenden auseinandersetzt, die sich im Laufe der Jahrzehnte in der Literatur eingenistet hatten. Sewalls Biographie bestätigt die oben erwähnte Beobachtung, die auch früheren Biographen nicht entgangen ist, daß Emily Dickinson selbst in ihren eigenen Worten nicht immer wörtlich verstanden werden will. So muß man auch bei der Zusammenfassung des biographischen Materials an die Bewertung ihrer Aussagen mit einiger Vorsicht herangehen.

Das Leben der Dichterin verlief äußerlich völlig undramatisch. Emily Elizabeth Dickinson wurde am 10. Dezember 1830 in der kleinen Universitätsstadt Amherst, Massachusetts, geboren. Sie starb am 15. Mai 1886 in ihrem Geburtshaus. Der Radius ihrer täglichen Aktivitäten beschränkte sich auf ihr Elternhaus und den Garten, dessen Grenzen sie kurz nach ihrem dreißigsten Lebensjahr nicht mehr überschritt.

Den früheren, nicht immer einwandfrei dokumentierten Biographien und „Enthüllungen" ist es nicht gelungen, eine eindeutig nachweisbare Begründung für ihr zurückgezogenes Leben zu finden. Viele der späteren Biographen, darunter auch Vertreterinnen der Frauenbewegung, erklären Emily Dickinsons Abkehr von der äußeren Realität als eine bewußte, radikale Ausschaltung von hinderlichen Verpflichtungen und Ablenkungen. Damit wird ihr selbstgewähltes inneres Exil zur unbeschränkten Freiheit, die es ihr erlaubte, im „Haus der Möglichkeit" zu

wohnen und darin unbemerkt und ungestört ihr schöpferisches „Tagwerk" zu verrichten.

Sewall weist darauf hin, daß Emily Dickinson selbst in den Jahren ihrer weitgehenden Zurückgezogenheit nicht so völlig isoliert war, wie es ihren frühen Biographen erschien. Der ständige Austausch von Briefen war für sie von Kindheit an eine Lebensnotwendigkeit. „Ein Brief ist unser Erdenglück – Den Göttern nicht vergönnt –". Diese Worte, die sie in zwei verschiedenen Briefen im Januar 1885 benutzt (einmal als Vers, das andere Mal als Prosa in den Text eingefügt), sind nur ein Beispiel unter vielen, mit denen sie ihre Vorliebe für diese Form des Kontaktes ausdrückt. (Vergleiche auch ihren Brief an Higginson vom Juni 1869, der mit den Worten beginnt: „Ein Brief ist für mich immer wie Unsterblichkeit . . ."). Noch im letzten Jahr vor ihrem Tod, einem Jahr, in dem sie viele ihr nahestehende Menschen verloren hatte und selbst durch Krankheit geschwächt war, schrieb sie mehr als 60 Briefe an verschiedene Empfänger.

Was wissen wir über das wirkliche Leben dieser Frau, die von sich sagte „Ich wohne in der Möglichkeit" und sich in ihr viel mehr zu Hause fühlte als in der Prosa des täglichen Daseins? Wir wissen, daß sie in einer traditionsgebundenen puritanischen Umgebung aufwuchs und zu einer der alteingesessenen Familien des Ortes gehörte. Ihr Vater Edward Dickinson, ein angesehener Anwalt und erzkonservativer "Whig"-Anhänger, spielte eine führende Rolle bei allen öffentlichen Angelegenheiten in Amherst. Er war dreißig Jahre lang Finanzverwalter des Amherst College, das sein Vater, Samuel Fowler Dickinson, gegründet hatte. Im Laufe seiner lebenslangen politischen Tätigkeit bekleidete er eine Reihe hoher Gerichtsämter im Staat Massachusetts; 1852 wurde er zum Abgeordneten des Kongresses in Washington gewählt. Er war offensichtlich ein sehr beschäftigter Mann, der keinerlei Sinn für literarische Ausschweifungen hatte.

In einem sehnsüchtigen Brief an ihren Bruder Austin schrieb Emily 1851: „Es gibt bei uns jetzt nicht viel zu lachen, es ist ziemlich alles nüchterner Ernst, und wir lesen kaum Gedichte, da Vater beschlossen hat, daß so ziemlich alles das *wirkliche Leben* ist. Zwischen Vaters wirklichem Leben und *meinem* kommt es manchmal zu Zusammenstößen, aber bisher hat es keine Verletzungen

gegeben." Immerhin betont Sewall, daß Vater Dickinson keineswegs so unmenschliche Züge trug, wie sie ihm von vielen Seiten angedichtet wurden, und daß Emily in ihrem Bruder Austin einen verständnisvollen Vertrauten hatte, mit dem sie sich, besonders in ihren frühen Briefen, in liebevoll ironischer Form über den Vater lustig machen konnte.

Wir wissen, daß sie als junges Mädchen heiter und übermütig war und an vielen Geselligkeiten teilnahm, wo sie durch ihren scharfen Witz und eine gewisse geistige Koketterie auffiel.

Von 1840 bis 1847 besuchte Emily die Amherst Academy, die einen ungewöhnlich vielseitigen Lehrplan und eine Anzahl anregender Persönlichkeiten als Lehrer aufzuweisen hatte. In dieser Zeit, in der sich ihr eine Fülle von neuen Möglichkeiten eröffnete, schrieb Emily an ihre Freundin Abiah Root: „Du weißt, daß ich immer in meine Lehrer verliebt bin." Hier fand sie einen ihrer ersten „Meister" in Leonard Humphrey, dem jungen Direktor der Academy, der schon zwei Jahre nach der Übernahme seines Amtes starb und dessen Tod sie als ihren ersten schweren persönlichen Verlust schilderte. (Der Begriff „Meister" war für sie ein Ausdruck höchster Verehrung und Bewunderung, der unter anderem auch in den Entwürfen zu den späteren „Meister"-Briefen auftaucht, die sie an einen bisher unbekannt gebliebenen Empfänger schrieb).

Im September 1847 wurde Emily zur weiteren Ausbildung nach South Hadley ins Mount Holyoke Female Seminary geschickt, wo sie häufig krank war, oft über Heimweh klagte, sich angeblich als einzige Schülerin weigerte, an einem öffentlichen Bekenntnis zum wahren Christentum teilzunehmen und schließlich nach zwei Semestern ihr Studium mit der Begründung abbrach, daß ihr Vater es so beschlossen habe.

In den folgenden Jahren entwickelte sich eine intime Freundschaft zwischen Emily und Susan Gilbert, der späteren Frau von Austin, der sie fast täglich zärtliche Briefe schrieb und eine sehr große Anzahl ihrer Gedichte anvertraute. Nach der Heirat von Austin und Susan entstanden Spannungen zwischen den beiden Frauen, die sich im gleichen Maße wie die wachsenden Spannungen zwischen den Ehepartnern verstärkten. Aber trotz der zeitweisen Entfremdung zwischen Emily und Sue sandte Emily

immer wieder liebevolle Botschaften an die „Schwester im Nebenhaus", wie sie die Schwägerin nannte.

Wir wissen, daß sie in den Jahren zwischen 1858 und 1862 eine überwältigende schöpferische Aktivität entfaltete. Zu dieser Zeit begann sie, ihre Gedichte in Gruppen von 18 bis 20 Exemplaren zusammenzustellen und die gefalteten Seiten, je vier bis fünf in jeder Gruppe, am Rand sorgfältig mit Nadel und Faden aneinander zu heften. Die in diesen Faszikeln enthaltenen Reinschriften umfassen 561 Gedichte, darunter 366 allein aus dem Jahr 1862. Viele Anzeichen, vor allem der Inhalt einer großen Anzahl dieser Gedichte, sprechen dafür, daß sie sich in einer schweren seelischen Krise befand und daß ihr Mut, sich bis an die äußerste Grenze der eigenen Verzweiflung zu wagen, verbunden mit der Fähigkeit, eine Sprache für das Unaussprechliche zu finden, sie vor dem totalen Zusammenbruch retteten.

Über die Ursachen dieser psychischen Krise ist viel geschrieben worden, aber bisher haben alle Spekulationen, Mutmaßungen und sensationellen Enthüllungen zu keinem definitiven Resultat geführt. Die vergebliche Suche der Biographen nach dem „verlorenen Geliebten", wobei ein Kandidat nach dem anderen aufgestellt und wieder abgesetzt wurde, ist vorübergehend zum Stillstand gekommen. Benjamin Newton, den sie mehrmals in ihren Briefen an Higginson erwähnt, und Leonard Humphrey, ihr zweiter frühverstorbener „Meister", gehörten offenbar zu den Empfängern jener unvermeidlichen, schwärmerischen Liebe, die Emily nach ihren eigenen Worten, all ihren Lehrern entgegenbrachte.

Ihre Beziehung zu dem Pfarrer Charles Wadsworth ist problematischer, weil das biographische Material hierüber hauptsächlich aus Lücken besteht. Daher ist es der Forschung bislang nicht gelungen, festzustellen, ob Emily bei ihrem Aufenthalt in Philadelphia im März 1855 Wadsworth persönlich kennenlernte oder ihn zumindest von der Kanzel sprechen hörte. Es ist möglich, daß sie zunächst eine seiner Predigten zu lesen bekam und davon so beeindruckt war, daß sie daraufhin eine jahrelange Korrespondenz mit ihm einleitete, wie sie es später mit Higginson tat. Von diesem Briefwechsel ist nichts erhalten geblieben außer einem unpersönlich-seelsorgerischen Brief an sie. Wir wissen aus ihren schriftlichen Mitteilungen an andere Freunde, daß Wadsworth sie zweimal

unerwartet in Amherst besuchte und bei seinem letzten Besuch, im August 1880, davon sprach, daß er „jederzeit sterben" könne. ("I am liable at any time to die.")

Nach seinem Tod schrieb sie an die Brüder Clark, die mit Wadsworth befreundet waren, über ihre „intime Beziehung" zu ihrem „geliebten Pastor", aber gleichzeitig geht aus ihren Fragen hervor, daß vieles, was ihn betraf, für sie so unerforschlich geblieben ist wie die Umstände ihres eigenen Lebens für andere.

Wadsworth war berühmt als passionierter Prediger, der seine Gemeinde oft mit einem „schalkhaften Humor" überraschte, eine Eigenschaft, die selbst Mark Twain bewunderte. Die Briefe an seine Frau Jane, von denen Sewall einige Beispiele zitiert, sind überzeugende Beweise dafür, daß seine Liebe zum Beruf nur von der Liebe zu seiner Familie übertroffen wurde.

Es ist durchaus vorstellbar, daß Emily aus einer flüchtigen Begegnung oder einer weitgehend einseitigen Korrespondenz eine intime Beziehung konstruierte, in der sie Wadsworth als Muse für ihre Dichtung benutzte. Wenn man andererseits ihre Worte ernst nimmt, ist es genauso vorstellbar, daß zumindest eine schriftliche Intimität existierte, die auf einer tieferen Wesensverwandtschaft beruhte und für beide gleich wichtig war. Sewall schreibt, daß „einige der Parallelen zwischen Stellen in seinen Predigten und Emilys Gedichten verblüffend sind, obwohl sie nichts anderes beweisen als eine Affinität des Geistes und der Imagination."

Hier noch ein kleiner Beitrag zu dem allgemeinen Rätselraten: Emily schrieb ihren ersten Brief an Higginson (15. April 1862) kurz vor der Übersiedlung von Wadsworth und seiner Familie nach San Francisco. In ihrem folgenden Brief heißt es: „Ich hatte einen Schrecken – seit September – über den ich mit niemand sprechen konnte." Sewall sieht darin einen möglichen Hinweis auf ihren inneren Zustand im Zusammenhang mit der bevorstehenden – für sie unüberbrückbaren – Entfernung. Ungefähr zur selben Zeit (ca. 1862; wie die meisten ihrer Gedichte nicht genauer datierbar) schrieb sie: „Ich kann nicht leben mit Dir" ("I cannot live with You-"), ihr längstes Gedicht, das einige, für Emily Dickinson ungewöhnliche persönliche Anspielungen enthält. Es ist an einen Mann gerichtet, der Gott diente und dessen Leuchten selbst im Paradies das Gesicht von Jesus überstrahlen würde, eine blasphemische

Vorstellung, durch die sie sich selbst zu einer gemeinsamen Auferstehung mit dem Geliebten für untauglich erklärt. Besonders die letzte Strophe, in der das Meer – neben dem Gebet und der Verzweiflung – als „Türspalt" für eine Begegnung offenbleibt, verstärkt die Hoffnungslosigkeit der Beziehung angesichts der geographischen Trennung, ohne jedoch die Verbindung ganz zu zerstören.

So verlockend und anregend Spekulationen dieser Art auch sein mögen, gelangt man dabei doch letzten Endes zu dem Ergebnis, daß es fruchtbarer ist, sich mit dem vorhandenen dichterischen Niederschlag von Emilys Leidenschaft zu befassen, anstatt weiter dem Phantom des unbekannten Geliebten nachzujagen.

Im Laufe der Jahrzehnte war es der Legendenbildung gelungen, die historische Persönlichkeit von Emily Dickinson weitgehend und scheinbar endgültig mit der Rolle der exzentrischen alten Jungfer zu identifizieren, die in ihrem eigenen Haus herumspukte, tagsüber nur mit Blumen, Bienen und Schmetterlingen verkehrte und sich – immer in makelloses Weiß gekleidet – auf ihr Rendezvous mit dem Tod vorbereitete, dem „gewandten Freier, der zuletzt gewinnt" ("Death is a supple Suitor"). Diese Legende wurde fast siebzig Jahre nach ihrem Tod durch eine überraschende Entdeckung mit einer neuen Wirklichkeit konfrontiert. 1954 veröffentlichte Millicent Bingham Todd, die Tochter von Emilys erster Herausgeberin Mabel Todd, ein Buch unter dem Titel: "Emily Dickinson: A Revelation". Die Enthüllung, die auf einer Reihe von Briefentwürfen Emilys beruht, bietet unwiderlegbares Beweismaterial dafür, daß es in ihrem Leben, wenn auch zu einem späten Zeitpunkt, eine befriedigende Beziehung zu einem realen Liebhaber gegeben hatte. Dieser Geliebte war Otis Phillips Lord, ein Kollege und gleichaltriger Freund ihres Vaters, ebenfalls ein Erzkonservativer und „Whig"-Anhänger, der wie Edward Dickinson eine führende politische Rolle spielte und als „einer der fähigsten Männer im Staat Massachusetts" galt. Während öffentliche Zeugenaussagen seine Strenge und gelegentlich einschüchternde Haltung als Richter betonten, verband ihn mit Emily – neben anderen Freuden – die Freude am Spaß, an entspannenden Unterhaltungen und die Liebe zu Shakespeare.

Die Briefentwürfe, deren Veröffentlichung aus legalen Gründen so lange aufgeschoben wurde, sind fragmentarisch, größtenteils

undatiert und anscheinend von Austin, der sie ursprünglich aufbewahrte, einer radikalen Zensur mit der Schere unterworfen worden. So ist daraus nicht zu ersehen, wann die Beziehung ihren Anfang nahm, wie sie sich entwickelte und ob eine Ehe, über die Emily verschiedene Andeutungen macht, ernsthaft in Erwägung gezogen wurde. Judge Lord war vierunddreißig Jahre verheiratet gewesen, als seine Frau nach langer Krankheit starb. Ihr Todestag fiel mit Emilys siebenundvierzigsten Geburtstag zusammen. Es ist bekannt, daß die Nichte seiner Frau, die Judge Lords Haushalt in Salem, Massachusetts, weiterführte, sich einer Ehe zwischen Emily und ihrem Onkel energisch widersetzte. Gleichzeitig kann man auch aus einigen Stellen von Emilys Briefen schließen, daß sie selbst es vorzog, ihr „liebstes Salem" (eins ihrer Koseworte für Judge Lord) in Amherst zu empfangen und in ihrem eigenen Haus ihre Unabhängigkeit von der Außenwelt, verbunden mit den Höhepunkten seiner Besuche, zu genießen.

Die folgende Stelle aus einem Brief an den Freund (1. Mai 1882) ist ein charakteristisches Beispiel für die Mehrdeutigkeit ihrer Aussagen: „Unser gemeinsames Leben war lange Verzeihen auf Deiner Seite mir gegenüber. Daß meine ländliche Liebe Deine Hermelingefilde unbefugt betrat, konnte nur ein Fürst verzeihen – Ich habe nie vor anderen gekniet – Der Geist [ist] nie ein zweites Mal der gleiche, sondern jedes Mal ein anderer – der andere göttlicher. Hätte ich ihn doch früher gefunden! Aber Zärtlichkeit hat kein Datum – sie kommt – und überwältigt. Die Zeit vorher hat nicht gezählt, so bleibt sie unerwähnt. Was da ist, reicht für alle Zeit und macht die Zeit zu nichts."

(Our Life together was long forgivenses on your part toward me. The trespass of my rustic Love upon your Realms of Ermine, only a Sovreign could forgive – I never knelt to other – The Spirit never twice alike, but every time another – that other more divine. Oh, had I found it sooner! Yet Tenderness has not a Date – it comes – and overwhelms.

The time before it was – was naught, so why establish it? And all the time to come it is, which abrogates the time.)

Aus der ersten Zeile könnte man entnehmen, daß die Beziehung seit langer Zeit bestand. Dem widerspricht der Wunsch: „Hätte ich ihn doch früher gefunden!" Im letzten Absatz, einem klassischen

Vierzeiler, hebt sie die Zeit endgültig auf. Der Satz: „Ich habe nie vor anderen gekniet –" wird gelegentlich als Beweis dafür zitiert, daß Lord ihre erste und einzige Liebe war, oder auch dafür, daß sie damit die „anderen" verleugnete. In einem einleuchtenderen Zusammenhang gesehen, bedeuten diese Worte, sie hätte nie vor Geringeren gekniet. Dem entspricht auch der folgende Satz: „Der Geist [ist] nie ein zweites Mal der gleiche ..."

Es ist anzunehmen, daß zwischen Emily und ihrem „liebsten Salem" keine derartigen Verständnisschwierigkeiten existierten. Die „zeitlose Zärtlichkeit", die sie mit ihm verband, hielt an bis zu seinem Tod am 13. März 1884. Wenige Monate danach hatte Emily einen Anfall von Bewußtlosigkeit, der zunächst auf nervöse Erschöpfung zurückgeführt wurde. Es war der Beginn einer Nierenerkrankung, die zwei Jahre später zu ihrem Tod führte. Ihre letzte Botschaft (Mai 1886), an die Schwestern Norcross gerichtet, besteht aus den Worten:

"Little Cousins,
Called back.
Emily."[5]

1963 schrieb Richard B. Sewall in der Einleitung zu seiner Auswahl von Essays über Emily Dickinson, daß das biographische Problem, trotz der Menge des neu zugänglich gemachten Materials, immer noch existiere. Die Situation sei ähnlich wie bei Shakespeare, bei dem man sich fragte, „Wie konnte dieser Bursche vom Lande solche Stücke schreiben?" Wir suchen nach Quellen in ihrem äußeren Leben, die uns Auskünfte über das reiche und anschauliche Leben der Gedichte geben könnten und stehen bei fast jeder Wendung vor einem unüberwindlichen Hindernis."[6] Sewalls große Dickinson-Biographie von 1974, die ich als Hauptquelle für meine biographische Skizze benutzt habe, zeigt nur allzu deutlich, wie wenig sich in der Zwischenzeit an dieser Situation geändert hat.[7]

Es ist ein Paradox, daß Emily Dickinsons „Leben nach dem Tod" viel zugänglicher und dadurch konkreter dokumentierbar wurde, als es vorher gewesen war. Die anschaulichste und eingehendste Untersuchung dieses Themas lieferte Klaus Lubbers

in seinem Buch „Emily Dickinson: The Critical Revolution“[8], das die wissenschaftliche Gründlichkeit des Literaturhistorikers mit detektivischem Spürsinn vereint und eine Fülle von faszinierenden Details über Emily Dickinsons Wirkung in der Öffentlichkeit enthält.

Hier soll die komplizierte Editionsgeschichte nur kurz zusammengefaßt werden. Während es Emilys Natur entsprach, ihr Leben in einen „feurigen Dunst“ zu hüllen, in dem sie sich mehr oder weniger unsichtbar machen konnte, kam es nach ihrem Tod zu äußerst dramatischen, selbst melodramatischen, öffentlichen Auftritten und Auseinandersetzungen zwischen den verschiedenen Parteien, die sich mit ihrem literarischen Nachlaß befaßten. Zunächst war es ihre Schwester Lavinia, die eine ungeahnte Menge von Manuskripten in einer verschlossenen Truhe entdeckte. Lavinia war von Emilys Genie überzeugt, hatte aber wenig Erfahrung mit Lyrik und noch weniger mit Verlegern und geschäftlichen Angelegenheiten. So wandte sie sich zuerst mit der Bitte um Hilfe an ihre erfahrenere Schwägerin Sue, die aber trotz ihrer literarischen und gesellschaftlichen Beziehungen nichts für Emilys Gedichte erreichen konnte und das Material wieder zurückgab. Lavinia fand schließlich eine willige und begabte Helferin in Mabel Loomis Todd, die bereit war, die schwierige Aufgabe des Abschreibens zu übernehmen und sich um einen Verleger zu bemühen.

An dieser Stelle muß der sachliche Bericht durch weitere „Enthüllungen“ unterbrochen werden, die in Sewalls Biographie zum ersten Mal ausführlich dokumentiert wurden und einen entscheidenden Einfluß auf den Verlauf der Editionsgeschichte hatten. Mrs. Todd war als junge Frau mit ihrem Mann, dem Astronomieprofessor David Todd, 1881 nach Amherst gekommen. Innerhalb von zwei Jahren entwickelte sich ein langanhaltendes und leidenschaftliches Verhältnis zwischen Mabel Todd und Austin Dickinson, das schon zu Emilys Lebzeiten ein stadtbekanntes Geheimnis war. Sewall zitiert eine Eintragung aus dem Tagebuch von Mabels Tochter Millicent Todd Bingham aus dem Jahr 1951: „Wie wirkte es auf Emily? Sie war froh, daß Austin nach seinem fast gänzlich ruinierten Leben etwas Wohltuendes gefunden hatte. Wie meine Mutter sagte, ‚Emily hatte immer Respekt für echte Gefühle‘.“

Auch David Todd respektierte anscheinend die Gefühle seiner Frau, und Austin, als Nachfolger seines Vaters am Amherst College, zählte offiziell weiter zu den Stützen der Gesellschaft, aber die Beziehung hatte letzten Endes tragische Folgen für alle Beteiligten. Nach Emilys Tod kam es allmählich zu einem völligen Zerwürfnis zwischen ihrer Schwester Lavinia und Susan, der ehemaligen „Schwester im Nachbarhaus“, wobei Mabel Todd zum Mittelpunkt der beiderseitigen Intrigen wurde.

Trotz einer scheinbar endlosen Reihe von technischen und psychologischen Schwierigkeiten gelang es Mabel Todd nach vierjähriger Arbeit des Abschreibens, zuerst Higginson und dann durch ihn einen Verleger für eine erste Veröffentlichung zu interessieren.

Hier ist zu erwähnen, daß zu Emilys Lebzeiten nicht mehr als sieben Gedichte – und diese anonym – erschienen waren. Higginson war nicht der einzige literarische Berater, der ihr von einer Veröffentlchung abgeraten hatte. Samuel Bowles, ein Freund der Dickinson-Familie und Herausgeber des *Springfield Republican*, hatte ihr Gedicht “I taste a liquor never brewed”, mit einem Titel und verschiedenen „Verbesserungen“ versehen, am 4. Mai 1861 in seiner Zeitung gedruckt. Dies erfolgte nach einer jahrelangen Korrespondenz, in deren Verlauf sie ihm eine große Anzahl ihrer Gedichte geschickt hatte. Ein weiteres Gedicht, ebenfalls von Bowles betitelt und „den Regeln entsprechend“ umgearbeitet, erschien am 14. Februar 1866. (Sie schrieb darüber an Higginson in ihrem Brief von Anfang 1866: „Falls Sie meiner Schlange begegnen ...“) Die Indifferenz ihrer literarischen Freunde mag dazu beigetragen haben, daß sie die vielfachen Ablehnungen ihres eigenen dichterischen Ausdrucks schließlich mit einer vollständigen Ablehnung gegen jegliche Veröffentlichung kompensierte. Die Aufforderung von Thomas Niles, einem Herausgeber des Verlages Roberts Brothers in Boston, der sie im April 1882 bat, einen Band ihrer Gedichte im Druck erscheinen zu lassen, beantwortete sie mit einer indirekten Absage, indem sie ihm statt eines größeren Manuskriptes nur ein kleines Gedicht schickte. Niles gehörte wie Bowles und Higginson zu den literarischen Persönlichkeiten, die sie ständig mit Proben ihrer Kunst versorgte.

Die erste Ausgabe einer kleinen Auswahl der Gedichte von Emily Dickinson, herausgegeben von Mabel Loomis Todd und T. W. Higginson, erschien am 12. November 1890 bei Roberts Brothers, nachdem Niles sehr zögernd und widerwillig seine Einstimmung dazu gegeben hatte. Diese Ausgabe war nach wenigen Wochen vergriffen, weitere Auflagen folgten in kurzen Abständen. Higginson hatte sich inzwischen so sehr von Mabel Todds Begeisterung anstecken lassen, daß er durch Vorträge und Artikel über seine ehemalige „Schülerin" ein größeres verständnisvolles Publikum zu erreichen suchte. Die Reaktion der Kritik war gemischt; die Rezensenten wetteiferten miteinander in der Benutzung von vagen Adjektiven, die mehr über ihre eigene Unsicherheit gegenüber dem Phänomen Emily Dickinson aussagten als über die Bedeutung der Gedichte.

Durch den zunehmenden Erfolg ermutigt, brachten T. W. Higginson und Mabel Loomis Todd 1891 eine zweite Auswahl der Gedichte heraus, deren fünfte Auflage 1893 erschien. Es folgten 1894 die "Letters of Emily Dickinson", eine zweibändige Ausgabe, und 1896 eine dritte Sammlung von Gedichten, herausgegeben von Mabel Loomis Todd, die noch im selben Jahr eine zweite Auflage erlebte.

Nach dem Tod von Austin Dickinson (16. August 1895) steigerte sich die Intensität der Intrigen zwischen den feindlichen Parteien: Lavinia, Susan und Mabel. Unter dem Einfluß ihrer Schwägerin Susan strengte Lavinia Dickinson im November 1896 gegen ihre ehemalige Freundin und Helferin Mabel Loomis Todd einen Prozeß an, der großes öffentliches Aufsehen erregte und sich bis zum April 1898 hinzog. Er endete damit, daß Mrs. Todd gezwungen wurde, ihren Anspruch auf ein Stück Land zurückzunehmen, das ihr Austin als Entgelt für ihre Bemühungen vermacht hatte. Mrs. Todd gab mit ihrem Anspruch auch ihre Arbeit an weiteren Abschriften von Dickinson-Manuskripten auf. Diese verwickelten persönlichen Umstände führten dazu, daß 665 Gedichte von Emily Dickinson in einer Kampferholztruhe verschlossen wurden und dort für die nächsten fünfunddreißig Jahre unangerührt blieben.

Die allmähliche und bruchstückweise Veröffentlichung des nachgelassenen Werkes von Emily Dickinson hat sich über einen

Zeitraum von fast siebzig Jahren hingezogen. Achtzehn Jahre nach der ersten Veröffentlichung erschien 1914 eine Ausgabe neuer Gedichte ("The Single Hound"), herausgegeben von Martha Dickinson Bianchi, der Tochter von Austin und Susan. Darauf folgten, wiederum in größeren Abständen, weitere Bände von Gedichten und eine Auswahl aus den Briefen, ebenfalls von Martha Dickinson Bianchi herausgegeben und mit äußerst irreführenden biographischen Ausschmückungen versehen. Auch die Gedichte waren, dem Geschmack der Zeit gemäß und ihrem eigenen ästhetischen Gefühl entsprechend, von Mrs. Bianchi „bearbeitet" worden.

Nach dem Tod von Mabel Loomis Todd (1932) übernahm ihre Tochter Millicent Todd Bingham die Redaktion der bis dahin verborgen gebliebenen Manuskripte, die sie in relativ authentischer Wiedergabe zur Veröffentlichung brachte.

Mit dem Erscheinen der dreibändigen Ausgabe der Harvard University Press im Jahre 1955 wurden sämtliche 1775 Gedichte von Emily Dickinson zum ersten Mal in unveränderter Form dem Publikum zugänglich gemacht. Diese „Variorum"-Ausgabe enthält alle alternativen Fassungen von Gedichten, Strophen, Zeilen und Worten, die Emily Dickinson entweder benutzt oder auch nur als Möglichkeit in Erwägung gezogen hat und erschließt damit ein weiteres, schier unerschöpfliches Gebiet für künftige Forschungen. Thomas H. Johnson, der Herausgeber der „definitiven" Ausgabe, hat sämtliche Eigenarten in Bezug auf Interpunktion, Versbrechung, „ungereimte" Reime, uneinheitliches Versmaß und andere unorthodoxe Sprachformen, die die früheren Herausgeber ausgemerzt oder „verbessert" hatten, dem Originalmanuskript entsprechend wieder eingesetzt.

Drei Jahre nach dem Erscheinen der Gedichte in der Harvard-Ausgabe veröffentlichte Thomas H. Johnson in Zusammenarbeit mit Theodora Ward die dreibändige Ausgabe der Briefe von Emily Dickinson. Damit endet die Editionsgeschichte, die in vielen ihrer Einzelheiten nicht weniger umstritten ist als die überlieferte Geschichte ihres Lebens. Die Frage nach der „wirklichen" Emily Dickinson wird ihr Leserpublikum sowie die Experten noch bis weit in das nächste Jahrhundert hinein beschäftigen.

New York, im April 1986 — Lola Gruenthal

[1] John Cody, *After Great Pain: The Inner Life of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1971), S. 489.

[2] Yvor Winters, „Emily Dickinson and the Limits of Judgment", in *Emily Dickinson: A Collection of Critical Essays,* ed. Richard B. Sewall (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, Inc.), S. 28–40.

[3]. R. P. Blackmur, "Emily Dickinson: Notes on Prejudice and Fact", *The Southern Review,* III (Autumn 1937) S. 346.

[4] Hans Galinsky: *Wegbereiter moderner amerikanischer Lyrik: Interpretations- und Rezeptionsstudien zu Emily Dickinson und William Carlos Williams.* Heidelberg 1968.

[5] *Called Back* („Zurückgerufen") war der Titel eines Buches, von dem damals außerordentlich beliebten englischen Schriftsteller Hugh Conway. Emily hatte darüber im Januar 1885 an ihre Kusinen geschrieben: „Es ist eine Geschichte, die einen verfolgt". ("It is a haunting story ...") So „telegrafierte" sie ihren endgültigen Abschied von der Welt mit einem Zitat.

[6] Richard B. Sewall, Einleitung zu *Emily Dickinson: A Collection of Critical Essays,* Loc. cit., S. 5.

[7] Richard B. Sewall, *The Life of Emily Dickinson* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974, 1980).

[8] Klaus Lubbers, *Emily Dickinson: The Critical Revolution* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1968).

INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

Zweimal nahm das Grab mir mehr 7
I never lost as much but twice

Sollt' ich sterben 7
If I should die

Mein König hat für mich kein Wort 9
I have a King, who does not speak

Ärzte sollten sehr behutsam 9
Surgeons must be very careful

Der Glaube als Erfindung dient 9
"Faith" is a fine invention

Ich werde wissen warum – wenn die Zeit vorbei ist 11
I shall know why – when Time is over

Ich koste nie gebrauten Trank 11
I taste a liquor never brewed

Wilde Nächte – Wilde Nächte! 13
Wild Nights – Wild Nights!

Durch Leid zu waten 13
I can wade Grief

„Hoffnung" ist das Federding 15
"Hope" is the thing with feathers

Ein kühler Freund – in schwüler Zeit 15
A Shady friend – for Torried days

Mein Hirn war ein Begräbnisort 17
I felt a Funeral, in my Brain

Ich bin Niemand? Wer bist du? 17
I'm Nobody! Who are you?

Mich dünkt die Erde kurz 19
I reason, Earth is short

Die Seele, die sich selbst zu Gaste lädt 19
The Soul selects her own Society

Ins Erdreich kommt ein Gast 21
A Visitor in Marl

Es kam die Nacht des ersten Tags 21
The first Day's Night had come

Guten Morgen – Mitternacht! 23
Good Morning – Midnight

Wahnsinn ist oft der höchste Sinn 23
Much Madness is divinest Sense
Ich schreibe diesen Brief der Welt 25
This is my letter to the World
Ich starb für Schönheit – und war kaum 25
I died for Beauty – but was scarce
Ich bin nicht mehr ihr Eigentum 27
I'm ceded – I've stopped being Theirs –
Schönheit ist nicht „weil" – SIE ist 27
Beauty – be not caused – Its Is
Wir träumen – wie gut, daß wir träumen 29
We dream – it is good we are dreaming
Das Herz sucht Lust – zuerst 29
The Heart asks Pleasure – first
Ich forderte die Welt heraus 31
I took my power in my Hand
Erst zähl ich Dichter – Sonne dann 31
I reckon – when I count at all
Ich kann nicht leben mit dir 33
I cannot live with You
Das Leid besteht zum Teil aus Nichts 35
Pain – has an Element of Blank
Ich wohne in der Möglichkeit 37
I dwell in Possibility
Könnt' ich doch schweben unbegrenzt 39
Could I but ride indefinite
Man muß kein Haus sein, heimgesucht zu werden 41
One need not be a Chamber – to be Haunted
Die Seele ist sich selbst 41
The Soul unto itself
Man sagt, „die Zeit bringt Linderung" 43
They say that "Time assuages"
Der Sieg kommt spät 43
Victory comes late
Als teilte sich das Meer 45
As if the Sea should part
Weil ich nicht anhielt vor dem Tod 45
Because I could not stop for Death

Vorahnung – ist der lange Schatten – auf dem Grün 47
Presentiment – is that long Shadow – on the Lawn
Eins und eins – sind eins 47
One and One – are One
Wer Fülle nicht gekannt 47
None can experience stint
Beraubt des Letzten zog ich fort 49
Bereaved of all, I went abroad
Die einz'ge Neuigkeit für mich 49
The Only News I know
Spalte die Lerche – du findest die Töne 51
Split the Lark – and you'll find the Music
Der erste Akt heißt: Finden 51
Finding is the first Act
Ich trat von Steg zu Steg 51
I stepped from Plank to Plank
Ein Überall aus Silber 53
An Everywhere of Silver
Wir entwachsen der Liebe wie jedem Ding 53
We outgrow love, like other things
Könnt' ich vergessen, wie glücklich ich war 53
How happy I was if I could forget
Verlust des Ganzen schütze mich 55
The Missing All, prevented Me
Zu sterben – ohne daß man stirbt 55
To die – without the Dying
Öffne die Gitter, Tod 55
Let down the Bars, Oh Death
Die Grille sang 57
The Crickets sang
Sag alles wahr, doch sag es schräg 57
Tell all the Truth but tell it slant
Ist Gott ein Arzt? Man redet 57
Is Heaven a Physician?
Ein leichter Frühlingswahnsinn tut 59
A little Madness in the Spring
Wie glücklich ist der kleine Stein 59
How happy is the little Stone

Ertrinken ist so kläglich nicht 59
Drowning is not so pitiful
Mein Leben schloß sich zweimal vor dem Schluß 61
My life closed twice before its close
Man macht eine Prärie mit einem Klee und einer Biene 61
To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee

Briefe 65

Nachwort 93

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4

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May 24, 1984

I feel like a tight-rope walker with a cramp in one leg.

Walked along Third Ave. from Alexander's to 86th Street humming "Silent Night."

Joel called from Beacon (Alma's house) to tell me about "Briefe der Nelly Sachs" which he wants to recommend to his publisher for translation. He wants to suggest me for the job because he feels that we speak the same language.

In the morning, before I went to Dr. Trojanas' office, thought about

writing "The Story of my Mother." I felt quite ready to ~~sa~~ start it and go ahead with it. But this is something that won't get lost.

"Meine Mutter war eine sehr mondäne Dame."

Last night Margarete (57) talked about her mother (80) with such passionate vehemence (also with quite a lot of dramatic florish) that one could almost see both mother and daughter in their unresolved conflict at different stages of their lives. Suggest discussion of "Mutter" for one of our future Wib meetings.

Yesterday very productive collective effort during our translation group meeting.

Interesting that Dagmar rejects the idea of "Heimat." The man whom she loves and who also expressed his love for her is in NY but does not see her more often than about once a year. She seems to be resigned to this. A situation even more unbearable than L.'s who now has lost her "beloved" since he has gone into complete retirement. Apparently there are many women, attractive, ~~and~~ intelligent and gifted ones, who can live on love alone, a sort of unilateral love, that is. This was probably Rilke's ideal

woman. "Eine der grossen Liebenden." Merline was not quite one of them because she did not accept "love without the beloved." Interesting subject to pursue further. Of course, Emily Dickinson was probably one of the greatest "unilateral lovers" of all times.

Ein anderes Thema mit dem man sich beschäftigen sollte: Warum gibt es keine "Renaissancefrauen" trotz der häufigen erstaunlichen Vielseitigkeit der Frauen auf den verschiedensten Gebieten. Siehe Patty, Margarete und in bescheidenem Masse meine eigene Person. Warum haben wir ~~so~~ so oft das Bedürfnis, uns dafür entschuldigen zu müssen, dass wir uns auf verschiedenen Gebieten, in verschiedenen Berufen betätigt haben und dass wir uns für viele Dinge gleichzeitig oder hintereinander interessieren?

[Heraussuchen: "Die Scheisse" v. Enzensberger und mein "Death is a boy"]

Alles aufschreiben, wenn es einem einfällt, damit man es nicht vergisst.

May 28

Had a very bad day yesterday. Alternating physical symptoms and depression. Depression seems to be winning. Wrote a pretty crazy poem today. First line "came to me" yesterday.

Who plays with me
pulls off my clothes
my hair
twists my head around
so I can see
What's behind
sticks a knife into me
to find
my heart
leaves me lying outside
for days
letting me swell
in the rain
rot
in the sun
but not
letting me die
~~whose old battered baby doll~~
~~am I?~~

whose battered old baby doll
am I?

Meine Mutter hatte sich das Leiden zur Lebensaufgabe gemacht.
zur lebenslänglichen Hausaufgabe gemacht

Ich hatte wenig Ähnlichkeit mit m. M. Ich war blass, blond, unansehnlich und nichtssagend. Auf meinen Kinderbildern schaue ich ziemlich blöde in die Gegend, verlegen lächelnd, als ~~f~~ wolle ich mich für mein Vorhandensein entschuldigen. Das auffälligste an mir war eine grosse Haarschleife, die ich mitten auf dem Kopf tragen musste, weil ~~weil meine Mutter das~~ u. die m. M. sie schön fand ~~diese~~ Verzierung mei. M.

obwohl ich mich
~~gefiel~~ jeden Tag dagegen
~~schön fand~~, ~~obwohl~~ sie
~~wusste~~ dass ich ~~mich~~
~~damit nicht gleichzeitig damit~~
~~fühlte~~ war. ~~sie albern u. kindisch~~
~~fand~~ Ich war meist ein
braves und friedliches
Kind (jedenfalls dem
äusseren Anschein nach),
und wahrscheinlich
musste ich das sein, um
mich von meinem
jüngeren Bruder zu
unterscheiden, der alles
andere als friedlich war.
Besucher meiner Eltern,
die etwas Freundliches
über mich sagen wollten,
~~sprachen~~ lobten in meiner
Gegenwart, ~~davon~~, was
~~für gute Manieren~~ wie
~~meinen~~ ~~gut~~ erzogen ich ~~sei~~ hätte.
Darunter litt ich ebenso
wie unter der Schleife,
denn was war das schon
für eine Auszeichnung
gute Manieren zu haben.
Später ~~kam~~ wurde gele-

gentlich die Phrase hinzu-
gefügt "wie eine
Aristokratin" was mir
schon etwas besser gefiel.
Meine Mutter hatte mir
einmal, vielleicht auch
öfter, zum Spass erzählt,
sie habe mich als kleinkind
zu gewinnen abgekauft, ~~ob~~
~~sie das tat~~, und diese
Vorstellung ~~fand ich~~ war für mich
einerseits faszinierend
und andererseits be-
unruhigend. Es konnte
bedeuten, dass ich in
Wirklichkeit das Kind
~~sehr vornehmer~~ aristokratischer deutscher Eltern
war, was auch meine
helle Haar- und Haut-
farbe erklären würde, aber
damit war die Befürch-
tung verbunden, dass
meine Eltern mich weiter-
verkaufen könnten, wenn
sie mir unzufrieden
waren. Ein Grund mehr,
~~um~~ ein braves Kind zu sein.

Meine M. ~~bestand~~ Fähigkeit verstand es mit eiserner ~~Energie~~ darauf, ~~ungefähr 10 Jahre lang~~ ihr wahres Alter geheim zu halten, und so blieb sie, wie ~~es mir in der Erinnerung scheint~~, viele Jahre lang eine junge Frau mit einer unheimlich schnell heranwachsenden Tochter. Deshalb mussten auch die grossen Schleifen beibehalten werden, was die Tochter kindlich oder zurückgeblieben erscheinen liess.

Meine Kleider, die m. M. von d. Hausschneiderin aus ihren eigenen abgelegten Stücken ihren ~~Kostüm~~ ~~teuren u. auffälligen~~ eigenen Garderobe herstellen liess, zeichneten sich durch auffällige Farben, z.B. das bewusste teure Liberstoffe und kaum die Unterhosen bedeckenden Rock Säume aus, zu einer Zeit als ich

wirklich ganz

nicht mehr ein es kleines Mädchen war. Einmal spielte ich im Park mit anderen Kindern unter der Obhut des Kinderfräuleins als eine fremde Frau mich entrüstet ansprach mit den Worten: "Sag gefälligst deiner Mutter, sie soll dich anständig anziehen und nicht wie so'n Zigeunermädchen mit nackten Schenkeln rumlaufen lassen." Diese Botschaft wurde meiner Mutter triumphierend überbracht, aber ich weiss nicht, ob sie unmittelbar die erwartete Wirkung ausübte.

Mir kam es wohl ziemlich früh zu Bewusstsein, dass m. M. nicht viel von Kindern hielt. Wie sollte sie auch die Rolle einer mondänen Dame mit der einer kinderliebenden Mutter verbinden?

Es gab Kindesmädchen, Fräuleins, Gouvernanten, die dafür bezahlt wurden, sich um die Kinder zu kümmern. Viele Jahre lang nahmen sie die Mahlzeiten getrennt, verbrachten die Sommerferien ~~mit den Fräuleins~~ und sahen die lieben Eltern nur zu seltenen Gelegenheiten.
Es gab damals viele Bälle und auch andere Gesellschaft. Ereignisse, an denen unsere Eltern teilnahmen, und für mich und meinen Bruder war es eine besondere Belohnung, wenn durch abends mich einmal ins Kinderzimmer kam, um uns gute Nacht zu wünschen und sich sich in ihren kostbaren Abendtoiletten vorzustellen.
Das war beinah so schön,

wie selbst ins Theater zu gehen, wenn nicht noch schöner, denn man konnte sie doch aus nächster Nähe bewundern, sie berühren durfte man sie nicht.
Im Gegensatz zu diesen eleganten Festlichkeiten gab eine andere Art v. Unterhaltung, die damals im Kreise meiner Eltern sehr beliebt war: das waren die Kapuzenbälle, die auch oft in unserem Hause stattfanden. Was man damals als Kapuzen bezeichnete, waren nicht etwa Indianer sondern Unterweltgestalten in der Art von Zuhältern und ihren Mädchen, ungefähr im Stil von Mackie Messer und seiner Jenny, aber mit einem leicht französischen Einschlag.

eine ewige "unbewältigte Vergangenheit"

31. Mai

Wir alle tragen unsere Mütter mit uns herum. Ganz gleich, was wir ~~inzwischen~~ selbst aus unserem Leben gemacht haben. ~~Sel~~ Ganz gleich, ob wir ~~selbst~~ ~~seit langem~~ seit ~~vor langer Zeit~~ inzwischenzeit Mütter ~~und~~, vielleicht sogar Grossmütter, geworden sind.

Vorige Woche sassen wir in A.'s Wohnküche (altmodisch, bohemienhaft, europäisch, gemütlich) und beschäftigten uns mit unserem literarischen Projekten (für den westdeutschen Rundfunk). Fünf Frauen, von sehr verschiedenartiger Herkunft, verschiedener Altersstufen, mit verschiedenen ~~Begabn~~ Fähigkeiten. Zuletzt blieben nur D. und aber sehr individuell ausgepr.

ich zurück. A. fütterte uns mit einem liebevoll aufgewärmten Eintopf, goss Schnaps in die Gläschen und erzählte von ihrer "Mama". Ihr Gesicht glühte und die Tränen stiegen ihr in die Augen, als hätte sie ~~eben~~ in diesem Moment bei einer leidenschaftlich erregten Auseinandersetzung eine Ohrfeige von der Mama bekommen. A. ist eine reife, vielseitig begabte Frau, ~~deren~~ ihr Leben ist voll ~~ist~~ von aufregenden Abenteuern, die sie fast ~~automatisch~~ ~~literarisch~~ erzählerisch verwertet. Sie fährt jedes Jahr heim zur Mama, wo sie die Kämpfe ihrer Kindheit täglich weiterführt. A. ~~erzählt~~, wie sie mit 15 Jahren dem

* Kämpfein geblieben:
in Frontlazaretten zu arbeiten u.s. dadurch der
Pappi eine Unterschrift
abzwang, ~~[illegible]~~
die ihr erlaubte, ~~als Hitler-~~
~~mädchen eine Stellung~~
~~als Hilfsl. im Osteinsatz anzutreten~~ ~~einzunehmen~~.
Sie hatte ihm ~~damit~~
gedroht, dass sie andernfalls die "Mammi" umbringen müsste ~~würde~~. Eine sehr dramatische Geschichte, ausserordentl. spannend erzählt. ~~Trotzdem~~ Am Ende bringe ich die Frage auf, Warum fährst du eigentl. jedes Jahr heim zu Mammi, wenn du doch weisst, dass sich der gleiche Kampf täge. Von neuem abspielt?" A.: "Aber ich liebe sie doch."
(Mammi ist inzwischen 80 Jahre alt ~~[illegible]~~ aber eine unermüdl. *
Die Geschichte von G., nur flüchtig nebenbei erwähnt, der die Mutter ins Poesiealbum schrieb: "Erst die Arbeit, dann

mütterl. Kontrolle zu entziehen
* Dingen

das Vergnügen." G. hat sich diesen Spruch zu Herzen genommen. Sie ist jetzt 32 Jahre alt und äusserst gewissenhaft in ~~ihrer Arbeit~~ berufl. u. persönl. *
Aber sie gönnt sich auch gelegentlich Freiheiten, die ihre Mutter ~~wahrscheinlich~~ ~~ihr nicht billigen würde~~ ~~sich selbst wahrscheinlich nicht gegö/gönnen würde~~.
Ich erwähne eine Frau von beinah 90 Jahren, die geistig sehr rege aber körperl. ziemlich gebrechlich ist und die noch mit 80 "alte Leute" pflegte. Jetzt ist sie faul geworden, wie sie sagt, aber sie kann es nicht geniessen, denn sie muss immer ~~dar~~ an die Worte ihrer Mutter denken, besonders an den Satz: "Man darf

dem lieben Gott nicht
die Zeit stehlen."
Ich verschweige meine
eigene Mutter. Ich gehe nach
Hause und fühle mich
einen Tag lang entsetzlich
bedrückt, ohne zu wissen
warum. Auf einmal ver-
stehe ich, was in mir vor-
geht. Meine Mutter weint
in mir und kümmert
auf mich ein wie eine
Gefangene, die zum Tode
verurteilt ist. Wenn ich
sie nicht befreie, wird
sie mit mir ~~stel~~ sterben.
Aber vorher wird sie
mich weiter quälen mit
ihrem Unglück, wie sie
sie mich ihr Leben lang,
mein Leben lang ge-
quält hat. Ich muss
ihre Geschichte schreiben,
wenigstens eine ihrer
Geschichten, um sie
und mich zu befreien.

~~Ich schreibe die Geschichte~~
~~der Befreiung meiner~~
~~Die Befreiung meiner~~
~~Mutter.~~
(Nachtgelüste?
oder Jugendbild meiner
Mutter)
Titel für eine Geschichte:
ein Überlebenskünstler.

Ein Punkt:
Ich bin ein Mölder-
einchen und ein
Überrumpelstilzchen.

Abdominable psycho-
somanic depressive
conversion syndrome.
(definitive ailgnosis)

Viva Peru!

24 Juni

Heim Mutter u. die deutsche Sprache:

"Ich habe ihm einen ganz armlosen Brief geschrieben."

"Mir wurde eisp und kalt." (tauchte heute nacht in einem Traum auf)

"Wir verheeren die Engländer" (aus einem Brief aus Nizza nach dem Krieg)

Ein wichtiges Kapitel in d. Geschichte meiner Mutter: die Korrespondenz mit ihren Verheerern.

Eine ganz armlose Geschichte

Traum v. 25.-26.6.

Ich hatte Hilde F. besucht und sie begleitete mich zurück zur Station. Sie trug meinen Koffer, indem sich vor allem Aufzeichnungen u. Manuskripte befanden. Plötzlich stand der Zug vor uns. Hilde lief voraus u. verschwand. Ich hatte Angst, den letzten Wagen nicht zu erreichen. Dann sprang ich im letzten Moment herein, aber H. war nicht drin. Das Abteil war fast ganz leer, furchtbar verdreckt, ein Betrunkener lag auf d. Boden. Ich war sehr verzweifelt und hilflos. Fuhr noch

drei Stationen weiter
und stieg dann aus.
Wusste überhaupt nicht,
wie ich zurück nach
Hause oder irgendwohin
zurück kommen könnte.
Frau ging auf die
andere Seite der Station
und fragte drei Frauen,
nach einem Zug, der
mich zu der Ausgangs-
station zurückbringen
würde. Wusste aber
keinen genauen Namen.
Sie fanden das sehr
bedenklich u. sagten,
man müsse sich
darüber beraten. Am
besten bei einem Bier.
Sie nahmen mich mit
in die Wohnung einer
anderen Frau die uns
sehr freundlich empfing.
Mir erschien die Situa-
tion völlig hoffnungslos,
a) weil ich mich hatte
mitschleppen lassen
und mir nun die
Gesichter v. d. Frauen
würde anhören müssen,
b) weil ich absolut
völlig verloren war, ohne
zu wissen, woher ich kam
und wo ich hingehöre,
c) weil ich alles, was
mir wertvoll war (Manus-
kripte etc.) verloren hatte,
und d) weil ich mir
mein Unglück selbst
eingebrockt hatte, zuerst
durch meine Unbeherrscht-
heit beim Herumspringen
zu den falschen Haltestellen
und dann dadurch,
dass ich mir an
falscher Stelle Hilfe
suchte d. h. mich
einfach mitschleppen
ließ anstatt selbständig
und mit Überlegung
zu handeln.
Was sehr bedrückt noch
längere Zeit nach d. Anfällen.

Später

Aussprüche, mit denen ich mich näher beschäftigen sollte:

Meine Mutter, mein Vater und die Calvinistischen Leiterinnen des Mädchenpensionats in der Schweiz:

1. "Aus Dir wird nie etwas werden."
2. "Du bist völlig unpraktisch!" Dies auch wiederholt von MG bestätigt, obwohl der in liebevoll anerkennender Form: "Du bist völlig unpraktisch, dafür aber ausserordentlich begabt." Oder umgekehrt.
3. M.G.: als wir im Begriff waren, uns zu trennen: "Mein armes Kind, wie wirst Du ohne mich leben können!"

In Bezug auf 2:

~~Al~~ Ich habe allmählich gelernt, das Gegenteil zu beweisen, aber ich glaube es selber nicht, wenn andere mir sagen, wie praktisch und tüchtig ich bin. Wenn ich dann ganz blödsinnige Fehler mache, z.B. bei einer Arbeit (temp. sec.), die mich nicht interessiert aber bei der ich mir die grösste Mühe gebe, bedeutet das immer wieder, dass "die Erwachsenen" recht behalten haben? Auch der Widerwillen, den ich gegen praktische Erledigungen habe (einkaufen, häusliche Aufgaben, Besorgungen, Bankdinge u.a.) hängen wahrscheinl. damit zusammen, dass diese Dinge im Leben meiner Mutter eine so überwältigende Rolle

Bestimmt von meinem 14. Jahr an (wenn nicht früher) bis zu ~~Zeit~~ meiner Ausreise, (abspielten und dass sie einen grossen Teil davon auf mich übertrug. Ich durfte mir nichts vornehmen bevor ich die Besorgungen gemacht hatte, die sie für mich bestimmte. Dazu gehörte das monatliche Hiertezahlen und andere amtliche ~~Dinge~~ Zahlungen, man die sehr einfach ~~so~~ per Scheck erledigen konnte, aber wahrscheinl. ~~wurden~~ mussten diese Dinge aus "steuertechnischen" Gründen persönlich und in Bar~~zahlung~~ bezahlt werden. Dazu kamen die endlosen Besorgungen für die Bridgepartien meiner M., für die ich Konfekt, Tee, Gebäck, Aufschnitt u. die verschiedensten anderen Sachen in verschiedenen Geschäften, oft

gesehen von ~~den~~ meinen ungefähr 1½ Jahren in London u. Paris,) ~~also~~ als ich fast 22 Jahre alt war. in verschiedenen Stadtteilen besorgen musste. Dadurch ging entsetzlich viel Zeit verloren und es ~~entstand~~ führte bei mir zu dem Gefühl, ~~dass es~~ dass es keinen Zweck hätte, sich etwas anderes vorzunehmen, weil ich doch nie dazu kommen würde. Woran mir besonders lag, war das Schreiben, aber das gehörte natürl. nicht zu den praktischen Dingen und musste daher aufgeschoben, wenn nicht aufgegeben, werden.

"Die tausend Pflichten des täglichen Lebens".

9. Jan. 1986

Korrektur: sie nannte es mit unfreiwilligem Humor "die tausend Kleinlichkeiten des täglichen Lebens"

1:45 1. Juli

Plötzlich wieder ein Angst- und Spannungszustand, nachdem ich vorher ganz vergnügt war. Beim Meditieren die Vorstellung dass mein Gehirn (wie) eine Schubladen ist, die weder auf noch zu geht. Dann erinnerte ich mich daran, dass ich gestern abend vor dem Einschlafen zu mir gesagt hatte: ich werde mich um dich kümmern (oder etwas für dich tun). Wenn ich mich einigermassen wohl fühle, immer das Gefühl, ich muss das tun, was von mir erwartet wird: Briefe schreiben, Telefonanrufe machen etc. Grosser

Widerstand dagegen. Dann Selbstbestrafung. Wenn ich krank lege wird nichts von mir erwartet. Unheimliche Regression in ein kindliches Bewusstseinsstadium.

Dabei fällt mir immer wieder ~~die Geschichte ein~~, ein Erlebnis ein, das mich zu meiner Kindheit stark beeindruckte. Unsere Haushälterin, eine ältliche Frau, hockte auf dem Korridorboden auf den Knien und schrie mit einer gepeinigten Stimme: "Jesu Blut kommt über mich!" Sie hatte die Augen mit den Händen bedeckt und ~~sich~~ wiegte sich hin und her, ~~vorwärts~~ u. zurück ~~[illegible]~~. Man konnte

sie nicht beruhigen. Dann klingelte die Eingangstür und während sie in der gleichen Stellung blieb und weiter stöhnte u. schrie „Jesu Blut kommt über mich", rief sie dazwischen mehrmals mit einer ganz anderen natürlichen Stimme: „Herr Doktor, der Bobbi kommt," bis mein Vater die Tür öffnete, um meinen Bruder hereinzulassen. Sie verschwand danach sehr bald aus unserem Hause und meine Eltern erklärten, dass sie verrückt geworden sei. Ich hatte diesen Vorfall nicht vergessen, aber die Frau auch später für psychotisch gehalten und sie gelegentl. im Zusammenhang mit anderen Fällen von „psychotischer Bewusstseinsspaltung" erwähnt. Jetzt erscheint mir ihr Verhalten ähnlich meinem eigenen, was ich nach Freud als eine hysterische „double conscience" bezeichnen würde.

Warum spricht man bei Psychotikern von einer „split personality"? Ist nicht der P. vielmehr weitgehend mit seiner Rolle identifiziert, während der Hysterikerin sich sozusagen in einer Realität mit doppeltem Boden befindet? Während er ~~beide~~ ~~[illegible]~~ zwei einander entgegengesetzte Seiten der Wirklichkeit sieht, erkennt und ~~[illegible]~~ anerkennt, kann

er sich nicht für die eine oder die andere entschliessen und bleibt ~~at~~ dadurch festgeklemmt wie die oben erwähnte Schublade. Was kann ich dazu tun, um aus diesem Zustand herauszukommen? Schreiben hilft wenigstens vorübergehend.

July 10

Yesterday (with M. in the country) suddenly fell into a deep depression. Was hardly able to talk. Home in the evening. Meditated, chanting OM, felt more relaxed afterwards. Read till 11:30.

Dream: I was living with George in a house that reminded me of my parent's house in Berlin. Very "hochherrschaftlich" with a large open staircase to the first floor. As we went up the stairs to our apartment we saw the body of a young girl on the floor outside the first floor apfmt. There were people standing around and someone said that there had been

an accident in which the parents of the girl ~~was~~ were killed. She had seemed to be reluctant but collapsed suddenly a few days later. I did not want to have a close look and I rushed upstairs with Geo. (he was about 12), trying to divert his attention. When we passed the first floor apartment again on our way out the body was gone and there ~~was~~ a bouquet of gladiolas which someone had placed outside.

Later I carried Geo. with his arms around my neck and his legs around my back. He was really much too heavy for me but I pretended that he was still a small child. At the same time I talked to him in a fairly adult manner. I tried to explain to him that we had to leave quickly (moving to another place or going on a trip?) and that ~~there~~ we still had a lot to do. Don't remember the second part of the dream very well, but all along I had the vision of the dead girl in my mind and when I woke up I felt again very depressed.

I now seem to be pretty sure that our apartment in Berlin was on the first floor. He usually walked up and down the wide marble staircase (it was marble covered with a red runner) and we did not make use of

(Ruth)

the elevator.

The ~~dead~~ dead girl obviously was my earlier self. I did not know this in the dream and I actually avoided looking at her. Why is this so painful to me now?

In the dream there is also the split consciousness because I was not only the dead girl but at the same time the adult mother. In the role of the mother I carried a child who was too heavy and too old to be carried and whom I treated as an adult. Was this a repetition of what my mother did with me? Creating both a dependence in the child (by carrying it around) and at the same time burdening it by treating it as an adult. Probably that is what I did to little George too, without being aware of it, as my mother had & been aware of what she was doing to me.

The dead girl had been very lively before, as I remembered in the dream. Why did she have to die? Did she feel guilty about the parents' death? Where did the flowers come from? How am I going to get out of this total confusion with which I have been living now for months?

1/18/81 Interesting observation. Discuss with H. + G.

could have more freedom to run around, or perhaps + that she didn't need that much protection anymore.

(This now seems to refer to restriction of creative spontaneous expression. Still, details are not clear.)

Am straightening out papers, miss., odds and ends, throwing away useless things and clearing my desk for new work.

July 14

Dream from the night before. Remember only fragments. It was about one of those neglected children girl of about 4, who play such a large part in my dreams. She was dirty and miserable and her mother didn't care about her. I asked mother to hand her over to me, then carried her around with me, trying to comfort her.

Why should it be so important to be able to take your mother? And in the new Ingmar Bergman film says, "now that I know I hate my

mother, I'm feeling much better." In some book (Alice Koller?) a woman tells about her analyst giving her permission to hate her mother. I don't believe this can help in the long run because we remain just as dependent though hatred as though "love" in the form of slavish submission. ~~We~~ We have to realize that the mother is inevitably part of ourselves that we can not and probably should not get rid of. Instead, try to understand it and come to terms with it. I tried to do this when I painted portraits of my mother and more recently when I wrote about her. It helped, but only temporarily. It is embarrassing and painful to realize that, in my depression, I am still talking to myself in the voice of my mother, telling myself to be sensible, to make an effort, etc. What can one do to overcome this? Perhaps ~~try~~ instead of complying w. the demands of the introjected mother, one could try to re-educate her, let her be more tolerant and more loving than the real mother could be.

7/15

Woke up at 7 a.m., then went back to sleep. Dreamed the sentence: "Ich kuschle mich in meinem Durcheinander." Was again in a strange place w. many people. Everybody was busy preparing for something. I just happened to be there. Perhaps it was a summer workshop. Shayne and I took turns babysitting for a little girl. S. said "I'll do it tonight." Then she corrected herself and said "actually it's your turn, because I did it yesterday." I felt that she was cheating but didn't say anything.

Then I went w. Geo. to the hinkchin's new

apt. in N.Y. They didn't expect us and they all were busy. We were supposed to bring them some things that someone else had asked us to take over. There was loose tea that I spilled on the floor. I felt very uncomfortable but nobody seemed to mind us. They just went on w. their business; talking to us fr. time to time. We left and came back another time. On that occasion Geo. disappeared and I heard him talking to ~~Fil~~ Tilo about personal matters that he needed help with. I sat around and felt bored. Then I left without telling anybody and got on

a train without knowing where I went. I just wanted to get away. Felt embarrassed because I didn't know what to tell the conductor when he would come to sell me a ticket. Didn't know whether to say "to the next station" or "to the end station." The interior of the train changed to ~~[illegible]~~ a large carpeted hall where someone was teaching an exercise class. I asked if I could participate. The teacher asked if I was a member of the sponsors of the downtown group. Since I was not a member of either I could only watch.

Dream content not particularly interesting. Only the recurrence of themes may be significant.

1. Being somewhere by chance, having drifted in, and not feeling part of the environment. Discomfort, embarrassment.

2. Assuming responsibility for a child. Sometimes this is my own neglected self, but in this case it was "taking care of other people's problems" instead of my own. I think that happened also in previous dream.

3. Escape: trying to get away, going somewhere, anywhere, again without having a goal. All very characteristic of me.

My handwriting has ~~changed~~ become very messy since the "beginning of my conversion." Partly I find it difficult to hold the pen because of the swelling in my index finger (quite painful arthritis). But that is ~~only part of the~~ not the reason.

Yesterday I wrote over two pages for my "Family Album." (Böbchen's temper tantrums.) It's beginning to take shape in my mind and I definitely want to continue it.

Das Liebe-bedürfnis meines Bruders war unersättlich. Kein Hunde-, denn seine Schreiübungen und Tobsuchtsanfälle brachten ihm viel Aufmerksamkeit und häufige Bestechungsversuche, in Form von ~~Versprechungen~~ allerlei ~~Leckereien~~ Belohnungen ~~für friedliches~~ von seiten der Erwachsenen aber letzten Endes doch wenig Liebe ein.

zur Erhaltung des
Verhalten Friedens ~~so wandte er sich~~
Wenn einmal zufäl-
lig alles still war
und die Erwachsenen
ihren eigenen Beschäf-
tigungen nachgingen,
wandte mein Bruder
sich an mich mit
seinem Anliegen. ~~Er~~
~~konnte ja nicht ahnen,~~
Während er auf dem
Boden mit seinen

Bauklötzen spielte
und ich an meinem
kinderschreibtisch
am "Kampf um Rom"
teilnahm, konnte er
wohl nicht ahnen,
dass ich im Grunde ebenso wenig
"anwesend" war wie
die anderen, die uns
vorübergehend allein gelassen hatten.
Oder vielleicht ahnte er
es nur allzu gut?
Jedenfalls spielte sich

zu wiederholten halen
und mit geringen
Variationen der fol-
gende Dialog zwischen
(eine Art primitiver
muss ab, Vorläufer v. B.)

Er: ~~Lola~~ Lola, Sieh mal,
ich baue ein Haus.

Ich: ~~ist~~ sehr abwesend Hm, hm, sehr schön.

Er: Willst Du mit
mir bauen?

Ich: abweisend Nein, ich ~~will~~ lese.
~~lesen.~~

Er: Du willst nie
mit mir spielen.

Ich: doch, ~~aber~~ einlenkend ~~beschwichtigend~~ aber
nicht jetzt.

Er: Du hast mich
nicht lieb.

Ich: ausweichend Lass mich jetzt
in Ruhe!

E. Hast Du mich wirklich lieb

Ich: Ja, natürlich

Er: Sag, ~~dass du mich~~
ich hab Dich lieb
~~lieb hast~~.

Ich: ~~Ja~~, zum Donner-
wetter; ich hab
dich lieb.

Er: So sagt man das
nicht. Sag es richtig.

Silbe für Silbe betonend eindringl.

Ich: (verzweifelt, ~~inständig~~ laut) Ich hab Dich lieb!

Er: Sag's nochmal,

Nicht so laut. Sags ~~und~~ nochmal richtig.

Richtig schön und ehrlich.

Ich: (schreiend): Ich hab Dich lieb, ich hab Dich lieb, ich hab Dich lieb!

Er: ~~(weinend)~~ fängt an zu weinen. Kindermädchen, Köchin, Hausmädchen oder wer sonst gerade in der Nähe ist (meist nicht die Mutter) kommt hereingelaufen und fragt bestürzt: "Was ist jetzt schon wieder los?

Mein Bruder: Die Lola liebt mich nicht!

Erwachsene Person: "Schäm dich,' das arme Kind. ~~so schlecht zu behandeln~~ Du weisst

doch, dass es ~~sowas~~
schwache Nerven hat.

Ich schäme mich.
aber ich wusste, dass
im Gegensatz zum K. u. K.
der Kampf um
die Liebe kein Ende
nehmen würde.

Nov. 17, 1984

Didn't write anything while I was working on FFP 7 (July 24 to Sept. 28). Wrote in my calendar 9/27: Total Despair (Murphy's Law!) Everything went wrong at the copy center, and they had to pick up the delivery from Goethe H. and rebind every copy. They finally delivered the re-finished job on Oct. 3. There were added complications, but in the meantime we have distributed (not sold), about 70-80 copies in addition to the 100 subscription copies bought by the members of the group to finance the production.

I've had a few genuinely positive responses about the editorial job and the attractive physical aspect ~~on~~ of the book, mostly from outsiders, with the exception of Esther who called it "a heroic monument." Still I feel lousy rather than heroic. In ~~the~~ the first weeks after the work was finished, I felt just generally exhausted, without any specific symptoms, but now I am ~~deeply depressed as well as~~ an emotional and physical wreck. Yesterday crawled back into bed after minimal breakfast and ~~lay~~ stayed there with eyes closed until early afternoon when I had to drag myself out to get my prescription from pharmacy. In the evening I was able to read parts of Faust I (in connection with an anti-witch poem that I wrote in German. I wanted very much to write, and a few ideas and poems had actually suggested themselves, but yesterday, when I finally thought I would have the time to myself, I felt too sick to think. Is all this really hysterical? ~~To~~ This morning I also had to lie down again as soon as I had gotten up. A sort of nausea and weakness which I've had before, even in younger years, especially in the

morning, and which usually subsides after a while. With great effort I managed to defrost + clean out the ~~r~~ refrigerator. This took almost ~~over~~ 3 hours. It's now 2:30 and I don't feel like doing anything not even having lunch. Disgusting!

8 --
6 -O Die Befreiung
7 — (B. bedeutet Ent-
6 -O spannung.
7 —
8 --

Fügung!

12/22/84

Das Zusammenhalten

8 --
7 —
8 -- Ergründe das
8 -- Orakel nochmals
8 --
8 -- 7 — Entwicklung
7 — (Allmäh-
8 -- liche Fort-
9 -O schritt)
8 --
8 --

Dec. 25

Woke up bed with virus since last Wednesday eve. Was out on Sat. and felt quite symptom-free. For the first time a thing like X-mas spirit. Made notes "Manhattan - 3 days before X-mas". Discovered Hilda Morley, widow of Stefan Wolpe. Very deeply moved by her poems "What are Minds..." Decided to write to her and tell her about the recording & have of St. Wolpe's composition based on my lyrics. (Haven't done it yet.) Felt very depressed and deserted on Sunday. Yesterday went out to get money for Supes and the Seven Drafts and did all the shopping to tide me over the next ten days. Afterwards felt quite relieved to have taken care of almost all of my obligations. Cancelled "Hei ligabend" with Margarete, today told Heimes that I was unable to come. Feeling quite peaceful at about being by myself. Ma called - completely preoccupied with her own X-mas preparations: she is baking a capon ("a 7-pound beast") all for herself! Ended the conversation by saying: "So I have to go back to my dried in the oven." I don't think she is senile, only mentally and emotionally inde-

developed.

Talked to P Sanders's companion (Myrtle) at the hospital then to Sanders herself. She sounded alert and rational. Asked me where I was, what "station". Perhaps thought that I was on the way to her. (Perhaps I am. Have to finish the poem I started a long time ago.) Explained that I was in bed with the flu. She said she would like to see me before she left and I told her I would come to visit as soon as I felt all right.

Had a fascinating dream last night but remember only little of it. I had written a play. Something like a pageant, while was being performed outdoors. I was standing on the balcony (or fire-escape) of a house that belonged to other people (reminding me of Hallowe'ens at the Lipman-Wolfs) and some of the other guests were inside. There was a parade of people dressed in animal costumes (over life-size), and I called to the visitors inside to come out and look. Somebody said that now it was the turn for the camel and the elephant to appear, but then somebody else said that the camel and the elephant were sick and could not participate. Still it was very impressive, re-

reminding me more of the Nativity scene in the Christmas show at Radio City while I found quite moving, contrary to my expectations. One of the people present commented on the beautiful costumes and I said that George had helped with those, feeling very proud and satisfied when I woke up. (George's helping with the costumes probably had something to do with his help to get the "Transatlantic plan" produced.) All this just "for the record."

Emily Dickinson 2/23/85
Prof. Sewell

Cassettes (£ 15) - Sewell void
In the beginning was the
word. [illegible]

[illegible]

Henry Wells: 1947
[illegible] toyed
[illegible] EB [illegible]
[illegible]
ED [illegible]
[illegible] Austen. [illegible]
[illegible] penchant
[illegible] cliché. [illegible] mode
[illegible]

reader snob

[illegible] 6 [illegible]

[illegible]

2 [illegible]

[illegible] Orpheus.

David Porter. [illegible]

[illegible] 6 [illegible]

[illegible] 40 [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Lyman;

"[illegible]" "6, [illegible]

[illegible] mighty"

Attraction by physicality of words.

Definition poems

Hope is the thing

Love is

Bliss is

[illegible] D. [illegible]

[illegible] 6 [illegible]

words "A word is inundation"

[illegible] 19 [illegible] 6 [illegible]

[illegible] 3.

[illegible] 6 [illegible]

[illegible]

what

S. found no comment

6 [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] "highest word,

letter to Higginson re

inspiration. "mantic

art"?

"The word made flesh"

Edward Mitchell, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Sense of guilt? as

w. Hawthorne, "Artist

of the - - - " nobling

but a "wordman"

Suspicion of poetry.

Father forbade novels.

Sacramental poet.

5 Boast or cosmic caution.

"The unknown is the greatest need of the intellect."

"The ecstacy of mere living"

Allen Tate: check.

"The poem makes the poet."

"There's a certain slant"

Presentiment

Kazin: An American Procession
1 Chapter on ED
Greatest realist of our literature about where the meanings are.
(of the interior)

Webster 1848 = Lexicon she used

Range of poems comparable to Shakespeare.
Inexhaustible.

She was a lud 19th cent. existentialist.

3 or 4 more poems in Springfield Republican

Theodora Ward dated poems by handwriting

great productive period

Letters about war show she was aware of what was going on.

Frazer ~~Stern~~ Stearn killed in war - letter.
read papers every day

Millicent Bingham only human E.D. set eyes upon. (?)

Letters

Pilgrimage of the Spirit.
Local Pieby has not
for her.
constantly asking
fundamental questions
Poems touch on every-
thing that's human.

The only news I have
is calling us all day
from Immortality.

Love is Anterior to life
Posterior to Death

Exponent of Earth's

Samuel Bowles, ed. of
Springfield's Republican

Sensed a pervasive failure
to understand her.
heard her
Mrs. Todd "inner music"

"Advice to a Young Con-
tributor" Higginson.
H. Has a feminist.

~~(3 women Poets.)~~

wireless voice ✓

Fame

Ruth Miller: E.D.

Rob. Weisbuch: E.D. -
Analogical Poet

Chr. Benfey: ED and
the Problem of Others
take her seriously as
a thinker. Prob. of
skepticism. Transcends
it.

Master Letters

Samuel Bowles

ED *

Was always in love.

Impose late 20th tension (?)

C. Keller: "The only kangaroo among the beauties".

compare ED ~~not~~ Ann Bradstreet.

E B White: Thoreau was not a full time hermit. He was a writer that's what he was.

* "This is a blossom of the brain

the spirit fructified

1958 Letters

Whicher, Wells

Dissertation since the 50's 30 full-length studies

most private poet there ever was.

Dickinson Home

Tues. 3 - 5

Fri.

Pub. affairs off.
Amherst Coll.
542 - 2321

2/27/65

Warum laufe ich vor mir selbst weg, flüchte in andere Aufgaben, benutze Vorwände, Aufschübe, Ausreden? Patti sprach von der Angst vor dem weißen Papier, dieser ganz irrationalen Angst, die ich auch kenne und die viele bekannte Schriftsteller beschrieben haben. Vielleicht ist diese Angst ähnlich wie das Lampenfieber, das angeblich auch berühmte Schauspieler immer wieder neu erleben, also die Angst, plötzlich buchstäblich sprachlos zu sein. Aber ist Sprachlose = impotent? Diese Angst ist sehr ausgeprägt bei mir. Aber vielleicht steckt dahinter noch etwas ganz anderes, viel Erschreckenderes. Die halb unbewusste Vorstellung, man könnte im Schreiben etwas entdecken, was ~~alles~~ dem sogenannten normalen täglichen Bild von einem selbst völlig entgegengesetzt wäre. So als würde man in den Spiegel sehen und darin eine grausige, verzerrte Grimasse entdecken anstatt der freundlichen Maske, mit der man sich im allgemeinen identifiziert. Vielleicht sollte man, müsste man, den Mut haben, sich dem auszusetzen, ehe man sich endlich mit sich selbst versöhnen kann. (Dieses man bezieht sich hier ausschließlich auf mich selbst. Ich weiß nicht,

wie weit es auf andere zutrifft.)

Jetzt möchte ich wieder weglaufen und nach Zitaten suchen (bei A. Rich, D. Levertov, Pavel, etc.), zwinge mich aber weiterzuschreiben.

Ich glaube, dass die Schreibängste zu tiefgründig sind und vielschichtige Ursachen haben. Zu der Angst vor dem Nichts, der Angst vor dem abstossenden, verdrängten eigenen Ich, kommt die Angst vor der abgründigen Verzweiflung, die vielleicht mit den anderen Ängsten zusammenhängt.

Eben mit Joel gesprochen. Er erzählte, u.a. die Angst, sich beim Schreiben endgültig festzulegen, also sich durch viele Möglichkeiten auf eine zu fixieren. Ich sagte dann, dass das Ziel bei vielen schreibenden Menschen eine Rolle spielt, gleichzeitig aber auch zu einem starken Antrieb führen kann, immer wieder von neuem zu schreiben, um sich nicht endgültig festzulegen sondern sich ständig zu ergänzen.

„Wenn man die ganzen Ängste umkehren, in ihr Gegenteil verwandeln könnte, durch das Schreiben selbst, wäre dies ein echter Akt der Befreiung.

Siehe Emily Dickinson, die sich ja tatsächlich durch ihr Schreiben selbst das Leben gerettet hat und die nicht davor zurückschreckte, das letzte innere

Grauen auszudrücken.
Über ED möchte ich
mehr schreiben, muss
mich aber zunächst noch
intensiver mit ihr be-
schäftigen. Sehr interes-
sant, was Prof. Schall über
sie sagte. Sie war alles
andere als ein armes hilf-
loses unterdrücktes Frauen-
zimmer. Ausgehend von
sie sich auch von jeglich
früh an ihres eigenen
künstlerischen Wertes voll
bewusst. Zitieren: "Wenn
der Ruhm mir gelöste,
könnte ich ihm nicht ent-
fliehen..." Ihr zurückge-
zogenes Leben beruhte auf
einem freiwilligen Entschluss,
entstanden aus der Einsicht,
dass von der Umwelt wenig
zu erwarten war und dass
die häusliche Umgebung,
trotz der damit verbundenen
täglichen Pflichten, ihr
die notwendige
~~mehr~~ Freiheit zum
~~Schaffen~~ eigenen Schaffen
ermöglichen würde. Sie
hat eigentlich in all ihren
Gedichten fortgesetzte
Dialoge mit sich selbst
geführt. Interessant ist
für mich, dass sie,
im Gegensatz zu den
meisten neueren "befreiten
Frauen", die sich mit Prosa
Selbstentdeckung in Sprache
und Dichtung befassen,
fast ganz darauf verzichtet,
das häusliche Milieu
als Gegenstand zu be-
nutzen. Dabei ist die
Bildhaftigkeit ihrer Sprache
durchaus konkret, aber
die Eigenart besteht z.T.
in den ungewohnten Zu-
sammenhängen in denen
die Bilder und Vorstel-
lungen dargestellt sind.
Heutiges Schreibpensum
vorläufig erledigt. Bin aber
nicht zufrieden damit.

3/4

I am giving myself the assignment (& permission) to do nothing without feeling guilty & having to be sick just because there is nothing I really want to do. See what happens. Very difficult. Constantly vacillating between the ideas of either having to do something useful (preferably for "others") & productive (for myself). Unable to do either at the moment.

Spent a good afternoon w. J. yesterday, was amazed at her mental alertness, sense of humour, spurts of vitality after having seen her in such a reduced condition at the hospital. Something like triumph to have come out alive after

the herself had felt that she wouldn't make it this time.

I feel very apprehensive about S. who was going to have an amputation (the thigh) of the leg today. Horrible thought: having to die piecemeal. She did not seem to be unhappy after she had lost her mental capacities (also piecemeal) but if she survives this it will be dreadful - for her - because she will be in constant pain unless she is constantly drugged. I hope they won't let her suffer unnecessarily.

Yesterday evening again long talk with Margarete and later w. Mathilde. Both completely absorbed in their problems.

Had a session session w. Baratan today

(he recommended an
A. Lowen woodchopping
exercise for release of
tension and did some
interesting (?) pressuring
on various tension areas)
but I still feel depressed.
Am now going to see
a show of an one-man-
Berliner Ensemble by
Brecht's son-in-law.

White - the color
that E. D. wore
~~You~~ here you there
with just the door
ajar.
that oceans are
and prayer
and that white
sustenance
despair
white heat
Er hat sie bis zur
Weissglut gequält.?
The flame of life
that turns white
and burns the mind.
Pain is white.
Despair, a terrible
sustenance
the taste of mold

black and white
extremes touching
each other

White

Blank spaces

The White Knight - in Alice in Wonderland

White nights
terrors of wakefulness

The story fairy tale of Snowwhite?

White Lies
(death releases)

9/20/05

I opened 7 doors and found things that I did not want to see. When I opened the eighth I found I. That is it like to be dead I asked her. Boring, she said, but you get used to it. For you it won't be much different from the way you were before. You've practised "being dead" most of your life.

A note found among papers (no date).
Mme Cézanne in Au Intervier*: "I lived a very ordinary life."
Q: Was it difficult?
A: Of course. Every life is difficult. But)

* invented by me.

learned early, how do you say, 'me débrouiller.'"
"My husband is 'sur le motif.' (Rilke)

Dec. 31, 1985

7 —
6 —
7 —
7 —
7 —
8 — —

Der Tiegel bedeutet Aufnehmen des Neuen. Folgt auf "Umwälzung (Mauserung)"

Erhabenes Heil. Gelingen. Auge u. Ohr werden klar und scharf.

44. Das Entgegenkommen
Bewegung geht v. d. Dunklen, Weiblichen aus, das d. Hellen, Männlichen entgegentritt
Das Schwache tritt d. Festen entgegen
Das Wachstum des Wegs der Gemeinen kommt davon her dass die Edlen sie mit Macht betrauen. Der Gemeine ist immer auf günstigen Zufall angewiesen.

Zusammentreffen der irdischen u. himmlischen Kräfte.

1/9/86

Eben alte Notizen wieder gelesen. Immer das gleiche Thema. Ich habe ziemlich viel Einsicht, kann sie aber nicht produktiv anwenden. Möchte sehr gern täglich Tagebuch führen, aber gönne es mir nicht oder habe Angst davor – oder beides. Immer sind die anderen Dinge wichtiger, d. h. sie müssen erst erledigt werden bevor ich zu Eigenem kommen darf. In dem Konflikt reiben sich meine Energien auf.

2/3/86

7 — — Wessen Freunde
8 - - - wenig sind, das
9 0 - - ist der Wanderer.
7 — — Stillhalten, innerer
8 - - - Zurückhaltung.
6 -0- -

Wenn der W. sich mit den kleinlichen Dingen abgibt, dann erschöpft sich sein Wille, und das ist ein Unglück. Feuer hier brennend schädigend, nicht erleuchtend.

9 auf 4. Platz: "Mein Herz ist nicht froh." Der Wanderer ruht an seinem Unterkunftsort. Er hat noch nicht seinen Platz erlangt. Er erlangt seinen Besitz u. eine Axt.

22. Anmut = Ungefärbtheit. Hervortreten d. ursprünglichen Materials, das durch Gestaltung verschönert wird. Im Kleinen ist es fördernd, etwas zu unternehmen

Tendenz des Zeichens: dem Überwiegen der Form durch Gehalt entgegenzutreten.

Träume: Gestern - Ich ging mit verschiedenen Leuten zu einer Party. Eine der Frauen sprach darüber, wie wichtig es sei, richtig angezogen zu sein. Es war anscheinend eine offizielle Angelegenheit. Wir kamen in einen grossen Raum, wo die Party stattfand. Männer und Frauen wälzten sich durcheinander und übereinander auf dem Boden. Es handelte sich dabei anscheinend nicht so sehr um sexuelle Befriedigung als um sadistische Gewaltakte, an denen Männer u. Frauen beteiligt waren. Wahrscheinlich wollte jeder oben sein. Ein

Mann warf sich auf mich und riss mich zu Boden. Ich biss ihn sehr kräftig in die Hand oder in den Finger und staunte über meine eigene Aggressivität. Dabei wachte ich auf und fühlte mich für eine sehr kurze Zeit ausserordentlich wohl und befreit. Danach den ganzen Tag über wieder benommen und bedrückt.

Heute wieder in einem grossen Raum, der in viele kleinere untergeteilt war. Überall wurde gearbeitet. Wieder viele Leute, mit verschiedenen Aufgaben beschäftigt. Eine Art Büro oder Auskunftstelle. Ich hatte vage das Gefühl, als wäre ich in unserer

jetzt
ehemaligen berliner Wohnung
die ~~sehr~~ für andere Zwecke
benutzt wurde. ~~Alles~~
Die Einrichtung war
provisorisch und es war
nichts mehr übrig von
dem früheren bürgerlichen
Prunk. Ich versuchte mich
irgendwie einzuordnen,
sprach mit ein paar
Frauen, die ganz freund-
lich waren, aber ich
hatte keine Ahnung von
der Arbeit oder den Auf-
gaben mit denen sie
sich beschäftigten. Eine
Art Stellenvermittlung?
(Assoziation zu dem
langen Warten auf der
Sauingsbank, wo ich
nahe daran war, der
~~gl~~ gelangweilten Ange-
stellten zu sagen: "This
is worse than the N.Y.
State Employment Service.")
Im Traum suchte ich

dringend eine Toilette,
fand schliesslich eine,
ähnlich wie die in
unserer alten Wohnung,
jetzt mit einem sehr
primitiven hölzernen
Riegel an der Tür.
Ich wollte mich ein-
schliessen, dachte
auch, es sei mir ge-
lungen, aber als ich
auf der Toilette sass,
kam mein Bruder
herein. ~~Das~~ Die Tür
war anscheinend nicht
verriegelt gewesen. Schreck-
liches Gefühl: not to
be able to relieve one-
self in privacy. Heute
wieder sehr schwerfällig,
müde und benommen.

Vorgestern Traum von
meiner Mutter die auf
meinem Bett lag und
stöhnte (wie ich es jetzt

häufig tun). Sie streckte die Arme nach mir aus und wollte mich zu sich herunterziehen. Sie rief mich um Hilfe an, aber ich entzog mich indem ich aufwachte.

Zunächst keine Erleichterung durch das Aufschreiben. Lähmende Schwere und Müdigkeit.

2/12

IMT = Inner Motivation Therapy. Anstatt zu fragen "Was müsste man tun?" "Was möchte man tun?" Dabei fallen die sinnlosen Widerstände weg und man stellt fest dass man viel mehr leisten kann als man sich zutraute. Es gäbe viel zu sagen über die psychologischen Zusammenhänge in der Depression, aber ich bin noch nicht so weit.

2/12

7 — Arbeit am
8 — — Verdorbenen
8 — —
7 —
7 —
8 — —

Dass auf jedes Ende
immer ein neues Anfang
folgt, das ist der
Lauf des Himmels.

8 — —
7 — 2/14
7 —
8 — —
7 —
7 —

Reading Lorde: Depression and the Body. Did his breathing exercise by substituting moving board for stool.

Have very striking but fleeting flashes of insight. Yesterday became aware of the fact that I used sublimation before I had fully dealt with experiences on the ego level. (This did not come from reading.) All my early poetry is an example of this. I remember when I wrote the poem "Jeune de Strasse." I had been with my parents at a restaurant (Kempinsky) and there was one of those terrible verbal boxing matches

between them, with my-
self being drawn in
as ~~a~~ moderator which
meant that some ~~of~~
~~f~~ blows from either
side hit me as well.
These violent scenes
would ~~f~~ take place
completely unpredict-
ably ~~of~~ ~~any~~ / ~~and~~ on
the slightest pretext.
It was particularly
embarrassing ~~wh~~
for me when this hap-
pened in public. My
parents went home
after having discharged
their hostile feelings,
temporarily reconciled.
I walked on by my-
self, and without
trying to deal with
the actual experience,
I "found" the lines
for the poem which
certainly does not

show any traces of its
origin. I myself was
very pleased and
proud of having found
such a beautiful ex-
pression ~~bases~~ as a
result of such an ugly
experience. I must have
been around 20 at
that time. Of course,
it all started much
earlier when I had to
be "the sensible one"
"while my brother, the
nervous child" was
indulged in his violent
rages.
(Strange how hand-
writing changes with my
feelings in the course
of one day!)

What I said to my-
self this morning and
then forgot again: you
have a non-contageous

disease. Why did this make me laugh? *

Resublimation: The reversal of mother-child role which started probably before I was 12.

Lowen: "naïveté ... characterizes the attitude of the depressed person" and ~~pr~~ constitutes his predisposition to the illness." "unconscious denial of the facts of life, the facts of one's own life, ... deprivations and disappointments.

Marta: "No matter how hard I try I never seem to get what I want"

* 6/7 What I really said was: "I have a non-communicable disease."

The world is not a jail-
it is your mind
That holds you bound-
within yourself confined.

Find original: Angelus Silesius:
Die Welt die hält dich nicht-
du selber bist die Welt,
die dich in dir mit dir
so ... gefangen hält.
7
7 —
9 ~~0~~
7 —
6 ~~0~~
7 —

3/16/86

13. Gemeinschaft mit Menschen

6 auf 2. Platz: klan-Gemeinschaft zu beschränkt u. daher beschämend.
~~5 u. 2 in Beziehung des Entsprechens. Die "gemeinsamen" Menschen weinen erst~~ aber nachher lachen sie. Nach grossen Kämpfen

~~gelingt es ihnen, sich zu treffen~~

9 auf 4. Platz lässt sich durch Notlage zum ruhigen Weg u. Vorsicht bewegen.

9. Des kleinen Zähmungs-kraft

Bewegung geht weiter -
Hindernis ist noch nicht eingetreten.

Innere Stärke bei äusserer Sanftheit.

Verfeinerung der äusseren Form - das kleine.

3/21

Remember dreams!
M. G., Ma

41 Minderung	9 ⊖
Beginn der	8 — —
Blüte, ebenso	8 — —
wie Lähmung	8 — —
durch Fülle	7 —
Untergang	7 —
einleitet.	

Erst Schwierigkeiten, dann das Leichte.

Im Vollzug + Leere sie muss man mit der Zeit zusammengehen.

Die Tiefe ertränken das Herz wie die Tiefe eines Sees.

19. Annäherung

Das Feste dringt an und nächst!

Annäherung - Geben u. Nehmen.

5/5 '86

Nachwort fertig und abgeschickt. Völlig erschöpft aber erleichtert. War wochenlang in einem hysterischen Angstzustand. Angst, es nicht zu schaffen.

Jetzt wieder – wie auch manchmal beim Schreiben – tauchen freie Assoziationen auf.

Ich lebe mit Emily wie andere alleinstehende Frauen mit einer Katze. Gehe mit ihr ins Bett und wache mit ihr auf. (Hatte interessante Träume im Zusammenhang mit Arbeit..) Zu müde zum Schreiben.

E's "Leben nach dem Tode" ... greifbarer u. dadurch begreifbarer (geworden) als es vorher war?

"Ich fahre mit E in der Unsterblichkeitskutsche."

Ha-Ha!

7/20

Feeling pretty hopeless about the publication mess and life in general. Terribly exhausted + no chance to get away for a real rest. Nobody who cares – self pity? Nobody. I can talk to about the way I feel. I don't want to get depressed. Will have to try to find a good environment. Or to create it for myself.

Rückzug

7 —
7 —
7 —
7 —
8 — —
8 — —

7/24

Beschränkung

8 — — Festhalten

7 — Heiterkeit

8 — — Sachgemässe

8 — — Verteilung v.

7 — Arbeit u. Verbrauch

7 — Untersuchen, Besprechen. Keine Bitterkeit.

Das heisst ich muss H. schreiben.

7/26

Tiegel ?

9 ⊖

8 — — 7. Das Heer

9 ⊖

9 ⊖

7 —

8 — —

7/29

7 — Auflösung

7 —

8 — — Auseinandergehen

8 — —

7 —

8 — —

2. August

Was ich heute "geleistet" habe:

Vormittag: noch während des Frühstücks den Ventilator auseinandergenommen, gereinigt und wieder zusammengesetzt;

mit Joel telefoniert, der mir ~~seine~~ letzte Version seines Nachrufs (Erinnerungen an) Schlotterer vorlas; Gespräch über den Künstler (Musil, Rilke),

der keinen anderen Beruf ausüben kann als den, zu dem er sich berufen fühlt. J. sprach v. Musils Beschluss, sich das Leben zu nehmen, wenn er nicht bis zu einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt Geld zum Leben bekäme. Joel nannte das ein "falsches Standesbewusstsein oder sowas ähnliches, während ich glaube, dass sowohl Musil wie Rilke in ihrer Arbeit eine gottgegebene Aufgabe sahen. Vielleicht spielte beides eine Rolle.

Schreiben ist anstrengend, bes. wenn man keine richtige Feder hat!

Zu Ende gefrühstückt und Dreck entfernt.

Das Wasser im Spüleimer (nach der Reinigung des Ventilators und dem Aufwischen des Drecks in der Umgebung war so schwarz wie es wahrscheinlich sein würde, wenn man monatelang das Badezimmer ~~zu~~ ~~od~~ nicht aufwischt. Interessant im Zusammenhang mit der Vorstellung wie dementsprechend unsere Lungen aussehen.

Weiter zum "Wesentlichen" mit Ma telefoniert, die mir mitteilte (unter Lachen), dass Hannah sagte, sie könne weder sehen noch hören. Meine Reaktion: dass ich dann lieber nicht leben wollte. Das sagte

H. auch bestätigte ha
u. fügte hinzu, sie
(H.) könne nicht
verstehen, warum ihr
Bruder nicht Schluss
machte, da es ihm
doch nicht an Mitteln
fehlte. Ich sagte das
sei nicht so leicht,
dazu brauchte man
eine ganze Menge
Kraft u. Energie.
Elsa H. angerufen,
keine Antwort, fest-
gestellt, dass sie
noch im Hospital
ist, ~~ge~~ gefragt ob
ich, sie am Nach-
mittag besuchen
solle. Mary sagte, ja.
Eva kurz gesprochen.
Sie wusste schon
Bescheid.
Irene angerufen
und erfahren, dass
sie sich nicht gut

fühlt. Das Sprechen
strengte sie an.
Küchen- und Bade-
zimmerboden ~~sauber~~
~~gem~~ geputzt, dann
~~hitta~~ gebadet,
Mittag gegessen,
alte Rechnungen be-
zahlt, vorher etwas
in einem alten
Woman's Day ge-
schmökert. Angezo-
gen u. z. Hospital
gefahren. Frau H.
war ~~nu~~ an Drähte
angeschlossen und
bekam ein ECG.
~~A~~ Ich sprach mit
Mary, die mir sagte,
sie hätte Schmerzen
auf der Brust ge-
habt. Als ich ins
Zimmer kam, schlief
sie mit offenem
Mund. Ich fragte
Mary, ob sie ständig

Schmerzen habe, weil
sie ununterbrochen
leise stöhnte, aber
M. sagte, sie stöhnte
garnicht, dass
sei die Frau im
Nebenbett, die ich
nicht sehen konnte.
Ich ging kurz danach
weg, weil ich ja
doch nichts tun
konnte. Mary sah
sehr hübsch, jung
u. gesund aus. Sie
ist ausserdem sehr
verantwortungsbewusst
u. geschickt mit
Menschen.
Draussen drohte
ein neues Unwetter.
(Es droht tägl.
mehrmals u. kommt
dann plötzl. mit
ungeheurer Vehemenz
herunter.) Ich raste
den Broadway ~~[illegible]~~ entlang,

kaufte in einem
Health Store "Rescue
Remedy" in einem
anderen Honig u.
Rosinen, erreichte
das Haus "mit
Mühe u. Not", sprach
kurz m. Jos., der
sagte, es sei ein
guter Tag, weil
Roy Cohn gestorben
ist und mir Apfel-
stücke von seinem
Obstsalat anbot.
Danach Gespräch
mit Gesine, dann
mit Margarete.
M. sehr angeregt
aber auch erschöpft
von ihrem literari-
schen Frauentreffen.
Hatte eine gute Idee,
die sich kommer-
siell ausnutzen lässt
u. v. der sie mir
ausführlich erzählte.

Abendbrot gegessen
(immer dasselbe:
kalte Nuden - Pasta-
Salad, Vollkornbröt-
chen mit Käse, Rasp-
berry Sherbet m.
Müsli, ~~ya~~ yummi!)
dann mit grossem
Genuss u. schlechtem
Gewissen alten
Woman's Day gelesen,
jetzt fertig mit
Hausaufgabe. Zeit,
sich etwas Sinnvollem
zuzuwenden.

4. Aug.

Es ist nicht alles
Scheisse!

Title for a book
on future lives:

Life After Life
After Life

Start a new notebook!

Yesterday Woodstock
was a very exciting
experience. Write
more about it
when there is time.
There never is time.

Warte nicht auf
bessere Zeiten!

Schmeiss-Weg!

Das Harten
8 — — die Ernährung
7 —
8 — — nicht fortschreiten
7 — zurückhalten
7 —
7 —

8/6

7 — Arbeit am
8 — — Verdorbenen —
8 — —
9 — Zersplitterung
9 —
8 — —

February 1, 1989

A new diary. Panic. Fear of taking initiative. Trying to escape in all directions. People, cooking, movies, telephone, reading. - sickness.

Had quite positive dreams. One two nights ago: I was on a down escalator and thought - either in the dream or immediately after that I would rather be going up. But entered into a pleasant situation. There were people in groups - perhaps a party and I stood between Jessie and someone else - may have been a man - with my arms linked into theirs. A little like posing for a picture. But I also felt supported by my two partners. It was not just a social situation but apparently we were going to work on something together.

Some of my happiest dreams are those in which I am involved

in a group project. Often dancing or acting. Ensemble work. This is something - outside of dancing and acting - that I also enjoy in everyday life. E.g. volunteering at the bookSales, helping at bazaars, etc. Also our writing project (FFP-7) which I finally carried out more or less by myself. I also liked working with children, even very difficult ones; remembering my volunteer job as assistant drama teacher at the Lincoln Sq. Community center where I was full of ideas and enthusiasm, not at all intimidated by the children's initial testing and teasing behavior.
Too bad that I never had a real career, that is, stayed in one field long enough to accumulate experience rather than rely on intuition. What I sometimes considered my strength was my flexibility, the capacity to take on any role that was given to me ~~without~~ at short notice, without having been able to prepare for it. Learning by doing. Always being available: "disponible" which also means "disposable". Where does this leave me now?

I am deadly scared of starting anything on my own. Especially writing. So scared that my thoughts run away. Going down actually a good direction, might mean "getting down to basics, beginnings, looking inward rather than outside, helping oneself, excluding external stimuli. In the dream, though, there were people downstairs and I was supported by others. ~~Very simply expressed:~~ This could ~~mean~~ be a demonstration of ~~the old truism~~ the simple truth that one has ~~to have~~ the courage to "go down", i.e. to face oneself, one (I) will find the support one has been looking for outside.

very awkward, but it is at least a partial explanation.

Ideas about being invisible in connection with the children's story.

like a snowflake on the nose of a fox (silly?), meaning white on white.

like a diamond in a coal-mine (check)

like a ghost in a ghost town (crazy)

"Children should be seen but not heard."

The child is raised by relatives or strangers, (old) people who are annoyed by her presence. She might be trying to find her parents. She should be of school age. Very unhappy (about being different from other children) ~~Story of Paula~~ S. ? Switzerland? Boarding school? ~~Finds a~~ Teachers very rigid?

Ideas I had the other day:
Child (name?) keeps a diary.
Tell story through diary.

3/3

Getting over bad flu. Very weak, quite depressed in the morning. Great need for support

Jessie's tulips. Their heads are still beautifully shaped and alive, but they started to bend on the second day. They have been boring since, like tired ballerinas at the end of a performance.

Almost all the women I know are sick, physically or emotionally, or both. As I said before, I identify with everyone's weakness. I can also identify w. other people's strength, but at present there is a great lack of this in my environment.

Yesterday listening for hours to M.'s childhood experiences in Prague. It was interesting but

exhausting. I also feel a need to talk about my experiences, good or bad, but not for hours. This is what George calls "dumping." Since I know how I basically resent others doing this to me, why should I do it to them.

I marvel at MG's + MB's ability to write reams of pages on how the world treated them. Quite honestly, this does not seem worth while to me. What would be? Real communication of which I'm not capable at present. This means caring and understanding for oneself and for others.

7 —
7 —
8 — —
9 0
9 0
7 —

Physically better, mentally worse. "Malaise." No longings. Great need for some human touch.

The other day in a half-somnolent state, this fragment: "die tierische Sanftheit des Papiers." "tierische Heimlichkeit" wäre auch schön.

* Was ich mit anderen gemein habe
Paula: rechthaberisches, aufstumpfendes Verhalten, meddling, "directing traffic," trying to take care of other people's lives. At the same time appealing to others see how good I am. Disgusting.
Margarete: trying to please, doing things for others, volunteering help, overdoing things, inability to say no, then getting very annoyed that others take advantage of this masochistic attitude.
Liesl: Self-neglect, demonstrative helplessness, faked innocence, also make-believe friendliness,

"I'm always nice to everybody," etc. etc.

Julie: (difficult to identify with, but I must have a lot in common with her, otherwise I wouldn't get so upset just thinking about her) Compulsive thinking, waste of energies + talents, emotional immaturity. Can't really face this.

Dorothee: Identification w. symptoms, pseudo-insight, ~~attention~~ craving for attention, façade of being nice and caring, lack of commitment and motivation, ~~lack~~ unwillingness to change. Anxiety.

7 —
6 o
8 — —
7 —
6 o
8 — —

Gentleness + penetration

3/12

Talking without communication. ~~As Pablo G. said quite bitterly years ago: "I find it easier to talk than to listen. Can't~~ get that anymore. Relating anecdotes, telling about incidents, experiences past or present, ~~a reas~~ re-enacting scenes ("no, wait a minute, I said" etc.) is a form of talking that hardly involves any thinking. ~~and is not~~ It is ~~it~~ usually like a very well rehearsed role, something one has repeated over and over again (or a role one is just beginning to rehearse) and for which one needs an audience.

Two or way communication - or dialog - is replaced by the intense need to hold the attention of the listener. This easily becomes an unconscious power game. (Paula who never stops talking: "will you let me finish!")

What is behind this besides the attention-getting? 1) a ~~or~~ covering (suppressing) up of disturbing thoughts and feelings. While I am telling my story I cannot simultaneously experience anxiety ~~related t~~ that has been pushed down to a deeper level. (Marg* and the "strange voice" telling her about "unterschwellige Verzweiflung." 2) combined with 1) by continuous talking the talker prevents the listener from asking questions which might be disturbing (Julie who gets very upset when I ask a question to get an idea about the context of her stories.) 3) Talking itself seems to have a cathartic effect, regardless of how meaningful relevant or the content is.

successfully

3/19

* "You have to be dedicated to yourself." (Hilde in connection with tooth implants and other maintenance expenses. ~~to~~ Miriam who, after her 80th birthday bought herself two mink coats. She is certainly dedicated to herself. Paula, on being discharged from the hospital goes home with three escorts (friends) whom she bosses around. She didn't want me because she feels that I'm critical of her. Introduces me to others as "an old friend of the family." Elsa has never been "dedicated to herself," literally sacrificed her life for others. Now she is a complete mental and emotional wreck. I asked her several times today to tell me what she would like, if there was anything I could do for her.

impossible to get any response. Her despair is overwhelming.

Paula H. told me something I did not know. Last year E. was hospitalized for 2 months for observation. She was given all the necessary neurological tests. Diagnosis: Alzheimer + depression. When they increased the Restoril dosis, she had a seizure "right there at the hospital, which almost killed her." They also tried other sedatives but finally decided to continue w. the original dosis of Restoril so she would have at least a few hours of sleep."

Two days ago she fell again and hurt her shoulder. Paula H. was called by the night attendant, came over at 3 a.m. and took her by ambulance to St. Luke's where they bandaged and strapped her shoulder, so she would not tear the bandage off. She looked heavily padded on both shoulders under her gown. "That's the way it happened," said P.H. She sounds convincing but I do not trust her.

She asks Elsa: "Do you want an apple?" Elsa says no. She gives her an apple, puts it into her hand.

I ask her why she does that. She becomes slightly annoyed and says when Elsa says no it means yes. Elsa eats the apple. In the kitchen, while nobody else is around E. grabs a raw carrot and eats it, chomping with great determination. Lake, Claudette, the afternoon woman, asks E. if she wants

a glass of water. Elsa either doesn't say anything or no, and the woman brings it anyway. Elsa gets angry and says to her in German, yelling: "Vom bringst du mir das?"

When I asked her "Freust du dich, dass ich komme?" she said yes. Also when I asked her if she would like to see George again. At one point, quite out of the blue, she got very angry at me and started yelling, making horrible noises like a child imitating a scolding adult, then stopped and gently touched my face. Although she calls me Paula, she definitely knows who I am. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to keep her in one place for any length of time, since she was constantly moving from one room to the other. I have the impression, based on last week and today, that her condition is deteriorating more rapidly than it appeared earlier this year.

Why am I writing all this down? What can be done for her? Probably very little. If she is placed in a home, she will probably be restrained, at least at night. But at least she will have better medical supervision. In the present situation at home nobody really knows what is going on. The total hopelessness of it is what depresses me.

I-Ching

What can I do with regard to E.T.

8 —
8 —
7 —
8 —
6 —O
8 —

It furthers one to install helpers and to set armies marching. The lowly man moves with devotion. Movement that meets with devotion. Thunder accompanies the movement of reawakening life.

6 — Perseverance brings good fortune. Prudence in the time of enthusiasm.

2nd line: Deliverance. Release from tension. Movement brings deliverance from danger. Obstruction is removed.

If there is still something to be done, it brings good fortune to do it as quickly and carefully as possible, because the movement is then crowned w. success.

it is not a purposeless futile effort. Release fr. tension like thunderstorm.

Superior man pardons mistakes and forgives misdeeds. Clearing of the air.

Buddhist I Ching

practice of insight is like setting up a rule, while practical activities are like mobilizing the army.

2nd yin: firm as a rock, not procrastinating, correctness bodes well.

using darkness to observe light, using stillness to observe activity, one can see what will happen.

Firmness + flexibility have to balance each other.

4/13

I do not allow myself to take the time for writing. Just things that pop up in my mind.

The trauma of childhood - (für mich) unbewältigte Vergangenheit!"

"Du kannst ja nichts dafür" - bedeutet Du bist dumm oder verrückt. Für mich - eine Ausrede: von mir selbst - mich von der Verantwortung zu drücken, keine ernsthafte Verpflichtung einzugehen. Ein wichtiges Thema im Zusammenhang mit Psychopathie, das mich z. Zt. stark beschäftigt.

Interesting that a lot of what I wrote on 3/12 and after relates to this "psychopathic behavior." Really "just hit upon descriptions of this personality type only after reading Grunthal's "Allgemeine Psychiatrie" and last weekend "Fatal Vision" with the various quotations of psychiatric experts. I have to spend much more time with this!

Something else that contributed to the "urgency" of this subject: Marianne's outburst at the HG meeting last week when we all thought she was in a dangerous manic state, and the next day she talked cheerfully about the fact that she was fully aware of her behavior and how it affected us, and that this reaction "getting our attention" one way or the other was exactly what she wanted. (Purely manipulative behavior, allowing herself to give in to her need to act out without any concern about the needs of others. Very much like Julie.)

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Title for a Thriller:

* A conspiracy of Victims

21. 4.

Worauf es ankommt: dass man sich der Aufgabe stellt, die einem gestellt wird. Sich nicht selber einen Strick drehen oder eine Falle setzen. Sich - die Aufgabe - ernst nehmen, ohne sich wichtig zu machen. Nicht mit Neurose - Krankheit - kokettieren.

26. 4.

Zweifel an der eigenen Wahrnehmungsfähigkeit: "Ich traue meinen Augen nicht." ED - Gedicht "As if the Sea should part". Plötzlich Angst, ich hätte einen Fehler gemacht. Joel um Hilfe angerufen.

5/6

Aufgewacht mit Spannungen, Ängsten, Durchfall. Listened to self-hypnosis + relaxation tape. Washed hair. Feel less tense. Talked to Lotte. What am I really afraid of?

41. Decrease

__ 9 ⊖ Previous sign: release
__ 8 __ of tension.
__ 8 __
__ 8 __ What is below is decreased
__ 9 ⊖ in favor of what is above
__ 7 __

When decrease has reached its goal, flowering is sure to begin.
Decrease is beginning of flowering.
Direction is upward
In being full + being empty, one must go with the time.
Upper element enriched at the expense of the lower.
Anger aroused must be restrained by keeping still.

Nine in second place: Perseverance furthers.
Without decreasing oneself, One is able to bring increase to others.
9 at the top:
one obtains servants (Gehilfen)
Harmony is maintained betw. above + below.
Turning Point
24. Return (Umkehr) - leads to self-knowledge.
turning away from confusion of external things, back to one's inner light
knowing the One means to know oneself in relation to cosmic forces.
movement goes upward.
The firm returns.

16.5
hier ist nichts Unmenschliches fremd. (Tierisches?)

Self-Introduction

I taste a liquor 10
(Letter to H. 67)
" to the world 24
I dwell 36
The soul selects 18
(One need not be 40)
(I stepped fr. plank 50)

Love

(I have a king 8)
Wild nights 12
I can not live 32
Split the Lark 50

Loss

(I never lost 6)
I shall know why 10
Hope is the thing 19
Bereaved of all 48
(My life closed twice) 60

Death rehearsals

Because I could not stop 44
Let down the bars 54

Nachtfeld 2600-9407

Grenz-Erlebnisse – Wahnsinn

Funeral
16 First Day's night
20 Pain
34 Distanzierung durch [+ kritische Untersuchung
Ironie + ~~Rollenspiel~~

If I should die	6
Surgeons	8
A shady friend	14
The heart asks	28
We outgrow love	52

Distanzierung durch Rollenspiel

I'm Nobody	16
We dream	28

Überwindung d. Verlusts, Transzendenz
Dialoge m. d. Ewigkeit

As if the Sea	44
The only news	48
The missing all	54
How happy is the little stone	58

Definitionen	Prescriptions
Beauty be not	26
I reckon	30
Presentiment	46
Tell all the truth	56
to make a prairie	60

NDR Hamburg

Susanne Gremmels

10

12:45 Elysee

8/15/89

7 —

8 —

8 —

7 —

8 —

7 —

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341

Knöpft das Gefühl sich zu
Nach grossem Schmerz kommt ~~förmliches~~
wird das Gefühl formelle Gefühl
Die Nerven ~~sitzen~~ ~~halten~~, ~~Gräben~~ Grüßen gleich,
~~im~~ Zeremoniell ~~Zeremoniell~~,
Das starre Herz fragt, ~~ist es ihm~~
hat es selbst ertragen geschehen,
~~Hat's~~ und ~~Und war~~ gestern oder ~~vor Jahr~~ -
hundert Jahre ~~her~~ zuvor. ~~hunderten~~.

Die Füsse gehn mechanisch ihren
Gang,
~~Hölterne Runden~~,
Ob Erde oder Luft, ~~ob~~ was ~~es~~ sonst
~~es~~ sei,
Ist ihnen ~~gleich~~ einerlei
Ein Quarz ~~Zurückbeben~~ Begnügtsein, wie ein
Stein -

Dies ist die Stunde aus Blei,
Erinnert, wenn überlebt,
wie ~~der~~ sich Erfrierende ~~den~~ an Schnee
~~erinnert~~ besinnen ~~erlebt~~, erinnern ~~beschreibt~~,
Erst-kälte, dann Erstarren,
dann das ~~Gehen-~~
~~lassen~~.

early 1862

1212

~~Ein Wort~~
A word is dead
When it is said,
Some say.
I say it just
Begins to live
That day. 1872 ?

Ein Wort ist tot
Wenn's ausgesprochen ist,
Sagt man, dann
Ich sag, erst ~~an diesem Tag~~
~~es fängt erst dann~~
es fängt
~~zu leben an~~ erst dann
zu leben an.

P/22

8 — —
7 —
9 0
7 —
9 0
9 0

P/23

9 0
8 —
7 —
8 — —
6 — 0
7 —

21. Das Durchbeissen
not listening,
Das Ende ist nahe.

concentrated insight
but not balanced and
not correct. One perversely
grasps the wrong things +
considers them sacred for-
ever falling into uninter-
rupted hell.

8/29

9 —
7 —
7 —
7 —
7 —
8 — — Umwälzung
Entfernung des Veralteten

9/1

8 — —
7 —
7 —
9 —0
8 — —
7 —

8 — —
8 — —
8 — —
6 —0—
8 — —
15. 9 —0
Bescheidenheit.

24. Wiederkehr nach Zersplitterung
9/4

Zurückkommen.
W. dient zur Selbsterkenntnis. Ein ewiger Kreislauf, aus dem immer wieder das Leben hervorgeht, gerade in d. Augenblick, da es völlig besiegt zu sein scheint.

Weg geht auf u. nieder.
Fördernd - etwas zu unternehmen.
Gangkraft noch schwach, muss

Achtsamkeit 2
Because I did not stop

Good

Am Schulhof ging die Fahrt
wo kinder mitzog ~~[illegible]~~ vorbei
mit Kinderbalgereien (rauferein)
vorbei am Blick des Weizenfelds,
am Sonnenuntergang.

durch Ruhe gepflegt werden.
15. Der Weg sich auszudehnen geht durch Zusammenziehen. Ausgleich.

Nurture potential w. serenity. "Shut the gates" of the senses"

Spontaneity. 5 minutes dem Gefühl folgen. Express feelings without censorship. Trusting oneself and others. No fear of making mistakes, no fear of being criticized. Just being without Hintergedanken. Being oneself. Very few people who have this capacity. I do when I feel well. This is what attracts others to me. I can

also bring out spontaneity in others. This is not identical with constant talking about one's problems. What am I afraid of?

7 ~~—~~
9 ~~—~~
6 ~~—~~
7 —
8 — —
7 —

9/9

Feeling dead, I'm working on an exercise in writing the bones. Totally blocked

Bones dead writing working exercise feeling working. writing blocked feeling in bones blocked dead writing working an exercise totally feeling totally dead writing exercise working the bones feeling the bones no more I. Go away. Nowhere to go.

[illegible]

497.86

Inf. 336.40
2,856.07
172.80
232
3,697.27

5,758.80

SCRIE

336.40
2,856.07
172.80
232
3,597.27
5,758.80
9,356.07

405.51
352.60
52.91

21. Durchbeissen 10/11

7 —
8 — 30 Das Haftende.
7 — Geist + Körper.
6 — use non-conceptual observation
8 — "aberrant intellect is like
7 — poison"

8 — 19. 11/11
7 —
7 — Einkehren - Stillehalten -
8 — Ruhen
8 —
9 — 45 Sammlung

17.11.89

Ich war die Puppe meiner Mutter und ich fürchte, ich bin es bis heute geblieben. Wenn sie mit meinem Anblick zufrieden war, sagte sie, "Du siehst aus wie eine Puppe." Als ich vor etwa einem Jahr ein Glas beim Fallen hörte, sagte ich zu meinem eigenen Schrecken "I am going to kill you." Ich glaube nicht, daß meine Mutter fähig war, so etwas zu sagen, aber dafür drohte sie dauernd mit Selbstmord. Ich machte oft ganz unheimliche unbewußte Selbstmordversuche, z.B. - so wie ich mich beim Kochen über die Flamme beugte und mein Schal zu brennen anfing. Ich sagte leise "Hilfe, Hilfe," und riss mir dann den Schal vom Hals, warf ihn auf den Boden und trat die Flammen tot.

Das Gedicht das mit den Worten endet "Heave battered old baby doll am I?" habe ich vor mir selbst verdeckt. Diese ganzen "Baby Doll"-Vorstellungen und Einnerungen sind im Prolog mit einem Feiffer-Cartoon aufgetaucht, in dem das Kind mit der Puppe die Rolle der Mutter spielt, die nur mit sich selbst beschäftigt ist und das Kind anschreit, weil es sie nicht in Ruhe lässt. Zuletzt zieht das Kind befriedigt ab mit den Worten "My Dolly jumped out the window."

12/7/84

Dialogue with M.

D: What are you really trying to tell me?

M: Don't you see that I'm desperate?

D: Then why do you tell me so many boring stories about people I don't know?

M. Because you don't ask the right questions.

D: What would be the right questions?

M: What are you desperate about?

D: O.K., tell me!

M: The example of my mother.

D: In what connection?

M: The way she presented herself as a role model, a woman who could cope with every situation while I was just lazy, unaware or uninterested in practical reality. She needed to maintain these images of both of us in order to hold on to some sense of her own superiority. Rather than ~~letting~~ encouraging me to experiment on my own, or teaching me things like cooking or letting me help her with her editing she ~~continued to~~ kept ~~demonstrating~~ criticizing me for my inadequacies and expressing her distress about my helplessness + inefficiency. This is a pattern that I have taken over from her in my attitude toward myself. What I have been doing almost all my life is to prove that she was right about me, that I was really no good. But the worst thing she did, her worst attack against me, was her suicide. On the one hand, it was as though she had said: "See what you made me do by abandoning me!" On the other it also ~~was~~ proved to me that her own "coping ability"

was no good, did not really help her find a meaning in life, was perhaps only a means to force others, especially her family, to admire and respect her, and when this failed, ~~she had nothing~~ there was nothing left worth living for. She probably killed herself because she could no longer sustain this false self-image. With her suicide she left me a terrible legacy — consisting of a life-long guilt feelings about having deserted her, the example of the false self, implying that it is useless for me to ~~try~~ attempt being useful, and finally the alternative of suicide as the only way out.

T: Thanks you for making the effort to tell me all this. Do you feel better now?

M: A little.

T: Perhaps next time we could talk about what it means to tell stories about others ~~or~~ and also to ~~the~~ dramatize one's own role.

12/10

Yesterday very bad. Met Mark's at craft fair, then went with her + Ann + Helmuth (both of whom I had met at her house) to local have coffee at Excelsior coffee shop. Animated talk about situation in E. Germany that I tried to participate in. Terrible ~~an~~ difficulties in communication, ~~at~~ even talking about simple matters. In the evening read Phyllis Rose's biography of Virginia Woolf and was fascinated by the chapter on "Mrs. Dalloway". I feel a great affinity with ~~her~~ V. W. but am too blocked now to go into this. Before I went to sleep I had the feeling that it was most important for me to re-read 'Mrs. D' because it contained so much that was familiar to me but that I could not express.

In my dream I was going to hear a lecture, again did not know exactly where or how to get to the place. Took a bus, then found out that it went in the wrong direction, got off and walked back about a block. There - at the corner - I met the lecturer who looked vaguely familiar, and he said that he did not expect anybody else but that he would talk to me alone, if I was interested. I went along, and met another older woman on the way who had also wanted to go to the lecture. I invited her to come along and gave her a large 5-dollar silver coin that I had in my pocket. Felt very pleased about my generosity by which was actually somehow misplaced, at least unasked for. The woman was like ~~someone~~ one of the former

white Russian exiles, poor but dignified and intelligent. The lecturer was also a foreigner, and there was an immediate mutual attraction between us. I don't remember what his subject was, probably something in connection with literature. We went to his place - a hotel? - and sat down in a salon or small reading room where he started talking about his experiences. Now it seems that the talk was more personal than literary. I don't know exactly what the part of the other woman was. She was quiet and unobtrusive whereas I felt very expansive and pleasantly excited. Since it got late, we (?) decided to spend the night at the hotel and the last thing I remember is that I got into bed (by myself in a regular hotel bedroom) with the feeling that there was much more to find out, talk about, see, hear and do, the next day.

12/17

"Parkplätze der Seele"

"I need a life or death elitis"

traps of the unconscious

this is going to be a midnight-blue Christmas - in contrast to a white one.

Lost: a sense of humor, but occasionally it comes back, wagging its tail.

Time to start a new book.

Sie haben eine einzigartige Gelegenheit versäumt. Hätten Sie mich nach meinem Klagebrief v. aufgefordert, mich in die polymorph perverser geriatrischer Fall einer pseudo-endogenen Depression mit verzweigten psychosomatischen Symptomen

zur Beobachtung resp. Behandlung für ~~H.U.K~~ ein paar Wochen in die H.U.K zu begeben, so hätten ich ~~zu ihren~~ sie mich mit grossem Erfolg als exotischen - - - - präsentieren können. Statt dessen bin ich heute bei einem hiesigen W. u. W. Psych. gelandet, der ~~die üblichen Erfolgen~~ es unverständlich fand, dass ich seit August in so einem unmenschl. ~~Formeln ankandte~~, nur eins der neuesten Wundermittel verschrieb und mir versicherte, er könne mich jederzeit innerhalb v. 24 Stunden in einer psychiatr. Abteilung unterbringen, falls ich ein unwiderstehliche ~~Selbstmordgelüste~~ Bedürfnis ~~hätte~~ nach. ~~Auch gegen ECT~~ ist er ~~nicht~~ abgeneigt Schocktherapie hätte.

Instand herumlaufe. Da es mindestens 4 Wochen dauern wird, bis das Mittel zum Wunder wirkt, werde ich nun doch versuchen, trotz ~~geistiger~~ Schwäche Ihre Briefe so gut wie mögl. zu beantworten.

24. 12

Schreiben als Rettung vor dem Selbstmord: E ED, Virginia Woolf, Kafka. (Bei VH nur aufgeschoben unter ständiger Bewachung von L. H.) & Immer wieder auftretende Suizidvorstellungen bei ED & K. Süchtiges Verlangen nach Arbeit, i. e. Schreiben. Kafkas Tagebuch notiert über die selbsterarbeitete Krankheit. Befreiung durch Krankheit, indirekter Selbstmord. E & Alle drei lebten unter günstigen bürgerlichen Verhältnissen, gleichzeitig & teilweise bevormundet von Familie (Mann). VH als einzige hatte einen verständnisvollen & geistig ebenbürtigen Partner. alle drei absonderliche Persönlichkeiten. ED am konsequentesten in ihrer Zurückgezogenheit. Wenig Kompromisse mit der Realität. Ihre

Eigenart wurde von der Familie respektiert. Sie musste - nach dem Tode des Vaters nicht mehr öffentl. auftreten. Ihr Leiden war echt u. oft scheinbar überwältigend. So verdiente sie sich die selbstgewählte Bezeichnung "Queen of Calvary". Sie war sich, scheint mir in der 2. Hälfte ihres Lebens, jedenfalls nach 1862, ihrer dichterischen Aufgabe vollkommen bewusst, auch der Tatsache, dass es für sie zu Lebzeiten kein Publikum geben würde. Ein wesentlicher Unterschied in ihrer Einstellung im Vergleich zu K u VH: nirgends, weder in Gedichten noch in Briefen spricht sie über Schuld, eine unerfüllte Forderung dem täglichen Leben, anderen Menschen gegenüber. Das erscheint mir als sehr ungewöhnlich, aber vielleicht doch eher verständlich

im Rahmen ihrer Zeit und sozialen Umgebung; ~~andererseits~~ (obwohl es selbst in ihrem engeren Kreise Frauen gab, die nicht nur gesellschaftl. sondern auch kulturell eine Rolle spielten. (z. B. Susan D. + Mabel Todd). also an der geschichtl. Ms. Sewall nannte ED mit Recht ihrer Zeit teilnahmen. Snob, ~~und er hatte sicher recht~~. Viele Beispiele dafür in ihren Gedichten.

VH war sehr besorgt darum, dass sie ein snob sein könne. geistiges Spricht häufig darüber in "A Writer's Diary". Sie behauptete, sie habe "den Engel im Haare" in sich umgebracht, um ausschliesslich schreiben zu können. Sehr gute Darstellung dieses Problems in Rose's Biographie. Rose meint, dass sie unter dem Mangel einer unvollkommenen Weiblichkeit gelitten hat und Vanessa als unerreichbares Vorbild

weiblicher Fruchtbarkeit, mütterlich & künstlerisch bewundert u. beneidet hat. Worauf es mir hier ankommt, ist die Feststellung, dass sie sich dem Leben gegenüber schuldig fühlte. Dafür sollten sich viele Beweisstellen finden lassen. Interessant ist, dass sie Mrs Dalloway, die sie mit sehr viel Attributen ihres eigenen persönlichen Charmes ausstattet, als eine unliterarische Frau ~~rein praktisch orientierte~~ darstellt, die mühelos mit den täglichen Aufgaben fertig wird und gleichzeitig fähig ist den Augenblick zu geniessen ~~u.~~ in einer Form, die ihr VW's Genie leiht. Aber die Frage nach der Schuld muss näher untersucht werden.

In K's Romanen wie in seinem Leben steht die Schuldfrage ganz im Vordergrund.

1/10/90

No place to go to - inside or out. No inner dialogue. Getting up I only want to go back to bed again. Can't make the effort to do simplest tasks. Can hardly imagine what it feels like to be alive.

Yesterday woke up quite light-hearted after a dream in which I saw Edith again - as a mature woman, very good looking, very alive. It was at a party with many people. I went over to her and told her how happy I was to see her. There were so many things I wanted to ~~to~~ talk to her about. She was friendly but also talking to others, so there was not much chance for intimacy. I said, "Please don't disappear again," and she answered "I won't." A young man told me how successful she was. I don't remember in what field, perhaps

social work.

George came in the evening and was nice. I made supper for him, which I wouldn't have done for myself. Dr. H. suggested that I could go on a liquid diet if I didn't feel like cooking. Excellent idea. "Ensure Plus" tastes sweet and icky but contains all necessary nutrients.

I still feel that I don't have the courage to find out what is really wrong with me. Need help but nobody believes me when I say it is all more or less self-inflicted suffering. I have occasional insights but it is too hard to figure it out by myself. Perhaps the Prozac will help to overcome the inertia and then I can try to work things out in writing or talking to Hannah. Can't jump over my shadow, because that seems to be all that's left of me.

Just Words

Coming and going
here and there
out and in
effervescence ?
essential nothingness
mindlessness
focusing

Subject: Angst
looking at dead body (my own?)
not able to find my way
falling - falling apart
hollowness
losing contact
helplessness - my own + that
of others
losing communication
" continuity

Jan 23

compared to my present state, Krap's Last Tape is cheerful entertainment. Why do I care to make literary comparisons? Just write what comes to your mind. Last Double Rehearsal. Again literature. This is a matter of life and death. So what? So nothing. Just write without thinking. This is not thinking anyway.

Sighing. While I write I'm not sighing. Yesterday I tried to sing instead of sighing. It helped a little. Did not feel so bad until I saw Sweetie with A very slyly concealed confession of a woman who grew up with a dysfunctional family. A study in insanity outside a mental institution, implying that everybody is crazy.

original

The Times review that I read afterwards had obviously not gotten the message, but it agreed although she said she liked it and did not take it too seriously. I was deeply upset by it, took a Xanax and was going to settle down with real "grey" when Mary called. Told me about a visit from an old lover from Yale. Everybody ~~reciting~~ is playing his/her own tape over and over. Totally boring. Reminds me of David who says, it's boring when he can't concentrate. Writing away from myself. Is that helpful? What's really going on inside may be just too frightening to look at. Loss of control, also in my handwriting.

I dreamt that I was at home with a number of

women (my "alleged" friends) visiting me. They seemed to be having a good time with each other. Tel Somebody called and asked where she could get a certain type of chocolate. I got very annoyed and said that I was not an information service. I had actually the confused the voice of the caller (Ruth) with that of Miriam and felt embarrassed when I found out.

Jan 24

Read my "dialog with M." to Dr. H. today and then continued to convince him of my hysterical symptoms. He seemed to be genuinely pleased at the discovery that I had more to offer than an ordinary depression and stated that of course it would take more than six weeks to get at all the underlying problems. I said that I could not possibly afford a lengthy continuation of therapy with him, and he said he would evaluate the situation after the next session when I would get the maximum effect from the medication. He said, "by then you'll be back to normal, that is you'll still be disturbed but in a way that you're used to."

It doesn't sound so funny now than it did before.

22 Anmut (Ungefärbtheit)
9 — — Hervortreten des ursprüng-
6 — — lichen Materials, das durch
6 — — Gestaltung verschönert wird
9 — — Möglichkeit zur Verwirk-
6 — — lichung der Form.
7 — — Gehalt u. Form.
Nichts Aussergewöhnliches unternehmen
Gefahr des Versinkens (Abgrund) dauernde Beharrlichkeit
9 oben: schlichte Anmut. Einfachheit.
Tendenz dem Überwiegen der Form durch den Gehalt entgegenzutreten

58 Das Heitere (Ha-Ha!)
Das Schneidende, Zerstörende die andere Seite des Aspekts.
Sich zusammentun mit Freunden, gemeinsame Besprechung.

22. ... not creating emotional opinions grasping and rejecting by judgment one as right and one as wrong. ... not making presumptions adjucation.

Seeing the wise, one thinks of how to be equal to them; seeing the unwise, one reflects on oneself.

58 do not destroy people to follow your own desires; to do not deviate from the right path to win people's praise.

Study without practice leads to nothing; practice without study leads to danger.

Jan. 25
So geht es nicht weiter. Lohnt es sich, noch einmal ein neues Blatt anzufangen?
Fail. Try again. Fail better.
(Beckett)

EP 656

auf welche Weise leicht geschaffene ~~Was lehrt~~ lernt eine Hand, ~~Formen~~ fernen Augen Formen aufzudrängen, die für sie ~~die ganze~~ das ~~ganze~~ volle Ausmass ~~des~~ von Lebens oder ~~des~~ Todes haben? Dennoch hat jeder Bleistift auf der Strasse diese furchtbare Macht, obwohl keiner ~~sie~~ ihn verhaftet. Ein ernster Brief ~~ist~~ ~~ein~~ sollte Lebens- oder Todesurteil – oder sollte es sein –, denn was ist jeder Augenblick anderes als ein Geweler, das harmlos weiles "ungeladen ist, ~~aber~~ "losgeht" sobald es berührt wird.

Männer ~~pflu~~ sammeln heute die Äpfel auf, und die hübschen nieter Pensionäre verlassen die Bäume, ~~Bienen~~ Vögel + Ameisen + Bienen. Ich habe einen Sperling 6 mal "~~die~~" missbilligend "die" sagen hören. Was würden wir tun, wenn ~~man uns~~ unsere Vorrechte

(Priviligien) in einem Schubharren weggerollt würden? - - -

Der Essex*-Besuch war himmlisch. Hr. L[ord] blieb eine Woche. Hrs beschloss noch einmal mit ihrem Sohn Elizabeth wiederzukommen. Tante Lucretia [Bullard] ~~hielt das Gewehr~~ schulterte das Gewehr. Ich glaube, sie ~~sind~~ liegen in meinem Gedächtnis begraben: ein Teegebäck und eine Bombe. Jetzt sind sie alle fort und die Grillen freuen sich. Ihr bombastischer Tadel fällt noch immer auf das Zwielicht ein und hält die sanfteren Tumulte des schwindenden Tages im Schach.

~~Liebe Grüsse~~ alles Liebe an Fanny. Dies ist nur ein Fragment aber Ganzheiten gibt es hier unten nicht.

Emily

Zu ED über Übersetzung

Zitieren: Morgenstern: Ein schönes Original (Gedicht) b. shines through - - -

Rilke: Chicago Rev. Spring 1951

1941 Book of hours: Lösch mir die Augen aus wirf mir

Literatur

Morgenstern: Stufen: Antasten

Henry W. Wells, 1947

Single Hound, 1914

Coll. edition 1937 (about 900 poems

hrs Todd + 1932

Madame Bianchi + 1913

Bolts of Memory, To edited by Todd + Bingham 1945

"no definitive edition of poems poss. short of a transcendental heaven"

Does not mark her preferences

lists 8-10 words as poss. choices

What do you expect?

No substantial recognition for 22 yrs after publication + became famous only 32 yrs later

Tragicomedy in five decades

1914 import. yr. in ~~lit~~ Am. lit

EDs style had been in advance of Am. taste by over ½ cent.

Waste Land 1922

1924 Life + Letters of ED (Bianchi)

End of 1930's she rec. — posthumous hon. degree fr. Amherst

1939 Whicher, Amherst Schola, Auden, p. 25

Quote Jarrell — 50 yrs from now readers will discover the poetry behind the person?

Henry W. Wells: Intro to ED 1947

relationship betw. tensions in

33 her life + the perfection of her art

34 had in this world but same in eternity

describes moods of extreme depression

Cambridge poets

49 found the circumference of Amherst in the world + of herself in the universe

Seeing New Englandly

50 philosophical aphorisms in verse

54 Calvinist: Election, Predestination, Grace

ED more universal than W. W.

108 pursued by his own identity

122 her inwardness + spirituality place her nearer to the Germans than to the French

Angelus Silesius

The two — see eye to eye in all important matters of love + death

148 Probl. of religion

A thought went up my mind today

35

The truth I do not dare to know
I muffle with a jest
Tragedy of the clown.

I know that he exists –
Bind me, I still can sing!

265 Imperfect rhyme
267 interesting observations
Fairer though fading
gedämpfter Reim

Ripodic verse ?

Dictionary: Noah Webster's

Subjunctive Mode

Clara Newman Turner
born 1844, grew up in Austin's
household (orphans) cousin
of Emily
Gradual withdrawal
"I don't speak things like the rest"

Cemetery lay 3 fields away (274)

Morgenstern: (?)

1863 CP 1890
Because I could not stop (1929)
stop – 1) anhalten, stehenbleiben, stoppen
1b) aufhören, an- innehalten,
Pause machen
18. stop for – warten auf
1890 Poems "The Chariot" ?
4. ~~Vers~~ Strophe, urspr. ausgelassen,
zum 1. Mal in 1955 eingefügt!
~~Ei~~ Gerall: It may have
as much to do with life as with
death ?

[More than the Grave is closed to me –]

nicht an hielt
Weil ich mich nicht aufhalten
konnte, Keine Zeit für den Tod
hatte, hielt er freundlicherweise
vor mir an, – Der Wagen – – –
– – –

Wir fuhren langsam – Er konnte

keine Eile, und ich hatte
meine Arbeit und auch meine
Musse beiseite getan um seiner
Höflichkeit willen

Wir kamen an der Schule vorüber vorbei,
wo Kinder in der Pause im Ring-
kampf [rangen] (verändert: playing)
Wir kamen vorüber ~~vorbei~~ an Feldern
starrenden Korns - ~~Wir~~ vorüber
an ~~der untergehenden~~ Sonnen-
untergang
Oder vielmehr, der ging an uns
vorbei - Der Tau rief verursachte Zittern
(quiver - Köcher) + Frösteln
hervor - Denn nur hauch-
dünn mein Gewand (kein Herb)
mein Umhang (tippet - von tip -
(spitze) nur Tüll -

Wir rasteten - ~~machten Pause~~
hielten an, inne, pausierten
vor einem Haus, das schien
Eine Schwellung ~~im~~ des Erd Bodens
[zu sein]

Das Dach war kaum sichtbar -
Der Sims im ~~B~~ Erdboden -

Seitdem ist's Jahrhunderte her -
und doch
scheints kürzer als der Tag
[An dem] ich zum ersten Mal
vermutete, dass die Pferdeköpfe
zur ~~der~~ Ewigkeit ~~gingen~~ waren,
(keine übliche Sprachform,
ein zusätzliches Kerb weg-
gelassen, z. B. Looking.]

~~Ja~~ Sehr ~~langsame~~ gemächlich + bedächtiger
Anfang; ~~(es geht im Trab)~~
eine scheinbar alltägl. Situation
der Tod hat nichts Erschreckendes,
(~~im~~ amer. Texten oft als "gentleman
Herren-besuch" (aller bezeichnet), eine Auffor-
derung zu einem Ausflug in
der Kutsche. Immortality fährt
mit, beinah wie eine Anstandsdame
(chaperone). Es geht langsam,
er hatte keine Eile, und sie
hat aus Rücksicht auf ihn,

aus Dankbarkeit, weil er so höfl. ist, ihre eigenen Angelegenheiten, Arbeit u. Musse beiseite getan.

Wir fuhren vorbei
Schuh-Kinderringen
(zwei Zeilen) Mittag
Gazing Grain - das Korn starrt
(unbeweglich)
setting sun - Sonne geht unter
Abend

~~Jetzt~~ An dieser Stelle tritt eine Veränderung ein. Die Sonne ging an uns vorbei. Zittern u. Kälte, anscheinend wird ihr bewusst, dass sie unzulänglich ~~v~~ vorbereitet ist. Die Beschreibung ihrer ~~Anfangs~~ (Kleidung) entspricht in keiner Weise der traditionellen Totentracht. Es ist, als hätte sie sich zu weit ~~weg~~ gegangen ~~gewagt~~. Ähnliches Thema in anderen Gedichten angeschlagen:

Das Spiel wird ernst

see other examples

eternity

I took my dog —, wo zu ist

eine scheinbar unverfängl. Situation dargestellt ~~wird~~ ist, die dann sehr unheimlich wird. ~~Auch~~ Vgl. das Gedicht I know that he exists, ~~B~~ No more death scheinsals! H

Death as circumference (Jane Donahue Eberwein

Amer. Dict. of the Engl. Lang. 1849: translation see 23, 276

S. Bowles: 1863 - "the Queen Recluse see p 30.

Translation: 36, Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews 11:5

2 Kings 2:11 Eliah

Matthew 17+2, 3

Rezept für
Man nehme

ein puritanisches Gewissen
einen tyrannischen Vater
3 ~~un~~ 3 unglückliche Lieben
~~eine (kleine) Portion~~
Handvoll ~~Frühlings~~ wahnsinn
Schmetterlinge, Bienen + versch.
Vogelsorten nach Geschmack
~~kräftig würzen mit Gedanken-~~
~~strichen~~ Hefe
die verschiedenen Bestandteile
gut vermischen und in eine
Springform bei mässiger Hitze

✓ Ich rolle mir Steine des Anstosses
in den Weg

wie ich zu ED kam

Das Übersetzen v. ED ist
nach wie vor eine unmögliche
und eine unendliche Aufgabe,
aber gerade das macht es
so verlockend. [Als ich in
den fünftiger Jahren damit
anfing, hatte ich zunächst keinerlei böse Absichten ~~Hinter-~~ ulterior motives
~~gedanken~~ dabei, auch keine
Vorstellung von einem Ziel
~~oder einer~~ im Sinne einer
eventuellen Verwertung u. Ver-
öffentlichung. Ich hatte
einige Gedichte von ihr gelesen,
in einer der frühen sehr
unvollständigen u. v. d. Herausgeber
veränderten ~~#~~ Ausgaben, ~~fühlte~~
~~mich~~ ~~u~~ und fühlte mich
~~anscheinend~~ von irgendetwas
im Ausdruck, in der Sprache,
im der Intensität Erleben ~~anscheinend~~ sehr stark
~~sehr direkt~~ angesprochen.
~~Damals wusste ich praktisch~~
~~gar nichts von ihrem Leben~~

Es war eine sehr ~~direkte~~ unmittelbare Berührung, denn, soweit ich mich erinnere, hatte ich sie sozusagen zufällig kennengelernt, d.h. nicht durch ~~die~~ Vermittlung v. Freunden, Lehrern oder literarischen Hinweisen. Nachdem ich mich jahrelang m. Rilkeübersetzungen ins Engl. beschäftigt hatte, von denen ich mir naiverweise erhoffte, dass die amer. Verleger sich darum reissen würden (~~sie erklärten damals~~ sie erklärten damals ziemlich einstimmig, der amer. Markt ~~sei vo~~ überschwemmt oder übersättigt von Rilke-Übersetzungen) ~~nach~~ ~~Ri~~ gab ich ~~vorübergehend~~ meine vergeblichen Versuche auf und im Vergleich zu Rilke also hielt ich Emily Dickinson für einfach und unmittelbar zugänglich. Es fällt mir heute jetzt schwer, mich jetzt in meine damalige ~~so~~ naive

For Two new Saints:
Sancha
St. Serendipity
Saint Synchronicity
Sancha

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Because she flowered too exuberantly

[illegible]

Because her flowering was too exuberant

Gedi
Dichter selbst
ein Übersetzer, nur
er selbst
Gedicht als übers
nur für ihn erh.

~~Tse~~ Tsvetayeva

Translation: Mech. notion in which, at any instant, every point of the body is moving in the same direction and at the same velocity as every other point.

translate: to convey or remove from earth to heaven without natural death

D. ~~Et~~ Ent.: Versetzung, Entrückung, (+ entrücken

Rilke: und er gehorcht, übertragen indem er überschreitet

Jedes Gedicht ist Übersetzung

kleiner Beitrag zur D-Forschung

Trotzdem finde ich es nicht abwegig oder allzu gewagt
kann man die Feststellung machen erscheint es mir lohnend
Trotzdem liegt es nah,
my life ~~cols~~ closed twice
mit einem anderen ~~u~~ I never lost as much as twice zu vergleichen,
[das letztere befand sich ED's "Päckchen 1",] Beide sind ausserordentlich ähnlich. Thauten in Sprache, Inhalt, Versmass, mit einem identischen fast bis zum Wortlaut in der ersten Zeile – und Bach beziehen sich offensichtlich beide auf den ~~doppelten~~ Verlust zweier von zwei geliebten Menschen.
Das Original: "I never lost befand sich im Emily D's Päckchen 1, ein Beweis ~~dafür~~ ~~d.h.~~ dass sie es für abgeschlossen + wertvoll hielt. Das angegebene Entstehungsdatum dafür ist ungefähr 1858, und so könnte man ohne eine

Indiskretion zu begehen, annehmen, dass auch my life closed twice, das nicht weniger rebellisch aber trotzdem überlegener klingt, mehr oder weniger aus der gleichen Periode stammt.

Die beiden geliebten Menschen waren zweifellos ihre Lehrer Humphrey und Newton, die beide unerwartet früh starben.

1980

specific
specific
specific
specific
specific
specific

Günter G

f ff

A T

effort

interesting

efforts

Die Kutsche

Weil ich ~~nie~~ nicht Stillstand vor dem Tod
Stellt' er bei mir sich ein –
Sein ~~Fahrzeug~~ ~~Wagen~~ trug ~~nicht ausser~~ uns
Und die Unsterblichkeit.
~~Fahrzeug~~
Es ging im Trab – er ~~hatte~~ nahm sich Zeit
~~ihm eilt' es nicht~~
Ich hatte mein [illegible]

ANDREA WINTER
621 73 75
(RADIO 100)

Lachmann
349-5052

Die Kutsche

Weil ich ~~nie~~ nicht stillstand vor dem Tod
Stellt' er bei mir sich ein –
Sein ~~Fuhrwerk~~ ~~Wagen~~ trug ~~nicht~~ ~~ausser~~ uns hielt uns beide mir –
Und die Unsterblichkeit.
~~Fahrzeug~~
Es ging im Trab – ~~ihm eilt' es nicht~~ er ~~hatte~~ nahm sich Zeit
Ich hatte meine Kühn
Und Müssigkeiten abgetan
Aus Rücksicht gegen ihn (?)
Vorbei am ~~zu~~ ~~sahen Kinder~~ ~~zu~~ ~~wir~~ ~~wir~~ sahn
~~Am~~ Schulhof, ~~kamen wir vorbei zu~~
~~die Schar~~
~~Vor Am~~ Schul~~hof~~, ~~zu~~ sahn wir Kinder ~~scharen~~ wir
~~die~~ die in der Pause rangen
~~Wir sahn den Schulhof~~
~~Vorbei an Kindern, die~~
Am Schulhof ging's vorbei zu

~~Vorbei am Schulhof zu~~ ~~zu~~ die Schar
~~von Kindern~~ Es ging vorbei
~~Am Schulhof~~ sahn wir Kinder-
scharen
~~die~~ die in der Pause rangen
~~Wir sahen~~ fuhren vorbei

Es ging vorbei an Kinderscharen
die ~~in~~ auf dem Schulhof rangen
vorbei am ~~Kornfeld~~ ~~Feld~~ Korn
~~mit~~ starrem Blick
am Sonnenuntergang

Vielmehr, der ging an uns vorbei -
~~Der Tau rief Schüttelfrost hervor~~
~~machte~~
Der ~~Im~~ Tau ~~fühlt~~ trug ich ~~ein~~ Frösteln
ins Gefühl
~~Im Tau fing ich zu frösteln an~~
Beim ~~mit~~ Abendtau stellte sich
Frösteln ein
Mich fröstelte im Tau - ~~bracht~~
~~Den~~ Mein Kleid war ~~dünn~~
nur ein dünner Hauch
mein Umhang nur aus Tüll
im Tau kam Frösteln
~~trug~~ Frösteln (ins Gefühl
~~an Kindern~~
Am Schul~~hof~~platz ging die Fahrt vorbei,
wo Kinder mittags rangen
vorbei am ~~Kornfeld~~ Blick des 2. Sonnenfelds starren Blicks
Am Sonnenuntergang

im Tau ~~drang fühlt ich~~ fröstelt

Vielmehr – der ging an uns vorbei –
~~Der~~ Tau drang frostig ins Gefühl
~~Denn nur wie Spinnweb~~
Ein dünner ~~Gewebe~~ Hauch ~~war~~ in
nur mein Gewand
Mein Umhang nur aus Tüll

Wir rasteten vor einem Haus
~~wie eine Schwellung~~
~~das schien wie ein~~
~~aus es schien~~
das hob sich ~~aus~~ kaum vom Grund
Das Dach war ~~wenig sichtbar~~
beinah unsichtbar
Das Sinus ~~war~~ noch verdeckt im Grund

~~stellte sich Frösteln ein~~
Der Tau ~~rief~~

zu ~~im Kreise~~ mittags Kinder rangen
im Tau ~~traf~~ fröstelnd ~~und zu~~ ein
~~im Tau drang Frösteln ins Zittern~~
im ~~Den~~ Tau ~~empfand~~ fühlt ich fröstelnd kühl
~~machte sich~~
fühlt ich mich fröstelnd kühl

AR 25164

Max and Lola Gruenthal Collection

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One blessing had I

Es ward *ein* Segen mir zuteil –
Was blieb, so groß war das,
daß ich nun innehielt davor
und lotete und maß.

Es war das Äußerste des Traums,
der Brennpunkt des Gebets;
gelähmt war ich, beseligt, ganz,
und gern verzweifelt stets.

Ich darbte nicht, es fror mich nicht
(Not – Schein, Frost – Schemen du!), –
was sich mir in die Seele wog,
mir wogs die Erde zu.

Den Himmel unten färbt ein Rot,
den Himmel oben auch.
Das Leben schäumte über, und
was ich gemeint, war Hauch.

Daß Freude sich nicht gern verschenkt
und Eden sich vertagt,
daß man im Glas die Flut uns reicht –:
dem denk ich nicht mehr nach.

Father, I bring thee not myself

Ich bring dir, Vater, nicht mich selbst –
  an mir trug ich nicht schwer.
Ich bring das kaiserliche Herz,
  das schwerer wog als schwer.

Heidelberg, den 21. 8. 90

Liebe Lola –

zu dem schönen, schwer in den Süden zu transportierenden grossen Bildgeschenk habe ich von Dir noch einen Geburtstagswunsch – den Versuch* einer Übersetzung des Italiengedichtes in's Deutsche.

Text umseitig, für alle Fälle –

herzlich

Walter

*keine Pflicht – at your leisure.

Our lives are Swiss -
So still - so Cool -
Till some cold afternoon
The Alps neglect their Curtains
And we look farther on!
Italy stands the other side!
While like a guard between -
The solemn Alps -
The siren Alps
Forever intervene!

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daß ich nun innehielt davor
und lotete und maß.

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  das schwerer wog als schwer.

EMILY DICKINSON

ACHT GEDICHTE

My life closed twice before its close

Mein Leben, zweimal fiels ins Schloß,
eh's zufällt; nun, ich will
jetzt sehn, ob die Unsterblichkeit
ein Drittes mir enthüllt,

so ohne Hoffnung und so groß.
Abschied, das ist, was uns,
du Himmel, an dir wißbar ist, –
und Hölle ists genug.

891

To my quick ear the leaves conferred

Die Blätter traten vor mein Ohr,
der Busch war Glockenschall.
Kein Bei-mir-selbst-Sein – die Natur
hat Augen überall.

Wollt ich hinunter ins Gewölb,
schon sprachs da auf mich ein.
Ein Klaffen, das mich sichtbar macht:
das muß die Schöpfung sein.

Let down the bars, o death

Fort mit der Schranke, Tod!
Die Herde kommt, es kommt,
wer blökte und nun nimmer blökt,
wer nicht mehr wandert, kommt.

Dein ist die stillste Nacht,
der sichre Pferch ist dein.
Zu nah bist du, um noch gesucht,
zu sanft, genannt zu sein.

Four trees upon a solitary acre

Ein Feld ist, einsam, drauf vier Bäume stehn,
von ungefähr.
Was waltet vor, was wirkt hier mit?
Sie stehn, sieh her.

Es kommt die Sonne mit der Früh,
Wind tritt hinzu.
Von allen, die da Nachbarn sind:
ihr nächster, Gott, bist du.

Das Feld hat für sie einen Ort,
und sie fürs Feld ein Aug.
Ein Aug, das huscht, jetzt hier – schon dort,
vielleicht ein Knabenaug.

Was sind sie im Zusammenhang
von Werden und Sichregen?
Ein jeder: wem bahnt er den Weg und wem
steht er entgegen?

Ins Deutsche übertragen von Paul Celan

Das ich, bis ich mich dran verhob,
im eignen Herzen trug;
dann gings und war erst recht die Last –
sag, hast du Kraft genug?

I never saw a moor

Das Moor, ich sah's noch nie,
ich kenn sie nicht, die See.
Doch weiß ich, wie's ums Heidekraut
und um die Welle steht.

Sprach auch noch nie mit Gott,
bin niemals dortgewesen,
und kenn den Ort, als hätte ich
die Karte schon gelesen.

I reason, earth is short

Ich denk: Dies währt nicht lang,
ein Ding ist, es heißt Bang,
und weh tut Hand um Hand –
ja und?

Ich denk: Sieh zu, man stirbt,
der Saft, der in dir wirkt,
auch ihm gilt dies: Verdirb –
ja und?

Ich denk: Im Garten Eden
ist alles wieder eben,
die Gleichung neu gegeben –
ja und?

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So larger to my Eyes
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Why Paradise defer -
Why Floods be served to Us - in Bowls -
I speculate no more -

Emily Dickinson

Ein Segen wurde mir zuteil,
Der war so uebergross,
Dass ich am Ausmass selbst - entzueckt -
Zu messen ganz vergass -

Es war der Brennpunkt des Gebets -
Des Traumes Grenzbereich -
Vollkommen - laehmend - Seligkeit -
Gefasst - Verzweiflung gleich -

Ich kannte Not nicht mehr - noch Frost -
Sie wurden Spuk und Schein
Vor diesem neuen Seelenwert -
Hoechstzahl im Irdischsein -

Der untere Himmel - kraeftig blau -
Verbarg des oberen Licht -
Das Leben dehnte sich - erfuellt -
Und tot war das Gericht -

Warum wird Freude rationiert -
Das Paradies vertagt -
Die Flut in Schuesseln uns serviert -
Dem spuer ich nicht mehr nach -

Lola Gruenthal

There was one blessing I received -
The rest, so large was that
that now I stopped to stand in front
and plumbed and measured it.

It was the limit of the dream,
the focus of the prayer;
I, blissful, whole, was paralysed
and gladly desperate.

I did not starve, I was not cold
(want - sham, frost - phantom, you!) -
what waved itself into my soul, /weighed
the earth waved it to me. /weighed

The heaven below was colored red,
the heaven above was too.
All life was brimming over and
what I had thought was breath.

That joy dislikes to share itself
and Eden is adjourned,
that flood they serve us in a glass-
now leaves me unconcerned.

Re-translated from the German by
Lola Gruenthal

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Lola Gruenthal

EMILY DICKINSON

Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility –

We passed the School, where Children played
At wrestling in a ring –
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
We passed the Setting Sun –

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –
The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – but a mound –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – but each
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses Heads
Were toward Eternity –

PAUL CELAN

Der Tod, da ich nicht halten konnt,
hielt an, war gern bereit.
Im Fuhrwerk saß nun er und ich
und die Unsterblichkeit.

Ihm gings auch langsam schnell genug,
und ich hatt fortgetan
das Fronen und das Müßiggehn,
so freundlich war der Mann.

Ein Schulhof kam mit kleinem Volk,
das miteinander rang . . .
Es hat das Korn uns nachgeäugt,
wir sahn: die Sonne sank.

Dann hielten wir, da stand ein Haus:
emporgewelltes Land.
Das Dach – kaum daß es sichtbar war,
Das Sims – ein Hügelrand.

Jahrhunderte seither, doch keins
war länger als der Nu,
da ich mir sagt: Wir halten ja
auf Ewigkeiten zu!

One blessing had I

Es ward *ein* Segen mir zuteil –
Was blieb, so groß war das,
daß ich nun innehielt davor
und lotete und maß.

Es war das Äußerste des Traums,
der Brennpunkt des Gebets;
gelähmt war ich, beseligt, ganz,
und gern verzweifelt stets.

Ich darbte nicht, es fror mich nicht
(Not – Schein, Frost – Schemen du!), –
was sich mir in die Seele wog,
mir wogs die Erde zu.

Den Himmel unten färbt ein Rot,
den Himmel oben auch.
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was ich gemeint, war Hauch.

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daß man im Glas die Flut uns reicht –:
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Father, I bring thee not myself

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  an mir trug ich nicht schwer.
Ich bring das kaiserliche Herz,
  das schwerer wog als schwer.

One Blessing had I than the rest
So larger to my Eyes
That I stopped gauging - satisfied -
For this enchanted size -

It was the limit of my Dream -
The focus of my Prayer -
A perfect paralyzing Bliss -
Contented as Despair -

I knew no more of Want - or Cold -
Phantasms both become
For this new Value in the Soul -
Supremest Earthly Sum -

The Heaven below the Heaven above -
Obscured with ruddier Blue -
Life's Latitudes leant over - full -
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Why Bliss so scantily disburse -
Why Paradise defer -
Why Floods be served to Us - in Bowls -
I speculate no more -

Emily Dickinson

Ein Segen wurde mir zuteil,
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Dass ich am Ausmass selbst - entzueckt -
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Lola Gruenthal

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There was one blessing I received -
The rest, so large was that
that now I stopped to stand in front
and plumbed and measured it.

It was the limit of the dream,
the focus of the prayer;
I, blissful, whole, was paralysed
and gladly desperate.

I did not starve, I was not cold
(want - sham, frost - phantom, you!) -

The heaven below was colored red,
the heaven above was too.
All life was brimming over and
what I had thought was breath.

That joy dislikes to share itself
and Eden is adjourned,
that flood they serve us in a glass-
now leaves me unconcerned.

Re-translated from the German by
Lola Gruenthal

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and gladly desperate.

I did not starve, I was not cold
(want - sham, frost - phantom, you!) -
what swayed itself into my soul,
the earth swayed it to me.

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what I had thought was breath.

That joy dislikes to share itself
and Eden is adjourned,
that flood they serve us in a glass-
now leaves me unconcerned.

Re-translated from the German by
Lola Gruenthal

Consulting summer's clock,
But half the hours remain.
I ascertain it with a shock -
I shall not look again.
The second half of joy
Is shorter than the first.
The truth I do not dare to know
I muffle with a jest.

Des Sommers Zifferblatt
Ist nur noch halb zu sehn.
Ich stell es fest mit einem Schock
Und schau nicht wieder hin.
Der Freude zweites Halb
~~Entspricht dem ersten nicht.~~
Die Wahrheit, die mich zu sehr schreckt,
~~Mach ich zum Spottgedicht.~~

~~Kraft sich~~
Kraft es
~~Kinder~~ Risse Verletzung
(Kraft es)
Diese Narbe ist
Nur ~~ist~~ in meinem Gesicht
~~Bleibt~~ Ein Veränderung
(Kraft) ~~Kraft~~ (Verlust)
~~Beweis~~ und d: Verletzung
diese Narbe ~~ist~~ ~~bei~~ ist
keine Erleichterung

Keinem anderen ist
beschrieben
S. Seelenqual
(Kampf)
Schatten atmen ~~wollt~~

~~Siegel Seelennot~~
In des Todes ~~Buch~~ Buch

Nur ~~ein~~ meines
Erlebnisses
von Veränderung
Leidensweg

K. Verg. Griffel mus
Nus im Turnen ein
Erkennen
Von Veränderungen

So gut dass ich verzichten
kann.
~~Ist meine Liebe, Ist das~~
Ist meine L. ~~[illegible]~~ gut?
(O gut [illegible]) Bist
~~[illegible]~~ Überzeugung
dass ~~[illegible]~~ er die Menschenliebe liebe
So war wie ~~[illegible]~~ liebe Bist
wie ich Dich liebe
dass er die Menschenliebe
So liebte wie ich Dich. ~~liebte~~

Ich habe keine Lust zum
Rätselraten sage ich,
Ich will jetzt wissen, was
das ist!
"Es ~~Die Stimme sagt:~~" Rap piep
nicht auf, sagt es
Es hat ja keine Eile. Ich
will nicht stören,
Ich komme ein andermal.
Auf Wiederhören.

Eines Tages werden wir auch
finden
~~bei einem Besuch~~
~~die Todesursache~~
~~Herzversagen~~
~~Todesursache~~
~~Todesursache bekannt.~~
~~Ein Gegenstand, eine Spur~~
und keine Spur von einem Täter,
~~Kein~~ Nur ein Papier auf
dem geschrieben steht
Niemand hat Eile!

I felt a Heaving in my Head
As if my Brain had split -
I tried to match it - Seam
by Seam -
But could not make them fit.

The Thought behind I strove
to join
Unto the Thought before -
But Sequence ravelled out
of Sound
Like Balls - upon a Floor.

Ich spürte einen Sprung im Geist
als wär' mein Hirn gespalten
Die Teile paßt' ich Naht an Naht
zusammen -
Doch wollten sie nicht halten

Den späteren Einfall knüpfte ich
an den davor
Doch Folge rollte aus dem
Klang
wie Bälle, die entschlüpften

46-6 So well that I can live without

So geht dass ich verschiedene Farben -

Ich meine Liebe - ist das gut genug?

So gut wie ~~Jesus~~ Jesu's?

Bewahre mich - dass ich die Menschen

So liebte die ich Dich -

(Paulet 40)

7 —

7 —

7 —

7 —

7 —

6 —

8 —

8/3/98

26

◡ – ◡ – ◡ – ◡ –
– ◡ ◡ – ◡ –
bei mir [illegible] kann

Dies ist ~~heut alles~~ was ich
Dir bis heut ~~erst gesagt~~ [illegible]
dies und meine Herz dazu –
" " " " und
~~jedes Feld~~.
und ~~alle~~ Wiesen ~~weit + breit~~
~~Zahl der~~ [illegible] ~~wach fallen~~ [illegible] ich [illegible]
nochmal, die Summe zeigen
~~am Ende~~ [illegible] Schluss
~~noch einen nicht~~ vergass
~~entdeckt~~ genannt –
Dies u. u. u. u. ~~Bienen~~
Bienenvoll~~doch + u. ohne Zahl~~,
~~die Bienen~~ u. ~~oben~~ [illegible]
das sich im Klee ~~wohnt~~
versteckt.

Lies ihr einen aus.
alles nach
Zahl der Wochentag, Ende
Zahl's nach ~~falls~~ Die Summe
~~das ich ob~~ einen ich
Lies ich ~~wolle~~ einen aus. 2
d. + m. Kl. + Biene Wolf
~~das~~ das sich im Klee
versteckt.
im Klee ~~ist es~~ zu laus
(das ist im Klee zu laus)

~~falls einer~~ Lies ich aus
einen aus
im Klee bei sich zu laus.

224 I've nothing
(861) else to Grieg

Befrag die Summe

hergans ich
eines
Tölle's mäh - beflag die
Summe.
(Lies ich Tölle einen aus) -
ob du zu ob Jemand
dazu (dabei) fehlt
d. h. m. K. + Brüsewolf,
das das Klee

v. d. j. eines
sagt es aus) Schaum
zeigt es an
Ehrlich.
ob jemand
ungenau
die S. Zeigt
falls einen ihr vergass
Ehrlich jemand ungezählt
das drei Klee zu 26.
Tölle.

Es kommt das aufschaufeln
Meer,
ereicht den ~~Küsten~~ Beach - und ~~Felsen~~ - erreicht
sie die Füße
Strand ~~sich~~ ~~sein~~ Schaum
Schaben ~~Hut~~ ~~Hut~~ aus
Fahrzeiten, ~~aus~~ ~~Sicht~~ Verschiedenen
→ * sie mit einem - Lenkt
ihr Weib, mein Herz,
Empfinden Ihnen - und nichts
Schaff - ~~Leo dem~~ Feind - Knapp
~~Vehikel~~ da sah's ein ~~Lei dem~~ Freund -
~~Kuddl~~ festen Raum mit Floß
mit Essensplan
Und trägt
Vehikel mit ~~Essen~~ Fahrplan
und Existenz Bedürfnissen
~~Daten~~ das Kaff
und trägt ~~aus~~ ihn einen
Sodann (zu Gott beten -

Schmückt jedes Haus mit
Flor und ~~Reben~~ Zapfen
und ~~trägt daraus~~ eilet mit
~~mit~~ für Gott
und Kreutel ~~zum Tanz~~ - für Gott -
~~tragt~~
für Gott - einen mit sich
heraus

1147

Hundert Jahre spaeter
Keiner kennt den Ort
Agonie, die dort geherrscht
Friedengleich erstarrt

Unkraut blieb als Sieger stehn
Fremde buchstabierten
Ein verlassenes Epitaph
Im Voruebergehn.

Zu den Sommerfeldern
Kehrt zurueck der Wind
Der Instinkt entdeckt den Schluessel
Der dem Sinn entfiel -

Von den Sommerfeldern
Kennt der Wind die Spur
Der Instinkt entdeckt den Schluessel
Den der Sinn verlor -

Wind aus Sommerfeldern
Kommt auf ihre Spur
Der Instinkt entdeckt den Schluessel
Den der Sinn verlor -

Von den Sommerwiesen
[Bleistiftentwurf auf einem Kuechenzettel]

Die Bibel ist ein alter Schmoeker - Waelzer
Von verblichenen Maennern verfasst
Auf Anregung heiliger Geister -
Themen - Bethlehem -
Eden - die einstige Heimstatt -
Satan - der ~~Kommandant~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Brigadier -
Judas - der grosse ~~Betrueger~~ - Schuldner
David - der Troubadour -
Suende - ~~vorsintflutiger Abgrund~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ein Abgrund von Rang vorstehender
Vor dem man andere warnt -
"Glaeubige" Knaben sind sehr allein -
Andere Knaben "verirrt"
Haette das Lied ~~bezaubernde Toene~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ begeisternde Tone - ~~begeisternde Ton~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ einen schmetternden Saenger -
Alle Knaben kaemen gerannt -
Orpheus Predigt hat gefesselt -
Sie hat nicht verdammt -

Obtaining but our own Extent
In whatsoever Realm -
'Twas Christ's own personal Expanse
That bore him from the Tomb -

Das eigene Mass nur wird gewaehrt
In jeglichem Bereich -
's war Christi eigene Dimension,
Die ihn vom Grab befreit -

don't include ?

Es geht zum Himmel!
Ich weiss nicht wann -
Frag bitte auch nicht wie!
Ich selber bin zu sehr erstaunt -
Die Antwort faellt mir schwer!
Es geht zum Himmel!
Wie leer das klingt!
Und doch wird es geschehn
So sicher wie die Herden nachts
Heimwaerts zum Hirten gehn!

Vielleicht gehst Du auch hin!
Wer weiss?
Bist Du als Erster dort,
Dann halt fuer mich ein Plaetzchen frei
Dicht bei den Zwein die ich verlor -
Ich brauchte nur das kleinste Kleid
Und ~~etwas~~ Krone reicht -
Du weisst, das Aeussere ist uns gleich
Wenn wir nach Hause gehn -

Ich freu mich, dass ich nicht dran glaub
Es naehm den Atem mir -
Ich saeh auch gern noch etwas mehr
Von dieser Erde hier!
Ich freu mich, dass sie dran geglaubt
Die ich nie wieder fand
Seit ich im Herbst am Nachmittag
Sie in der Erde liess.g.

Lay this Laurel on the One
Too intrinsic for Renown -
Laurel - vail your deathless tree -
Him you chasten, that is He!

2.

Pflanzt den Lorbeer jenem ein
Fern dem Ruhm und in sich rein -
Lorbeer - traure du vielmehr -
Den du zuechtigst, das ist Er!

Deckt mit diesen
~~Bergt in~~ Lorbeer ~~Einen~~ nun
~~Unerreichba~~r fuer den Ruhm - zu unfehlbaren (unfehlbaren)
Lorbeer - traure du vielmehr -
Den du laeuterst, das ist Er! zu verborgen

EMILY DICKINSON

1058

Bloom - is Result - to meet a Flower
And casually glance
Would cause one scarcely to suspect
The minor Circumstance

Assisting in the Bright Affair
So intricately done
Then offered as a Butterfly
To the Meridian -

To pack the Bud - oppose the Worm -
Obtain its right of Dew -
Adjust the Heat - elude the Wind -
Escape the prowling Bee

Great Nature not to disappoint
Awaiting her that Day -
To be a Flower, is profound
Responsibility -

EMILY DICKINSON (585)

Ich seh gern wie er Meilen schluckt -
Und Täler schnell verschlingt -
Und seinen Durst im Stehen stillt -
Dann mit gewandtem Schritt

Von steilen Höhen Abstand hält
Und ungenierten Blicks
Am Strassenrand in Hütten stiert -
Dann einen Steinbruch schält

Bis er ihm um die Rippen passt
Und sich hineinbugsiert
Ein Klagelied ertönen lässt
Mit grausigem Gestöhn -
Und dann sich selbst zu Tale hetzt -

Wiehernd wie Donnerhall -
Dann - pünktlich wie ein Stern zuletzt -
Fromm und erhaben dazustehn
Vor seinem eigenen Stall.

ED 244

It is easy to work when the soul is at play -

But when the soul is in pain -

The hearing him put his playthings up

Makes work difficult - then

It is simple, to ache in the Bone, or the Rind -

But Gimblets - among the nerve -

Mangle daintier - terribler -

Like a Panther in the Glove -

EMILY DICKINSON (1452)

Your thoughts don't have words every day
They come a single time
Like signal esoteric sips
Of the communion Wine
Which while you taste so native seems
So easy so to be
You cannot comprehend its price
Nor its infrequency

Dir fallen die Worte nicht täglich ein
Sie kommen zur eigenen Zeit
Wie Schlucke von geweihtem Wein
Bedeutsam dargereicht
Der im Geschmack so hiesig scheint
So einfach so zu sein
Dass du nicht seinen Preis begreifst
Noch seine Seltenheit

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The hearing him put his playthings up
Makes work difficult - then -

It is simple, to ache in the Bone, or the Rind -
But Gimblets - among the nerve -
Mangle daintier -terribler -
Like a Panther in the Glove -

Die Arbeit ist leicht, wenn die Seele spielt -
Doch wenn sie leiden muss -
Und man hört sie ihr Spielzeug beiseite tun -
Dann macht die Arbeit Verdruss -

Schmerz ertragen ist leicht in Rinde und Bein -
Doch der Bohrer im Nervenbereich
Verstümmelt gründlicher - peinlicher -
Einem Panther im Handschuh gleich -

EMILY DICKINSON (244)

It is easy to work when the soul is at play -
But when the soul is in pain -
The hearing him put his playthings up
Makes work difficult - then -

It is simple, to ache in the Bone, or the Rind -
But Gimblets - among the nerve -
Mangle daintier -terribler -
Like a Panther in the Glove -

Die Arbeit ist leicht, wenn die Seele spielt -
Doch wenn sie leiden muss -
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Doch der Bohrer im Nervenbereich
Verstümmelt gründlicher - peinlicher -
Einem Panther im Handschuh gleich -

EMILY DICKINSON (1677)

On my volcano grows the Grass
A meditative spot -
An acre for a Bird to choose
Would be the General thought -

How red the fire rocks below -
How insecure the sod
Did I disclose
Would populate with awe my solitude.

Mit Gras bedeckt ist mein Vulkan -
Ein andachtsvoller Ort -
Das ideale Vogelheim
So meinten andere dort -

Wie rot das Feuer drunter schwelt -
Wie sich der Boden hebt
Gäb ich's bekannt
~~Erschüttert wär die Einsamkeit belebt~~.

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Wie rot das Feuer drunter schwelt -
Wie sich der Boden hebt
Gäb ich's bekannt
Erschüttert wär die Einsamkeit belebt.

ED1727

Springt einst der Deckel mir vom Kopf
Und lässt das Hirn heraus
Dann geht der Kerl wo er hingehört -
Kennt ohne mich sich aus,

Und die Welt - falls sie zuschaut - sieht und staunt
Wie weit vom Heimatsort
Der Sinn zu leben fähig ist -
Die Seele - längst schon dort.

If ever the lid gets off my head
And lets the brain away
The fellow will go where he belonged -
Without a hint from me,

And the world - if the world be looking on -
Will see how far from home
It is possible for sense to live
The soul there - all the time.

ED1695

Es gibt die Einsamkeit im Raum
Die Einsamkeit im Meer
Die Einsamkeit im Tod, all dies
Scheint wie Geselligkeit
Verglichen mit dem ~~tieferen Grund~~
~~Polarer Heimlichkeit~~
Der Seele bei sich eingekehrt -
~~Einzig~~ - Unendlich - Sein.

There is a solitude of space
A solitude of sea
A solitude of death, but these
Society shall be
Compared with that profounder site
That polar privacy
A soul admitted to itself -
Finite infinity.

Bluehn ist Ergebnis. Wenn ein Blick
Die Bluete fluechtig streift
Vermutet man kaum, dass vielleicht
Noch etwas nebenbei anderes
Mitwirkt bei diesem bunten Spiel
~~Subtilster Einfachheit~~
Am Ende als ein Schmetterling
Dem Meridian geweiht -

Die Knospe bahn - dem Wurm zum Trotz -
Ihr Recht auf Tau beziehn -
Die Waerme wie den Wind bestehn -
Dem Bienenstrolch entfliehn -

~~Bereit zu dienen der~~
Nicht zu enttaeuschen die Natur -
~~Ihr dienen jederzeit~~ -
Das Bluetesein ist ein zutiefst
Verantwortliches Sein -

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Brigitte M. Goldstein

GERTRUD KOLMAR (1894–1943): GERMAN-JEWISH POETESS

"All about her radiated a great stillness and at the same time one sensed a profound inner restlessness." These words by Hilde Benjamin, the post-war minister of justice in East Germany and the last person who saw Gertrud Kolmar alive, encapsulate the very essence of the poet and her work. Quiet languor, even resignation, and wrenching turmoil of the soul nourished the stream of emotions that inspired some of the most beautiful, original poetic imagery in modern German literature. Nelly Sachs said of Kolmar, "Probably one of the greatest lyrical poets" with "visions beyond all limits." Yet her rightful place in the constellation of great poets, where the renowned German-Jewish poetesses Nelly Sachs and Else Lasker Schüler reside, has so far not been assured. In this country Kolmar's name is known to those with an interest in Jewish women's literature, but the language barrier makes her work largely inaccessible. Some have taken note of her because of her tragic death at the hands of the Nazis or because she fits the category of lost women writers. But these facts alone do not justify Kolmar's claim to the ranks of the great poets of this century. It is her work that stands as testimony to an extraordinary creative genius which, however, defies categories.

Who then was, or is, Gertrud Kolmar? What is known of her life is fairly easily told. She was born Gertrud Käthe Chodziesner (Kolmar was the *nom de plume* she chose for herself) on December 10, 1894 in Berlin; she perished at Auschwitz sometime after February 1943. She came from an upper middle class Jewish family, rather typical of the Wilhelmian German *Bildungsbürgertum*, or educated bourgeoisie, in taste and lifestyle. Her father, Ludwig Chodziesner, was a prominent defense lawyer who gained renown at the turn of the century as defense counsel in several sensational trials that touched all the way to the Imperial family. Her mother, Elise Schoenfliess, hailed from the great Berlin Jewish families of Schoenfliess, Benjamin, Galliner, Lindenheim, Wissing, Crzellitzer, and Hirschfeld, which Gershom Scholem chronicled in his essay about Walter Benjamin's ancestors and far-flung "clan." Walter Benjamin was Kolmar's first cousin and an early admirer of her poetry.

Gertrud Kolmar showed an early talent for foreign languages and she became a certified language teacher—she excelled particularly in

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French which she spoke with native fluency, but also read in English and Russian. She was at various times employed as private governess and as teacher of deaf/mute children. During the First World War, she was attached to a prisoner of war camp as interpreter and reader of the correspondence of French soldiers. At about this time she had the love affair which ended in great unhappiness and became the source of her most hauntingly beautiful verses. She never married, and from 1928 on she lived in the house of her parents in a Berlin suburb. It fell to her to care for her terminally ill mother who died in 1932.

When the Nazi noose tightened around the Jews of Germany and relatives and friends left the country one by one, she chose to remain with her ailing, octogenarian father. In 1939, the family residence had to be sold and she and her father moved into crammed quarters in a depressed area of Berlin where they existed in ghetto conditions. From sometime in summer 1941 on, Gertrud Kolmar was performing forced labor presumably in a war materials factory. The father was deported to Theresienstadt in September 1942 where he died under unknown circumstances. She herself was caught in the Gestapo sweep to make Berlin *judenrein*, the infamous *Fabrikaktion*, on February 27 and 28, 1943, and was transported to Auschwitz.

A telegram from the SS command at Auschwitz to SS headquarters in Oranienburg states: Re: transport of Jewish armaments workers. On March 5 and 7 arrived the following Jewish prisoner transports: Transport from Berlin, arrival March 5, 1943, total 1128 Jews—389 men and 96 women assigned to labor (Buna); 151 men and 492 women and children received special treatment (*sonderbehandelt*). Transport from Berlin, arrival March 7, 1943; total 690 including 25 prisoners in protective custody—153 men and 25 protected prisoners and 65 women assigned to labor (Buna). Thirty men and 417 women and children received special treatment.

What Gertrud Kolmar's fate was can only be surmised. Nothing was heard from her again. But in the forty-eight years of life that were granted her, she created a poetic work unique in German literature. She has been compared to other German women poets, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff and Else Lasker Schüler, but hers is a singular voice that is hers alone and defies comparisons and established categories. It is the inner voice of a woman, a Jewish woman, that speaks in nearly five hundred poems, in the novel *Eine jüdische Mutter*, the short story *Susanna*, and a collection of letters written to her sister, in Switzerland, during the years of her captivity in Berlin from 1938 to 1943.

The richness of this inner life, the depth of emotion, the wrenching, idiosyncratic poetic style, characteristic even of her prose writings move and batter us and in the end lift us to elysian heights in the real-

ization that we have been granted a glimpse into the soul of an extraordinary human being and have been enriched by it. She, who was so demure, even diffident, in her dealings with people, who lived behind a "wall of modesty and reserve," she opened her inner self mercilessly and completely to her poetry. She makes this clear in the opening poem of the collection *Weibliches Bildnis* (Portrait of a Woman). At the beginning of the poem *Die Dichterin* (The Poetess), we read this almost timorous plea:

> You hold me in your hands completely
> My heart, in your fist, beats like a little bird's.
> You, reader, take care and remember,
> You are turning over a human soul with every page,
> Though to you it may be made of paper only.

Gertrud Kolmar's work is the work of a master of language and a skilled wordcrafter. Language in her hands becomes the potter's clay or the sculptor's stone which she bends and shapes to her will. She once likened herself to a cake baker who gathers all the ingredients of a cake in a bowl, mixes, kneads, and shapes them into a dough that is then put in the oven to bake. Another apt metaphor may be that of the virtuoso; she played the German language with supreme command of its intricacies, its nuances, but the music that welled from inside her soul is completely her own.

Fifty years after her tragic death, this great poet's fame lingers in the shadows. A disturbing thought comes to mind. Could those who destroyed her life have succeeded as well in negating her claim to immortality by virtue of having destroyed an audience for her work? Does she inhabit a universe alone where most readers of German are unwilling to follow? Could it be that the language she loved so much, the language that was her Stradivarius, the funnel through which her genius found expression, should now have become the stumbling block to the recognition that is her due? Other twentieth-century Jewish poets creating in the medium of the German language—Paul Celan, Else Lasker-Schüler, Nelly Sachs, particularly—have received honor and praise, their poetry is featured in German textbooks and school anthologies. Could it be that it is easier in these three outstanding poets to separate the poet from the work? Hard as it may seem to imagine, is it perhaps easier to gloss over their Jewishness since all three somehow eluded the murderers? No easy, conclusive answer, presents itself.

A work such as Gertrud Kolmar's must be approached with a receptive frame of mind, a willingness to be drawn into the inner world of a Jewish woman. For to open Kolmar's lyric work is to enter a private, nocturnal realm, a mental landscape at once lush and desolate, a fantasy

world filled with passionate longing, erotic obsession, with the sorrows and pains of love, and with moments of abandon and ecstatic bliss. It is cluttered with fabled creatures, historic personages and scenes imagined—the French Revolution and the admired figure of Robespierre, the man of virtue—and always, and again and again, there is the woman's cry for the child that is denied her, the yearning for fulfillment in love. Above all, and this must be emphasized, it is the world of a Jewish woman. Jewishness is a skin that cannot simply be sloughed off, she once said. Not only toward the end of her life when it was thrust upon her, but throughout her life, she regarded her fate identical with the fate of the Jewish people. (She was the only one in her family with an early appreciation of Zionism.)

Even in her very early work, she drew the parallels. Again in *Weibliches Bildnis* (Portrait of a Woman), there is the poem *Die Jüdin* (The Jewess), the despised exile, the outcast, longing to return to her "own ancient land" and the ancient traditions of her people. A clear line runs from this to the sentiments that filled her in the last stage of her life. Jewishness and historicity are inextricably intertwined in Kolmar, being Jewish means to be part of that chain of being that stretches through millennia back to the days of the Patriachs. Thus the poem:

I am a stranger.
Since the world does not dare approach me,
I want to be girded with massive towers,
Towers capped with steep, gray stone
That stretch into the clouds.

Never will you discover the iron key
To the musty stairway
Reeling upward into itself,
Like the otter's flat, scaly head
Stretches toward the light.

The fortress now crumbles like a rock
Washed by a thousand-year old stream.
In its gouged-out caverns
Birds perch with coarse, wrinkled necks.

Silt trickles down in the vaulted space,
And lizards with spotted breasts cower in the sand.
Oh, that I could prepare a journey
To explore my own, very ancient land!

Perhaps I can still discover somewhere
The Chaldeans' buried city of Ur,
Dagon, the idol, the Hebrews' tent,
Or the trumpet of Jericho,

Which laid waste those haughty walls.
Now it blackens in the depths,
Tattered and bent;
I too once drew of the breath
That hurled forth that shattering blast.

In coffers, buried in dust
The noble vestments lie dead,
Faded lustre of the wings of doves
And the pall of Behemoth.

Stunned, I robe myself.
Though my stature is slight,
And I am far removed
From the splendor and might of those days,
Its resplendent fullness stiffens around me,
Forms a shelter, and I begin to grow in.

My aspect appears strange,
Unrecognizable even to myself
As I already stood before Rome,
Before the Carthaginian gate;
A sudden flame kindles in me the altar
Of the judgess and her faithful band.

From the hidden vessel of gold
A painful blaze flows through my blood.
And a song calls me by names
That are fitting once more.

The heavens call out colorful signs.
You turn your face inward:
Those who stroll about me, withdrawn
In the company of the desert fox,
See it not.

Gigantic pillars of wind sway and tumble,
Green as nephrit, coral red,
About the towers God allows to decay
And stand for thousands of years.

From 1933 on Kolmar's poetry becomes less exclusively personal. For the first time, current outside events become sources of her work. This was the year she created a collection of poems she called *Das Wort der Stummen* (The Word of the Mute) in which the theme of Jewish suffering becomes a chilling augury of things to come. The poems like *Im Lager* (In the Camp), *Die Gefangenen* (The Prisoners), *Der Misshandelte* (The Maltreated), *Anno Domini 1933,* and *Die jüdische Mutter* depict in prescient detail that which we, from the vantage point of hindsight, know to

have come true. Again her obsession with the fate of the Jewish people elicits some of the most powerful poetic creations that rattle at the shackles of language. Love, anger, and hatred, pour forth in the poem *Wir Juden* (We Jews) like stored up waters gushing from a dam flung open.

The poem begins with an expression of tenderest love for the martyred Jews, her people, and ends with an outburst of bitter hatred for the enemy.

Only night listens: I love you, I love my people,
I want to berth you in my arms, warm and tight,
As a wife holds the husband standing at the pillar and post,
As the mother does not forsake the son spurned and reviled.

When the gag in your mouth muffles your bloody cry,
When your arms are cruelly bound,
Then let me ring out the call
That falls into the shaft of eternity,
Let me be the extended hand that
Touches God's heaven on high.

The poet then compares the various nations of Europe and the accomplishments that define their civilizations. The stanza ends with the shattering line: "Only we, we were molded by the gallows and the rack!"

The reader is taken aback here, tempted to call a halt to so much self-deprecation. Not all has been suffering and pain! What of Judaism's great, fundamental contribution to the civilizations of the world? Surely she is aware of it, but here she stomps on relentlessly, reciting her bitter litany and offering herself as solace—"When the bitter hour is nigh, I will rise here and now, will be your triumphal gate through which pass your torments." Defiance is already a source of strength, the cry of battle.

I shall not kiss the arm the blazon scepter swelled,
Nor the idol's knee of ore, its foot of clay in bitter times
Oh, that I could lift my voice,
Like a flaming torch in the dark desert world,
And proclaim the ancient cry: Justice! Justice! Justice!

In the last stanza the poet recapitulates the passionate evocation of love of the beginning and ends exhorting the downtrodden: "So cast your lot with the lowly, be weak, embrace your sorrow! Until one day your weary wander shoe will crush the mighty's neck."

The historical suffering of the Jews is also the theme of the poem *Ewiger Jude* (Eternal Jew) of the same collection, which contains the line: "Ah, the sign, the yellow sign—Stitched to my rags by their piercing gaze!"

In this period Kolmar wrote her only novel, *Eine jüdische Mutter,* a harrowing tale of a Jewish widow whose four-year-old child is violated by a rapist and dies. This is a complex narrative of a mother's obsessive love for her child which ultimately conflicts with her erotic obsession for a handsome, but shallow, "Aryan" type.

The mother's search for the unknown perpetrator sets her on a self-destructive path through a cold, impersonal urban landscape. Kolmar paints an evocative picture of Berlin of the late 1920s marked by poverty, decadence, and cultural pretensions—bleak tenements, a bourgeois dinner party, Berlin's homosexual culture, glittering shops along the Kurfürstendamm form the background for some of the most indelible scenes. This is a world peopled with working-class weekend gardeners, middle-class cultural snobs, transvestites, various artistic types, an ex-Spanish dancer turned hostess with a secret, a sly soothsayer, a Jewish lawyer who rigidly clings to the rule of law, a piano-playing Nazi type.

Kolmar is at her best when she peels away the layers of outward restraint from the marginal figure at the center and bares the inner soul of a woman, wounded by this callous universe. The style is a contrast between often painfully detailed, precise descriptions of the surroundings, of mechanical, quotidian activities and merely brief hints, sparse sketches without background or foreground of almost biblical directness—"And she saw" is a frequent phrase. People appear suddenly and out of nowhere. They are just there. Thus she alternates between material description and psychological dissection, but everything is there to reveal the inner soul of the woman and sustain the dramatic tension moving inexorably toward the shattering end.

The deeper meaning of this tale, however, is a bitter denunciation of the so-called German-Jewish symbiosis. Kolmar mercilessly demolishes the great, at one time cherished, myth and exposes it as a sham, a love affair that was always one-sided and always unrequited. Whatever issued from this union was callously trampled and violated, like the child born of the union between this Jewish woman and an "Aryan."

All of these works, dating from the beginning of the 1930s, already express the defiance that became so pronounced in the last years of Kolmar's life. This did not mean childish foot-stomping recalcitrance; no it was a defiance through submission to the inevitable fate that steeled her determination not to succumb to despair when unbearable living conditions, forced labor, humiliation, uncertainty, loneliness became her daily lot.

Conquering fate by embracing it. This was how she prepared herself for the unknown. In a letter to her sister, dated December 15, 1942, she wrote: "My friend Dr. H., who was a Spinoza scholar, spoke to me some time ago about the concept of freedom of the human will amidst conditions of unfreedom. I told him that I understood this very well

from my own experiences. For even though I was not free to accept or reject the work in the factory I was ordered to do (I had no choice but to acquiesce, to carry it out) but what I did have was the inner freedom to approach it either with a negative or a positive attitude, to do it either willingly or unwillingly. At the moment when I assumed in my heart a positive stance, the pressure was lifted from me. I was determined to view this task as a learning experience, and to learn as much as I could. In doing so I became free in the midst of my unfreedom."

She took great pride in her ability to handle the heavy, unaccustomed work at an anonymous machine (the nature of the machine or what it produced is never described). But she gave veiled hints that she knew this was not yet the end of all suffering. She knew more was to come. In the same letter, she went on: "This is how I want to approach my ultimate fate—be it as tall as a tower, as black and oppressive as a cloud. Even though I don't know yet what it will be, I have already said yes to this fate—I have given myself over to it beforehand. Therefore, I can be certain that it will not crush me. It will find me neither meek nor cowed. [. . .] Somehow it will turn out that this fate is mine, that I was born to suffer and overcome it. And I shall grow in my innermost being because of it."

In retrospect it appears almost ironic that she should have felt that she could only prepare herself mentally for the unknown ahead, for what she came to see as the fulfillment of her historic destiny as a Jew, if she fled the company of those near her, those, though strangers, who shared the same fate. She closed her ears and hardened her heart against what she described as the incessant laments that could only weaken her resolve to remain strong. She girded herself now with those massive towers against her fellow sufferers and thus fortified, she prepared herself for the path of those forebears who had mounted the stake and the executioner's block without flinching. These were the examples she wanted to follow, these were her solace and inspiration.

On October 26, 1941, she wrote: "Believe me, whatever may come, I will not give myself over to unhappiness and despair. I know I have to go the way for which I was destined . . . So many of us have wandered along this road in the course of the centuries—why should I want to go a different way?" Even the thought of emigrating, had it still been possible, she pushed from herself by then: "Such emigration would be merely something forced on me by external circumstances; I don't want to flee from what in my heart I know I must do. Until now I did not know my inner strength, and recognizing it makes me very happy. . . ."

Again and again she returned in her letters to the theme of submitting to the inevitable while refusing to be crushed: "And yet I feel as if even my current life has a purpose, as if it was up to me alone to endow the seemingly senseless with meaning." (November 25, 1941)

Kolmar's capacity for suffering—at times she betrayed a marked tendency for glorying in anguish and pain—had always been the well-spring of her creativity. Her most beautiful verses had been inspired by unhappy love:

> And were I destined to die with my child's first cry,
> Were I to know with certainty, I would still bless my pain,
> And bless would I the trumpet that roused me to suffer and to weep,
> And bless I would the trumpeter who by my side did sleep.

She had been unlucky in love in her life, but she had always guarded against disappointment. On February 2, 1942, she explained to her sister: ". . . I have known great unhappiness; I have suffered the deepest pain and yet I loved this pain as a woman about to become a mother loves the pain with which she blesses her child. I always foresaw everything, saw it coming in advance; and I knew the price I would have to pay. So there were no disappointments."

Denial, clinging to illusions were far from her nature. She recognized the reality and made herself invulnerable through sheer force of will. The pain was all inside and found its outlet only in her poetry.

During those last years of hardship in Berlin, she closed herself off to the present and built her own reality nurtured by the past. "I feel closeness only to what was in my earlier life. All that which is happening to me now I perceive as unreal, distant. Even though I may not actually be dreaming, I am not really awake either. I wander about as in a world of in-between, a world that has no part of me, and of which I have no part." (June 2, 1941)

With few hours of free time, she still continued her creative work. She found solace in the study of the Hebrew Bible and flung herself with great energy into learning Hebrew so she could read it in the original. She even tried her hand at composing poetry in Hebrew and was very proud of her accomplishments—albeit none of it survived.

The Scriptures were also one of the sources for her last surviving work, *Susanna.* The basic theme of this short story, written in "nocturnal bouts with the angel" in the winter of 1939/40, is, like *A Jewish Mother,* Jewish existence in an alien, friendless world. But the shtetl Jews of this story are not so much alienated from the surrounding world as they are alienated from themselves. The central character is Susanna, a young woman of breathtaking, exotic beauty, who, though the object of admiration by many young men in town, is socially unacceptable because she is "different." She suffers from melancholy, in the modern idiom she was mentally unstable, and is, therefore, shunned by the small town society.

As told by Kolmar, *Susanna* is a prose poem with strong echoes of the biblical book *The Song of Songs*—the lyrical style, an ardent meeting

of the lovers at a window lattice, and the abandoned woman wandering through the streets in search of her lover. The writing of this story coincided with her study of Hebrew and the name Susanna is most likely derived from the Hebrew phrase *kshoshanah bein hakhokhamin*, "a lily among thorns" which is what this Susanna truly was.

The narrative centers on Susanna's tragic love for a young man, who at the behest of his mother leaves the shtetl for Berlin to pursue a "suitable" marriage and a respected professional career. Susanna dies on the railroad tracks leading to Berlin, a place of which she has only the vaguest conception, when she tries to follow her lover.

This story too can be read on different levels and be given different meanings. It has been suggested, for instance, by some German interpreters that Susanna represents the free-spirited artist encaged by bourgeois morality and conventionality. But Kolmar was never politically engaged and such questions did not occupy her. The circumstances under which the story was "given birth" (Kolmar's favorite metaphor for the creative process) and the poet's frame of mind taken together make clear that at the heart of *Susanna* lies the relationship of the Jews with the wider world, their aspiration to be accepted in this world, even at the cost of sacrificing their Jewishness. Susanna, a naive, ardent child-woman, a beautiful princess who delights in the thought of being a descendant of the biblical kings David and Solomon, yet naive and without forethought, is the personification of the pristine Jewish spirit. The young men of the town flirt with her, they admire her, they even woo her, but there can be no consummation.

"She can never marry," Susanna's guardian tells the narrator, a teacher hired to be her companion and governess. All suitors must be kept away. As nubile as she may be, Susanna is condemned to remain childless, she must not be permitted to have offspring. Her exuberant spirit must be contained. When she dies, the Jewish spirit, in its purest form, dies with her. The messenger of her death is a deformed young man, representative of the impoverished Eastern Jews, whose ardent, if distant, love for her had been unconditional.

Kolmar is here at her lyrical, elegiac best. The scenes and images associated with Susanna are daubed in soft, bright colors, evocative of sweet, biblical fragrances, placed in jarring contrast to the barren, snow-blanketed landscape surrounding the town, ominous mountains looming in the distance like evil giants, and somewhere over the horizon, at the end of the railroad track, Berlin, the capital of assimilation.

Susanna is not merely the quaint depiction of small town Jewish life at the border where Western and Eastern Jewry meet. The story's very essence is the predicament of the Jews in the modern world, a predicament that had become inescapable at the time of Kolmar's writing.

This explains the somewhat puzzling lead-in which at first seems to

have very little to do with the actual story. The narrator, a teacher, no longer young and wearied by an unfulfilled life, finds herself in a hotel room, her suitcases packed, waiting for an affidavit from Plymouth, Massachusetts, that would permit her to emigrate. While she is waiting, an obituary in the newspaper, which she happens to read, brings back the memory of events that had taken place years before. The end of *Susanna* does not recapitulate the beginning. The reader never learns what happens to the waiting woman. Did the affidavit ever come? The story does not return to that hotel room. All we can presume is that she still sits and waits as the story fades out.

The narrator of *Susanna* has very strong autobiographical features. She is a teacher and governess, unmarried, and approaching an age when she is no longer young. But Kolmar did not passively sit and wait for the day she knew would come. She prepared herself and she never completely stopped writing, even under extreme constraints of time and place. She always read new and old works: Thomas Mann, Rilke, Tolstoy, D. H. Lawrence, Buber; and always the Bible and Hebrew poets like Achad Ha'am, Chaim Nachman Bialik, and anecdotes connected with them. She never stopped exercising her mind, even as her world became more and more mindless and chaotic.

The day for which she had prepared herself came on February 27, 1943, when those Jews who still remained in Berlin then were arrested in the factories and transported to the "East"—whether she knew the true meaning of this euphemism, or how much she actually knew about the ultimate destiny of the Jews will never be known; her letters were, and had to be, silent on anything that touched on the Nazi regime, the war, or the treatment of the Jews.

Her last letter was dated February 21, 1943. She discussed mainly family matters, and chatted about some of the sources of creative inspiration and indicated that she was working on another prose story. Nothing in this letter hints at the impending end. But this does not mean that she did not know, only that she could not speak about it.

The exact circumstances of Gertrud Kolmar's death are not known. She once wrote admiringly about a colleague at the factory: "They can break him, but they cannot bend him." On first thought this statement may seem paradoxical; it should be the other way around. But in Gertrud Kolmar's universe it makes perfect sense. Like the Tartar-thistle in the parable Tolstoy tells in *Hadji Murat* (which she read in the original Russian)—the once beautiful thistle, whose stalks had been mangled, its flowers soiled, and which was tattered and torn as if parts of its body had been severed, its guts pulled out, an arm lopped off, and an eye gouged out, yet it stood erect, defying man who had destroyed all his brethren—Gertrud defied her oppressors. They can destroy the body, but the spirit will never be crushed. We can be sure that she faced

her murderers unbent, with a brave heart and head erect. Long before her death she had written a poem that may serve as a fitting epitaph:

A Woman, Contemplating (*Die Sinnende*)

When I'm dead my name will float
Still above the world for a while.
When I'm dead may I still exist
On fences somewhere beyond the fields.
For soon I shall be gone
As water oozes from a nubby jug,
A fairy's secretly forfeited gift,
A puff of smoke from a speeding train.

When I'm dead, my heart and loin will give way,
What once held and moved me will decay,
Only my quiet hands, turned upward, like strangers, will be placed beside me.
My brow the mouth of a cave will be,
Wherein stars gather at dawn,
And gray shrouds hang heavy in huge folds
From the illumined vaults of shadow stones.

When I die, I want to rest,
Turn my face inward,
And close it like a child closes a picture box
It has contemplated for too long.
And sleep shall I, good and tight,
While I am still a flickering image of what once I was:
A waxen light for the wakening in the second world.

Like the Jewish mother and Susanna, Kolmar does not occupy a secure niche in the world, she is outside the mainstream of literature, she belongs to no school, she was never part of the bohemian café world of 1920s literary Berlin. She lived and created quietly far removed from this world. She loved the theater and especially modern dance, but her world was in a quiet suburb with her beloved dogs, her flowers and garden, and long solitary walks.

The words Joseph Brodsky once wrote about the Russian poet Anna Akhmatova may be even more apt for Gertrud Kolmar: "[She] belongs to the category of poets who have neither genealogy nor discernible 'development.' She is the kind of poet that simply 'happened', that arrives in the world with an already established diction and [. . .] own unique sensibility. She came fully equipped, and she never resembled anyone." Marina Tsvetaeva, another great Russian woman poet and like Akhmatova a contemporary of Kolmar, though they are not likely to have known of each other, made a distinction between poets with history and poets without history. The latter she called pure lyric poets whose works

reflect what the poet goes through and suffers. This kind of poet has no agenda, poetry is solely the record of human dreams and feelings. The soul and mentality of these poets is formed in their mother's womb, says Tsvetaeva, they come into the world fully formed, they do not need to learn anything for they know everything from the moment they are born.

Gertrud Kolmar was such a lyrical poet, a poet who simply "happened." Although critics have thought to detect the influence of Rilke in her work, she herself has stated that she came to Rilke, whose works she greatly admired, too late to have been influenced by him. (In one of her last letters to her sister she writes about reading Rilke's Duino Elegies; her promise to share her thoughts, alas, remained unfulfilled.) The one commonality with Rilke she acknowledged was a strong affinity for the French symbolist poets. However one may look at her work, and it seems in the nature of criticism to look for antecedents, to establish connections with the familiar, to compare and evaluate, any true appreciation of Kolmar's work can only come from taking into account the profound Jewishness of her thinking and feeling. But Gertrud Kolmar is not a noteworthy poet on account of the circumstances of her death. She does not deserve attention because she is a woman, nor because she is a Jewish woman, although these two factors nourish her work like the confluents of a mighty river. She is not remarkable merely among women poets or Jewish poets or women Jewish poets, or even German poets—she certainly is all this, but when all categorizing is done, her work stands on its own and will assure her immortality.

Little of her work was published in her lifetime, only three small volumes of her poetry appeared within a twenty-year interval, 1917 and 1938. The last publication, by a Jewish publishing house, gained her some critical acclaim and even brief fame among a Jewish readership, but the copies were soon confiscated and pulped when the Nazi regime shut down all Jewish presses. She declared herself unaffected by the lure of fame, but, at the same time, she harbored no doubts about her genuine talent and vocation as a poet. "Ich bin eine Dichterin ganz und gar"—"I am a poet with all my being." She knew that one day she would take her place in *Weltliteratur*, the literature of the world.

HIGHLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY

MATTHIAS CLAUDIUS

KRIEGSLIED

's ist Krieg! 's ist Krieg! O Gottes Engel, wehre
Und rede du darein!
's ist leider Krieg - und ich begehre
Nicht schuld daran zu sein!

Was sollt ich machen, wenn im Schlaf mit Graemen
Und blutig, bleich und blass
Die Geister der Erschlagnen zu mir kaemen
Und vor mir weinten, was?

Wenn wackre Maenner, die sich Ehre suchten,
Verstuemmelt und halb tot
Im Staub sich vor mir waelzten und mir fluchten
In ihrer Todesnot?

Wenn tausend, tausend Vaeter, Muetter, Braeute,
So gluecklich vor dem Krieg,
Nun alle elend, alle arme Leute,
Wehklagten ueber mich?

Wenn Hunger, boese Seuch und ihre Noeten
~~Freund~~, Freund und Feind ins Grab
Versammleten und mir zu Ehren kraehten
Von einer Leich herab?

Was huelf mir Kron und Land und Gold und Ehre?
Die koennten mich nicht freun!
's ist leider Krieg - und ich begehre
Nicht Schuld daran zu sein!

Dear Lola -

As you can see, I have only very few and minor criticisms. The overall impression is one of a very close approximation in feeling, tone, imagery, rhythm — it would be hard to improve on most of what you've done here. It's really a beautiful job.

AR 25164

Max and Lola Gruenthal Collection

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Box: 3 **Folder: 20**

EMILY DICKINSON (1677)

On my volcano grows the Grass
A meditative spot -
An acre for a Bird to choose
Would be the General thought -

How red the fire rocks below -
How insecure the sod
Did I disclose
Would populate with awe my solitude.

Mit Gras bedeckt ist mein Vulkan -
Ein andachtsvoller Ort -
Das ideale Vogelheim
So meinten andere dort -

Wie rot das Feuer drunter schwelt -
Wie sich der Boden hebt
~~Gäb ich's bekannt~~ Verriete ich's

EMILY DICKINSON (585)

Ich seh gern wie er Meilen schluckt -
Und Täler runterschlingt -
Und stehend sich an Tanks betrinkt -
Dann mit ~~geschicktem~~ Schritt -

Von steilen ~~Höhen~~ Abstand hält
Und ungenierten Blicks
~~Am~~ Strassenrand in Hütten späht -
Dann einen Steinbruch höhlt

Bis er ihm um die Rippen ~~geht~~
~~Dann~~ sich hineinbugsiert
Zugleich sein Heldenlos ~~besingt~~
Mit ~~grässlichem Gestöhn~~ -
Und dann sich selbst zu Tale hetzt -

Wiehernd wie Donnerhall -
Dann - pünktlich wie ein Stern zuletzt -
Fromm und erhaben dazustehn
Vor seinem eigenen Stall.

It is easy to work when the soul is at play -

But when the soul is in pain -

511

If you were coming in the Fall,
I'd brush the Summer by
With half a smile, and half a spurn,
As Housewives do, a Fly.

If I could see you in a year,
I'd wind the months in balls -
And put them each in separate Drawers,
For fear their numbers fuse -

If only Centuries, delayed,
I'd count them on my Hand,
Subtracting, till my fingers dropped
Into Van Dieman's Land.

If certain, when this life was out -
That yours and mine, should be
I'd toss it yonder, like a Rind,
And take Eternity -

2,

But, now, uncertain of the length
Of this, that is between,
It goads me like the Goblin Bee -
That will not state - its sting.

EMILY DICKINSON

511

Wenn du im Herbst kaemst, haette ich
Den Sommer ~~abgewehrt~~,
Wie Hausfraun es mit Fliegen tun,
Halb laechelnd, halb empoert.

Koennt' ich dich sehn in einem Jahr,
Ich ~~legte Mond fuer Mond~~ ~~Welle~~ jeden Mond
~~Wie Baelle - jeden in ein~~ Fach,
~~Aus Angst, sie mehrten sich.~~

Kaemst du Jahrhunderte zu spaet,
Die zaehlt' ich ~~wie im Spiel~~
~~Bis mir beim Abziehn von der Hand~~
~~Ein jeder Finger fiel!~~

Waer mir gewiss nach diesem Sein
Ein kuenftiges zu zweit -
~~Die alte Schale~~ wuerf' ich fort
Und waehlte Ewigkeit -

Doch ungewiss, wie lang es waehrt,
Was noch dazwischen ~~ist~~,
~~Plagt es mich wie die Biene, die~~
~~Nicht ansagt - wann sie sticht.~~

POEMS

1114

(Neue Ausgabe)
GEDICHTE

The largest Fire ever known
Occurs each Afternoon -
Discovered is without surprise
Proceeds without concern -
Consumes and no report to men
An Occidental Town,
Rebuilt another morning
To be burned down again

Der groesste (je bekannte ~~Brand~~
Bricht jeden Abend aus,
Wird taeglich unbestuerzt entdeckt,
Wirkt unbekuemmert fort, -
Verzehrt - und kein ~~Bericht~~ ergeht -
Die Stadt im Abendland,
Die, ~~andern~~ morgens neu erbaut,
~~Stets neu in Flammen steht.~~

There is another Loneliness
That many die without -
Not want of friend occasions it
Or circumstance of Lot

But nature, sometimes, sometimes thought
And whosoe it befall
Is reicher than could be revealed
By mortal numeral -

Es gibt ein andres Einsamsein,
~~Das mancher nie~~ gekannt, -
Nicht Freundschaftsmangel ist der Grund
Noch Schicksals Unbestand -

Natur ~~nur~~, manchmal, manchmal Geist,
Und wer dazu erwaehlt,
Ist reicher als die Ziffer zeigt,
Von Sterblichen gezaehlt.

Copy 2

608

mich fürchten! Wovor fürchtet ich mich?
~~Dem~~ Vorm Tod? Was tut mir der?
Der Pförtner an des Vaters Haus
erschreckt mich genau so viel wie mehr.

~~Dem~~ Vorm Leben? Das begreift mich ganz -
so bleibt der Furcht dabei -
in einem Dasein oder mein,
wie dem auch immer sei.

~~Der~~ Vor Auferstehung? Fürchtet sich
der Osten und ~~versteht~~ verwehrt
~~dem Tag die Strenge Stirn?~~
die Stirn dem Morgen? Ehe zwei
mein Königskind erlebt!

In Prosa sperrt man mich -
Wie man als Kind mich viel
In einen Schrank gesteckt hat -
Sie mochten mich gern"still".

Still! Keiner sah mein Hirn -
Wie sich's im Kreis bewegt -
Wird wohl ein Vogel auch in Haft
Fuer Hochverrat gelegt -

Er braucht zu wollen nur -
Leicht wie ein Stern schaut er
Herab auf die Gefangenschaft -
Und Lacht - Was brauch ich mehr -

. . . . . .

Homely Angels

agonized

Uniforms of Sweet

Accents & demeanours

to flaunt p. 31

the Censure 31

heart-skin 35

vital scarlet 40

gay, ghastly, Holiday 44

Cordiality of Death 46

Difference twixt Despair

& Fear 56

smart, Misery 85

Liberalised Courtesy

Some Hard for Sweetness

93

Iertatwo 11

Critical Essays 84

Buckingham: 2 Ok
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Dann sind Hayden
Jede der späteren Zeiten
als eine Linie die ihren
Die Leidenschaften
Hafen verbreiten.

The dying must hold on tight
The Rose to be dead
232

I've dropped my Pray'r
An Apt'tude for Bird
235

There is a Tone where
every Year -
And Communion is Noon
234

Revolution is the Pool 243

The Sepulchral Freight
The Cellars of the Soul
260

Agony is frugal 263
Not to Pity alone

liebe Lola, 17.4.2002

wie versprochen um nochmal offiziell die Nachricht vom freudigen Ereignis nebst einigen Extra-Fotos. Ja, das Leben ist voller Überraschungen – zum Glück, sonst würde man sich ja aufhängen wollen vor Langeweile!

Joseph Ashar ist ein sehr freundliches Geselle, lacht schon viel und weint sehr wenig. Und er ist wirklich zum Knuddeln!!

Ich hoffe, Du hast Dich von meinem

"Vorfall" inzwischen erholt und es geht
Dir gut. Wenn sich die Lage in der Welt
wieder etwas beruhigt hat und das Kind
wirklich sein Nomadenglück entdeckt haben
wird, wie ich immer hoffe, kommen wir
auch mal vorbei!

Laß es Dir gut gehen und grüße alle,
die Du kennst.

Herzlich, Deine Familie

THE END OF ENCHANTMENT

The Frog has gone back to his well,
no more to be spurned, debased or reborn
in human form.

The Old King has been dethroned,
his castle burned,
or turned into a boarding school.

The Princess, no longer beautiful,
lives on her own, abandoned,
first by a part-time lover,
then by her son.

There are no more Fairies
or Little Wise Men
offering free advice
on how to convert
dirt into gold
or rags into riches.
Their secrets are now sold
by Marketing Companies.

Even Witches
have given up their brooms.
Like ordinary women,
they're using shopping carts
and they conceal their spells.
Sometimes you feel them all around you,
although you know there's no one there.
The woods have given way to pleasure parks.
No longer dark, they still
are full of dangers.
People complain
that life has changed,
(that things were better before)
and that there is too much intrusion.
Yet, without knowing your name,
they warn you of strangers
and show you their own
pain and confusion.

Remember the Fool?
He is still there, unchanged,
and he will outlast armies of witches of shopping carts.
He stays forever young,
true to himself
in his pursuit of illusion,
forever in love
with one of the totally
useless arts.

MATTHIAS CLAUDIUS

WAR SONG

It's It's
~~There's~~ war! ~~There's~~ war! O angel, do inspire
Restraint, invoke His name!
It's ~~There~~'s war, alas, and I desire
Not to have caused this shame!

What should I do, if, pale and bloody, weeping -
As I lay on my cot -
The ghosts of slaughtered victims found me sleeping?
What should I tell them, what?

If brave men who sought honor through their daring
Were writhing in the dust, ~~and cursing me with swearing~~
Half dead and maimed,
In agonized disgust?

If every father, mother, bride and maiden,
So happy formerly,
Now all deprived, all with misfortune laden,
Were wailing about me?

If hunger, evil plague and need were going
To join all, friend and foe,
Within the grave and sat on corpses crowing
For me a hymn of woe?

What could I gain if I were to acquire
A crown and land and fame?
It's ~~There's~~ war, alas, and I desire
Not to have caused this shame!

Unbehelligt von saemtlichen irdischen Plagen
scheinen die Toten ihr Totsein mit Fassung zu tragen.

Ob sie in Frieden ruhn oder sich zu den Lebenden legen,
Ihr Tun oder Nichtstun ist gebilligt von Gottes Segen.

Sie brauchen den boesen Nachbar nicht mehr im Aufzug
zu gruessen
und selbst die toedlichsten Suenden hoerten sie laengst
auf zu buessen.

Anstatt troestliche Worte an einsame Freunde zu richten,
koennen sie sinnlose Verse wie diese dichten.

Es steht uns nicht an, nach ihrem Befinden zu fragen,
doch die Antwort liegt auf der Hand: die Toten koennen
nicht klagen.

RESTLESS SPIRIT

When I parted I thought I could sever
each vital thread.
Those who said that the dead rest forever
were never dead.

Though the stone may obstruct the intrusion
of earthly sights,
though the bone be immune to illusion,
who counts the nights

when the spider of life, undefeated,
reweaves its thread
into dreams, uncompleted. repeated,
to haunt the dead?

1952

As willing lid o'er weary eye
The Evening on the Day leans
Till of all our nature's House
Remains but Balcony

Wie ueber muedem Aug das willige Lid
Lehnt sich dem Tag der Abend an
Bis von dem ganzen Haus unserer Natur
Nichts bleibt als der Balkon

Spleen

(Baudelaire)

Ich hab ein Königreich, das Schwermut heisst:
dort bin ich Herrscher, jung und schon ergreist.
Wenn die gespreizten Höflinge sich zieren,
spiel ich mit Hunden und mit andern Tieren.
Doch nichts erheitert mich, kein Falke und kein Reh,
nicht das geplagte Volk, das ich vorm Fenster seh -
nicht einmal meines Lieblingsnarren Schwank
zerstreut mich; ach, ich bin so sterbenskrank.
Zum Grab wird mir mein blütenreines Bett,
und selbst die Damen, lüstern und kokett,
mögen sich vor mir wiegen, drehn und winden,
sie werden meinen Mund nie lächeln finden.
Der Weise, der sonst alle Künstek kennt,
aus mir verteibt er nicht das böse Element.
Wo in den Römerbädern blutge Quellen rinnen,
aus denen selbst die Schwachen Kraft gewinnen,
erwärmten meinen Körper keine Gluten:
Mein Blut ist wässrig wie die Lethefluten.

Valéry

Der Freund-Wald.

Wir dachten in der Form von reinen Dingen,
als wir uns schweigend an den Händen hielten
und unbekannter Blumen Duft erfühlten,
auf Wegen, die wir miteinander gingen.

Wir gingen wie die Angetrauten gehen,
in diesem grünen Wiesenwald verloren:
der Mond, ein stiller Freund berauschter Toren,
ward zwischen uns geteilt als Frucht der Feen.

Dann lagen wir gestorben auf den Matten,
sehr fern, ganz einsam zwischen sanften Schatten
in diesem Wald, der Heimlichstes uns lehrte.

Und oben sahen wir ein Licht erscheinen,
darin wir uns vereinten unter Weinen:
oh meines Schweigens treuester Gefährte!

Müder Sommer.

Alles, was blüht, muss verblühen -
denn die Natur ist Gebot.
Alles, was glüht, muss verglühen -
in der Geburt keimt der Tod.

Alles wird einmal vergehen,
Liebe und Lasten und Leid.
Alles wird spurlos verwehen,
ausgelöscht sein von der Zeit.

Alles, was blüht, möchte reifen -
reifen heisst: schwer sein zum Fall -
fallen ist tiefes Begreifen
ewiger Einheit im All.

ca 1933

copy

EMILY DICKINSON (1677)

On my volcano grows the Grass
A meditative spot -
An acre for a Bird to choose
Would be the General thought -

How red the fire rocks below -
How insecure the sod
Did I disclose
Would populate with awe my solitude.

Mit Gras bedeckt ist mein Vulkan -
Ein andachtsvoller Ort -
Das ideale Vogelheim
So meinten andere dort -

Wie rot das Feuer drunter schwelt -
Wie sich der Boden hebt
~~Gäb ich's bekannt~~
~~Erschüttert wär die Einsamkeit belebt.~~
ED1695

Es gibt die Einsamkeit im Raum
Die Einsamkeit im Meer
Die Einsamkeit im Tod, all dies
Scheint wie Geselligkeit
Verglichen mit dem tieferen Grund
Polarer Heimlichkeit
Der Seele bei sich eingekehrt -
Einzig - Unendlich - Sein.

There is a solitude of space
A solitude of sea
A solitude of death, but these
Society shall be
Compared with that profounder site
That polar privacy
A soul admitted to itself -
Finite infinity.

EMILY DICKINSON

1075

The Sky is low - the Clouds are mean.
A travelling Flake of Snow
Across a Barn or through a Rut
Debates if it will go -

A Narrow Wind complains all Day
How some one treated him
Nature, like us is sometimes caught
Without her Diadem.

Der Himmel ~~stumpf~~ - die Wolken ~~schlecht~~ gesinnt -
Ein Treibschnee ueberlegt
Ob Radspur oder Scheunendach
Zum Reisen kuenstiger liegt -

Ein duerrer Wind klagt stundenlang
Welch Unrecht ihm geschehn -
Natur, wie wir, zeigt dann und wann
~~Sich~~ ohne ~~Diadem~~.

A Word dropped careless on a Page
May stimulate an eye
When folded in perpetual seam
The Wrinkled Author lie

Infection in the sentence breeds
We may inhale Despair
At distances of Centuries
From the Malaria -

copy

Ein achtlos hinterlassenes Wort
Trifft den, der es erblickt
Wenn faltig in den ewigen Saum
Gepresst der Schreiber liegt

Im Satz schon keimt die Infektion
Die uns befallen mag
Als Seelenpein Jahrhunderte
Nach dem Entstehungstag-

EMILY DICKINSON (1336)

Nature assigns the Sun -

That - is Astronomy -

Nature cannot enact a Friend -

That - is Astrology.

3 2 1

Den Sonnenstand bestimmt Natur -

Das - ist Astronomie -

Natur spielt nicht den Kavalier

Den Freund bei dem Natur versagt -

Das ist Astrologie

~~Beherrscht~~ Astrologie.

EMILY DICKINSON (1186)

Too few the mornings be,
Too scant the nights.
No lodging can be had
For the delights
That come to earth to stay,
But no apartment find
And ride away.

Zu selten sind die Tage
Zu knapp die Nächte.
Es gibt kein Logis
Für Seligkeiten
Die gern auf Erden blieben,
Doch keine Wohnung finden. Und weiterziehen.

I felt a Cleaving in my Mind -
As if my Brain had split -
I tried to match it - Seam by Seam -
But could not make them fit.

The thought behind, I strove to join
Unto the thought before -
But Sequence ravelled out of Sound
Like Balls - upon a Floor.

Ich spuerte einen Sprung im Geist -
Als sei mein Hirn gespalten -
Die Teile fuegt' ich Saum an Saum -
Doch wollten sie nicht halten.

Den spaetern Einfall suchte ich
An den davor zu knuepfen -
Doch Wortlaut loeste sich vom Klang
Wie Baelle - die entschluepfen.

Nimm alles was ich hab, lass nur Ekstase mir
Und ich bin reicher dann als jedes Menschenkind -
Doch schlecht steht er mir an, der eigene Wohlstand hier,
Wenn mehr Begueterte gleich neben meiner Tuer
In tiefstem Elend sind -

Take all away from me but leave me Ecstasy,
And I am richer then than all my Fellow Men -
Ill it becometh me to dwell so wealthily
When at my very Door are those possessing more,
In abject poverty -

Ein Schacht

Abgrund - doch Himmel ueber ihm -
Und Himmel nah, und Himmel weit,
Und ~~Abgrund~~ doch ein Schacht
Mit Himmel ueber ihm.

Sich ruehren heisst man rutscht -
Zu schauen fuehrt zum Sturz -
Zu traeumen schwaecht den Schutz
Der meine Chancen stuetzt.
Ach! ~~Abgrund~~! Schacht mit Himmel ueber ihm!

Wie tief - ich wag es nicht
Die Fuesse zu befragen - -
Wir stutzten wo wir sitzen
So ~~aufrecht~~ statt - kannst ihn kaum erspaehn -
Den Abgrund drunter - klaftertief -
Im Umkreis immer gleich.
Same - Sommer - Grab -
Wer verdammte wen?

Die Dichter zuenden nur Lampen an -
Sie selbst gehn aus -
Lassen die Dochte gluehn -
Ist Licht lebendig

Darin wie's Sonnen tun -
Linsen sind dann die Zeiten
Die ihren Radius
Weiter verbreiten -

AR 25164

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Doris Dörrie

STRAIGHT THROUGH THE HEART

From: LIEBE SCHMERZ UND DAS GANZE VERDAMMTE ZEUG

(Love Pain and all that Jazz)

Translated by
Lola Gruenthal

After Armin's death Anna had immediately given away or sold all electric appliances in the house and made sure that all outlets were removed. Only a few ceiling fixtures were left. Otherwise there was no electric current in the entire house, and as much as Anna sometimes missed the television, the record player or a hair dryer, she definitely preferred not to feel surrounded by electricity so she would not have to worry about Jan's safety. She simply did not trust herself any more in dealing with the current; she almost feared its revenge... but that was silly.

At the age of four Jan had once gotten a slight electric shock when he was touching Anna's fleecy sweater. There was a little spark, and Jan was so frightened he broke into tears. Anna picked him up, carried him into her room and put him down on the bed. Jan sobbed vehemently, trembled and clung to her, and Anna knew he was not making a fuss, he had good reason to panic. She felt Armin and the past at her back and, bravely and defiantly, she turned around, went to the closet and pulled out the shoe box with her old photos.

Jan's sobbing stopped. He loved pictures more than anything, immediately grabbed his favorite photo and examined it carefully, as though to verify that everything on it was unchanged: Anna with the shiny saxophone after her first concert. Just turned 16, with sweaty wet hair, ugly, happy. In the background, the drummer. Now she couldn't even recall his name. He had been very gentle, and on his belly he had a small tuft of long black hair. Like grass. Anna smiled to herself and Jan, who didn't

know why, grinned back. The tears were forgotten. He rummaged in the box. Anna and Thomas in a fishing boat in Greece. With indifferent expressions, they looked in opposite directions. A silly individual with extravagant movements who, during the six months they spent together, had told her every day that he loved her more than anything. Anna took the photo from Jan's hand. Armin in front of the little red Fiat which he had given her for her twentyfirst birthday and which she was still driving.

"Was Daddy very strong?"

"No, my sweet - he was not. But very nice."

"What do you mean - nice?"

"Well, he was very good to me."

"Were you sweethearts?" Jan giggled, excited.

"No," Anna said softly, "we were not."

Jan shrugged his shoulders and shuffled the photo back among the others. Her mother Angelika and Anna in her student's pad in Munich. Anna had held the camera at arm's length, pulled her mother close to her and pressed the shutter. The picture showed only half of her face, and that half did not tell anything about the expression she had worn. A farewell photo. She hadn't even wanted to leave home. Angelika smiling into the camera. Did my mother have enough of me after 19 years? Angelika's disappointment when she failed the entrance examination at the music academy. Study, no matter what. So it had to be Munich, quite far from home. She hated the closeness of the mountains. Her room was tiny and expensive, located under the roof. Weeds in the eave trough (gutter) outside the window. Water stains on the ceiling. Dark in the daytime, quite cozy in the evening. The gas heater was much too big for the small room and could

not be adjusted. Every fifteen minutes Anna had to turn it off and open the window. The American Forces Network on the radio. Blabbering against the silence.

The university was disappointingly similar to her former school routine. Her fellow students bored her with their seriousness. In the evening she would go out by herself to a movie or a pub. The crazy American standing next to the entrance with his glass of beer, grinning to himself. She knew right away that he was an American because he wore those tough walking boots and a blue down vest. "Are you hungry?" she had asked him. "I'm going home now to cook some spaghetti for myself." How stupid - but he actually was hungry. Silently and cheerfully they walked along Leopoldstrasse. He was at least 35 and had long grey hair.

On the small electric boiler she cooked spaghetti with butter, which he praised. He also liked Randy Newman. When they were lying in bed in the dark, Anna grinned, her head on his shoulder: She had managed to "pick up" a guy, he was nice - and had fallen asleep even before she got undressed.

She saw him only once more, one morning when she was on the way to her class and had almost stumbled over him on the stairs. After a drunk spree, he was sleeping it off on the third floor, hadn't been able to make it all the way up to the fifth last night. Anna skipped her class and fried some eggs for him.

He was in love with a German model and read everything by Henry Miller while he waited for her her to yield to him.

"Mummy, why do you have blue hair on this photo with Daddy?"

"Come on, Jan, let me close my eyes for five minutes. I

have a little headache."

Jan patted her forehead with his small hot hand. Anna smiled with her eyes closed.

The papers she had to write for her seminar had been an ordeal. She would sit hunched up in her room for hours, poring over her books. She wasn't interested. She drank Cinzano in little sips until her thoughts got muddled. Sleep. Often until late evening. Colorful, pleasant dreams, nothing exciting, but reason enough to keep from waking up. Then she would lie with closed eyes, waiting to slide back into sleep.

"Make a plan for every day," a suggestion of her mother. How embarrassing for humanity to cover up its own meaninglessness with a detailed agenda.

What her old Latin teacher had always said: "Anna, you are a windbag." She could not get the right feel of the city, lost her way in the old center, got on the wrong streetcars and busses. The determined faces around her made her fidgety and awkward. She stepped on other people's feet, and once, losing her balance, propped herself up on the head of a seated passenger. Frightened, she got off at once. Perhaps a hormone deficiency. Too much sleep. Like an illness without pain. Or had she simply been lazy through and through? Unpleasant thought.

Only rarely did she make decisions, and when she did, they came from far away over night. One morning she had awakened with a clear head and unswollen eyes, and she had known: Today I'm going to have my hair dyed blue.

It felt good to see how even the fashion-conscious British hair stylists on Elisabethstrasse were impressed by her project, not quite sure about their part in it. Smiling, she waited for her turn and, somewhat contemptuously, flipped the pages of a fashion magazine. Afterwards, when the smelly chemical substance began to react with her hair and one couldn't tell yet how blue it was going to be, she enjoyed the hot, exciting feeling of a slight electric charge in her body, something that she liked a lot but that happened only on rare occasions. The dryer was turned off and swiveled to the side. Ultramarine blue. Anna beamed. Just like one of those cheap nylon sweaters from the "specials" box in a department store.

She did not mind that everyone in the street and in the lecture hall stared at her and whispered about her. She had always felt different from most people, not better, just different; and the blue hair now allowed this already established feeling to turn into a picture in her head: A black-and-white photo with a single daub of color - Anna Blume. A lonely existence, this she had suspected for quite some time. She found it extraordinarily strenuous to talk to others for any length of time. She almost got dizzy with boredom, although she liked to talk, but she was never sure whether the way she used words corresponded to common usage. It was not necessarily important for her to be understood. But, unlike sleep, the waking state made her miss something that she could not name.

During the last sunny fall days she took the saxophone along to the Englischer Garten. She enjoyed it spreading sound. A man in his mid-thirties, wearing a heavy expensive coat that

gave him a completely rectangular appearance. He stopped walking and listened for a long time. She remembered quite clearly that she had unconsciously taken a step back in order to increase the distance between herself and that man. She did not play for money, but the man took his newspaper, spread it out before her and placed a twenty mark bill on it, which he secured with a small stone. His large face was reddened. Very serious light eyes. Anna looked at him as she went on playing. He did not remove his gaze, and the way he stood there, observing her calmly, made Anna uncomfortable. She turned away. Why didn't he go on already? Her hands started to become clammy. When she turned around, he was gone and she played better again.

Gladiolas. How corny. And a whole dozen of them. They were lying outside her door when she went to the john in the hall late at night. And a white card with a stilted handwriting: "I would like to invite you for supper tomorrow evening at 8:30." in 'The Cloud' No signature. The rectangular man. She was quite sure. Annoyed, Anna threw the card into the wastebasket, knowing at the same time that of course she would go. Perhaps that electric feeling and the certainty of knowing what to do for a whole day.

Until six o'clock in the evening she stayed in bed. Shower. Shampoo. The heating coils of her old hand dryer suddenly showed a dangerous orange glow, there was a little popping sound, and Anna, frightened, dropped the dryer. Twenty minutes to rub her hair dry with a towel. White makeup and black kohl for her eyes. Jeans. Don't overdo it.

The restaurant was small and distinguished with pleasant yellowish lighting. The waiter immediately led her to a table,

moved her chair back and remained standing behind it until Anna was seated. "Dr. Thal called. He will be here presently." Of course. A lawyer or a doctor. Her armpits itched from the perfume. Get up and leave immediately.

He again wore his heavy coat. "I'm so glad," he pressed Anna's hand firmly. Raindrops shining on his face. Under his coat a light blue cashmere sweater. Almost childlike. Armin Thal, dentist. Anna nodded. For you please, pâté and lobster. He ordered the wine. While they had cocktails he again looked at her with the same calm and steady gaze. Anna gave herself one point for withstanding it until she had slowly counted to five, two points if she could reach ten and three for fifteen. When she evaded his gaze already before the five, she subtracted one point.

Only three points when he began after a long pause: "Anna, since I saw you yesterday in the Englischer Garten, your appearance has released a very strong feeling in me. I have seen how you live because I followed you." The waiter brought the appetizers, and while he began serving, Armin Thal continued calmly: "I want to make a suggestion to you: I live in the country in a spacious remodeled farm house. You could immediately move in there, you'd have two rooms at your disposal as well as 15000 marks a month. No obligations." She had not even been greatly surprised. "Assuming that I didn't have blue hair and you had met me as a normal student and not as a saxophonist - would you have made the same offer to me?" He smiled very briefly with his eyes only. "You think I'm very superficial. No, with or without blue hair - I'd like to have you around, because in your presence I feel

some of the excitement that unfortunately so far has mostly been lacking in my life." She understood immediately. "What kind of excitement?" She smiled because her blood had suddenly started to flow more rapidly. "The excitement of becoming someone else than the person one is - through another..." Now he was grinning. "An illusion. But so infinitely more thrilling than reality."

"But what if the excitement is gone after a few days or weeks... then I can leave again?"

"No. Your risk would be relatively small. To start with, I would think of a one-year contract, 1500 mark a month."

Anna sucked the flesh out of the lobster claws, then washed her fingers in a small ceramic bowl with lukewarm lemon-scented water.

"2000 mark," she said. A long glance. Three points.

He folded his hands and placed them on the table in front of him. Short, round fingers with very small nails.

"Agreed."

Anna took a sip of wine.

"Maybe."

She somehow lost control over her face. Espresso with brandy amid breathing problems. Without collapsing she reached the restroom. Loud retching, afterwards relief. She washed her face, rinsed her mouth and sat down on the cold stone floor. Suddenly exhausted. Smeared makeup.

He paid quickly with a credit card and led her to his car. Anna had trouble focusing. Without being asked, he drove her to her place. Climbing the stairs, she began to stagger, and

he took her in his arms and carried her quickly and safely up to the fifth floor. When he removed her jeans, she tried to decide whether this bothered her but could not settle on an unambiguous feeling. The safe bed. With her eyes closed she still noticed that the light went out.

She woke up because she felt nauseous again. Groped for the light switch, but there he was already next to her, leading her to the wash basin. Bitter gall. He held her and gently patted her back. A doctor. Every thought now too strenuous. At seven o'clock he woke her with tea and zwieback. He was going to his office now. His telephone number was placed on her bed table. A brief, cool breath of air touched her forehead when he opened the door and left.

Two hours later Anna had a high fever that put her in a state of pleasant, soft haziness. She enjoyed her own hot indolence, her view of the ever unchanging dirty-white ceiling with its large brown-edged water stain. When Armin came to look after her, she fell effortlessly in a deep sleep. He did not bother her, provided the necessary ventilation as well as hot tea in a thermos. After two days she already recognized him by his steps on the staircase.

After four days she knew what she wanted, and the fever went down. Armin showed his pleasure with a quick nod. Together they packed her things. Amusement and the feeling of having become years older in just a few days. He carried the saxophone down the stairs.

Still, driving through the city she felt rather depressed

and intimidated like a kidnaping victim. She opened the window and held her head out. The cold wind stung her eyes and made her scalp shrink. I want to be wild, a savage - and a savage has no scruples. She emitted a long, high scream that trailed behind the speeding car like a tail.

Armin was satisfied. With leather-gloved hands he gently stroked the steering wheel at every stoplight.

The farm house was a surprise. A tasteful but not snobbish interior. Little furniture, big beautiful rugs. No dog, fortunately. From her room on the first floor she looked at willows without end.

That evening they sat together in front of the VCR in the living room, watching Only Angels Have Wings. Jean Arthur also knew exactly what she wanted. Someone who knows what he wants will never compromise himself. The wine was good. They did little talking. At 12:30 Anna got up. Following an impulse she gave Armin a kiss on the forehead, which he accepted with friendly equanimity.

In bed she cried a little. Just like that, because she didn't know what she was supposed to feel. He woke her at seven with rosehip tea and two small round cakes. Did she want to come along to town? Much too early, Anna shook her head. 2000 mark and the contract under the breakfast plate.

Curious and with slight heart palpitations she later wandered through the house. In his bedroom another VCR. English thrillers. Hardly any clues to the person of Armin Thal. No photos, no letters. Silk pyjamas. In the basement nothing but wine bottles and old furniture.

She read a thriller, watched two movies: The Red Circle and Breathless. Called her mother on the phone. As expected, she was shocked by Anna's move.

In the evening Armin came back with some steaks and salad. He put on a rock 'n' roll record and started to wash the salad. Surprised that Anna couldn't dance rock 'n' roll. Jerry Lee Lewis - never heard of him. Born in 1957 - where should she know him from? Of course, Armin laughed softly. He put the steaks in the pan.

After the meal: "Do you play chess?" No, that she didn't either. Patiently he explained. A fire in the fireplace. After two hours she could not concentrate any longer. She was perspiring. Silence. He looked at her calmly. She got up and walked back and forth in the room. Discomfort in her stomach.

Impatiently she sat down on the side of his chair and placed one arm around his neck. He gave her a friendly look but did not move. Her blue head on his chest. Pleasant. Did he really want nothing else from her.[2] Impossible. After a while he had finally started to stroke her. His skin was firm, smooth and cool. No water stain on the ceiling in his bedroom. Excited and at the same time indifferent, she had felt very free. He was elegant, tender, used to it, good.

She woke up only at noon, alone. A long, hot bath. After all, what was wrong with it? No love, no problems. She laughed, and in the large tiled bathroom it sounded louder than she had intended.

She skipped the class at three because the bus to town took over an hour. Instead she went to the market and bought fresh fish and vegetables. Chocolate pudding for dessert. Armin was thrilled. Sole - his favorite fish. Anna turned red with pleasure.

She got used to waiting for him. Often she did the cooking because she enjoyed it. They never arranged a time. Anna was always there.

She did not register again for the summer term. During the day she sat in the comfortable leather armchair and read or watched movies. Every day now had a plan: Armin left the house at 7:30 and returned around eight in the evening.

They continued addressing each other by the formal Sie. Not out of courtesy, that they both knew, but because it prevented them from sliding off into ordinary routine.

On a damp June evening, after supper, Armin placed two plane tickets to San Francisco on the table. Departure in two days. "Don't forget to take your saxophone." She grinned and scratched her leg. "Your beautiful blue is beginning to grow out."

Before thetrip she had her hair color touched up. She herself would have liked a little change - but better not to take chances. This was how he knew her. This was how she had to stay.

Once they had stepped on American soil, Armin spoke to her only in English. Fluently and without any accent. His movements became more relaxed and he smiled more frequently. Was he simply

adjusting to the American style or did he actually feel different?

The air conditioners in the expensive hotels hummed softly. Sometimes she felt like Jean Arthur, sometimes more like Lauren Bacall - she felt fine.

Armin carried her saxophone through the city, and on the third day, when he saw two blacks ~~standing~~ at the street corner playing tenor saxophone and guitar, he took it out of its case. She was supposed to play? Armin asked her to do it, and the two blacks nodded goodnaturedly. It was embarrassing. She herself felt that her playing was much too dry and lacking imagination. Armin took pictures. Suddenly, short, violent abdominal pains which took her breath away. She felt like a fake. Everything a fake. It passed quickly. People stopped and watched appreciatively.

Armin invited the two musicians for dinner. She was not hungry, she felt hot and queasy. With an awkward motion she knocked the wine glass over. The two men liked Armin. His calm. Casually and carefully he took hold of her wrist and kept holding it for a few minutes. She felt relieved and was able to orient herself again.

At the Ocean Front Walk in Los Angeles. On the beach, under palm trees. Armin on roller skates. Laughing at every fall. Playing like a little boy. Unimaginable in Munich.

At night at the Tropicana Motel Anna grasped his arm in her sleep and moved closer to him. She woke up, frightened: The old indifference was gone. Her body was changing, her skin

became nervous and electric, her heart pounded. She took a shower. Black cockroaches scurried along the edge of the bath-tub. Some were drowned. It was unplanned, stupid, dangerous. Ridiculous. But she knew she would not be able to reverse the change. What was this? A biochemical process?

From now on she had to restrain herself to keep from touching Armin constantly. "Why are you so tense?" he asked her (in English, as usual) during breakfast. English Muffins and orange juice. What was "tense", what did he mean? She shrugged her shoulders: "Let's go to the movies."

They saw Sunset Boulevard. How different, to see the films here where they came from and where they belonged. Armin put his arm around her and drew her closer. For him, pleasure without obligation, for her, suddenly, agony. Keep your mouth shut, don't show anything. Difficulty of avoiding the fantasized intimate "du". A silly goose in love? He would not have extended the contract, would have sent her packing. A nuisance and a bore, not at all what he had expected of her.

In Chicago she had a small diamond nose ring made to order, and when she asked him to do it for her, Armin himself quickly and almost painlessly inserted it in her nostril.

Despite all her efforts she found herself boring to tears, but he enjoyed her. So far. Back in Munich he immediately settled into his old reserved elegance, and Anna suffered all the more from her sentimental weakness.

A little red Fiat for her twentyfirst birthday. She threw her arms around his neck.

Only two weeks later, on September 20, he did not come home for the first time. At 10 o'clock Anna's heart started to race noticeably for about two minutes. Jean Seberg and Jean Paul Belmondo calmed her for the next hour. A glass of Southern Comfort. But then, suddenly, a thick ball in her throat that made swallowing difficult, also ice-cold hands. She walked back and forth, gasping with anxiety. Never before had she been afraid, even for a second, that he might have had an accident or simply forgotten her. Around midnight she ran outside. Silence. When she stumbled over a small stone and fell down, she started to cry. The crying changed into retching. She vomited but the retching did not stop. On her hands and feet she crawled back into the house and collapsed on the bathroom rug. Every five minutes the retching recurred, went through her body in big waves and shook her. After every attack she tried to breathe quietly and to relax. Work. That would lead to something.

When Armin came in at 6:45, she was exhausted but composed. He took a bath. Fresh coffee. His light eyes, that calm, indifferent tone: "You must have asked yourself why, contrary to habitual routine, I wasn't here last night." She spread a roll with quince jelly for him and forced a smile. "Yesterday I met a very unusual woman, artist."

"Some more coffee?"

He nodded.

"I intend to offer her a contract similar to yours. Your contract is valid until the end of this year... and of course you can also continue living here. Now I don't wan't to rush

you, Anna - but would you mind if that lady," he took a bite of the roll, "moved in here already tomorrow?"

She smiled at him silently. Then a scream, high and lasting about fifteen seconds. He watched her calmly, only mildly shocked, then took a sip of coffee. Anna closed her mouth, grinned and sat down on the arm of his chair.

"Well, of course," she said evenly, scraping his chin with her hand, "I am pregnant. In the third month. I don't know if you want the child... what I would need above all is rest..."

His response to her lie surpassed her expectations. Joy. He embraced her, beaming, called the office, he wasn't coming in today. Champagne and oysters for the mother. After the second glass, Anna: "If you really want me to give birth to the child, I would like to make a contractual agreement with you to the effect that - in the interest of the child - we stay together until it comes of age. And perhaps my salary could be raised to... 2800 marks?" She giggled. As of today, she decided, she would say "du" to him. Goodness, why was he so much looking forward to the child? They silently gazed into each other's eyes, and while Anna saw herself reflected in his pupils, she realized that each of them only seemed to understand the language of the other.

The pregnancy now gave a definite direction to her life. She ate systematically and with the feeling that it was for her own good: already in the morning, a pound of nuts, two bars of chocolate, supplemented by a pint of heavy cream. Two hours intermission for proper digestion, then, for lunch, spaghetti with white beans, and sometimes, when she could get it down,

half a pound of melted butter with a little salt. In the afternoon, juices and capsules to stimulate the appetite. She ate without repulsion. Did not get sick once. Only when Armin came in the evening, she sometimes had to lie down, and then he sat next to her and held her hand.

He now spent the nights with the unusual woman artist, but he called Anna every hour to ask how she felt. For the first time in her life she had a sense of calm and of permanent strength. The diet was very effective. Her face lost its peaked contours, becoming wide and serene, framed by disheveled blue hair. Her flesh in its massiveness felt foreign to her. Once she was startled by the appearance of a figure she saw in the hall mirror because she did not immediately recognize it as her own. The blue hair, the only part of her that remained unchanged. Ever wider dresses. She was pleased by her increasing awkwardness. She sensed the movement of her bones, her flesh, her blood, and it seemed to her like an achievement.

Light blue and pink wool for the baby. Two little jackets, tiny pants and caps in different colors. Armin was amused. Knitting - never learned it. She followed the instructions of the lady in the yarn store. Like the pregnant women she had observed, she carried her belly in front of her, with her back straightened. Mothers holding small children by the hand nodded at her pleasantly. They now seemed to find Anna's peculiar hair color less disturbing.

The way Armin pushed a combination vitamin and calcium tablet between her lips in the morning... he was so touchingly concerned

about her. No, she didn't feel like going to bed with him any more - he had to understand that. Come to think of it, he hadn't even asked her to. Strange, but ever since she had been pregnant, she had lost all desire for him. Whatever devotion she got from him was sufficient. She was going to choose the clinic herself. A woman's job.

The delivery. Perhaps a miscarriage? She would think of something. The contract was there. Or would it become invalid if she didn't produce a child... Problems for later.

For hours she sat in the leather armchair, often occupied only with the thoughts formed by her brain, letting those thoughts walk over to the white wall across, letting them bounce off and slowly wander back into her brain.

A December evening at the fireplace. Armin massaging her legs. "Why don't you bring your friend, the artist, over for coffee sometime? Tomorrow afternoon, sweetheart?" She now occasionally permitted herself to use terms of endearment, it was alright, she noticed - for a mother.

were
His interest and his concern centered on her belly, that was clear to her. But without head, no belly - without Anna, no child. "If it isn't too strenuous for you, I'll be glad to invite her!" To whom did he say "<u>du</u>" nowadays? Was he talking to her or already to the child? Never mind. Alright, coffee and cake. The artist: red hair and metalframed glasses. Anna knitting. Conversations about an art show. All of a sudden Anna smiled at the other woman. Dreamily: "You know, he's already crazy about the child..."

Armin took hold of Anna's wrist. She gently disengaged herself, feeling completely calm and self-assured. The artist nodded. Said goodbye soon.

Armin did not blame Anna for the fact that he never heard from her again, that she had taken off already the next day for Italy or some place.

He now spent his nights at home again. Close to each other they lay on his bed and watched movies. Sometimes Anna entertained Armin by turning off the sound and doing her own dubbing version for Jean Arthur and Cary Grant, Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart. The daily beans made her belly tight and hard. He felt with his hand how the child moved. Indeed, it moved. Anna beamed. At night she preferred to sleep alone. Lonely? Yes, sometimes in the early morning hours, when lying awake in bed, she pushed her nightgown up and looked at her empty, fat, white belly. But then again Armin in the morning: "How are we doing today, the three of us?" A slight smile from the mother, not too wide, not too radiant, for after all, pregnancy was a strain. She spent the days waiting. Never bored, because she accepted it as a task.

According to her calculations, the delivery date was to be March 24. From the beginning of February she stayed in bed also during the day. No matter how much she ate, her belly refused to grow fatter. The fat settled on her legs and arms. When she rotated her arms, two heavy folds appeared around her wrists. Blubber. She had not found it repulsive, then. Incomprehensible today. Armin bought a valuable 19th century cradle in an antique store. Absorbed in the sensation, he stood next to it and rocked

it back and forth.

Early in March Anna used the telephone to order diapers, bottles, a baby dressing table with a small bathtub, a scale and a four-pound jar of Nivea.

Her second room, which she had hardly ever used since she gave up studying, was being turned into a nursery by Armin who spent hours working on it in the evening. From her bed she could see him through the door, . . concentrating on his task. A pleasant light yellow for the walls. Armin had changed: no longer quite so inaccessible, he'd become more receptive to a normal and undramatic way of living. He made it possible for her to be pregnant. Nothing but pregnant.

If it was a boy, they would name it Jan, a girl, Angelika, after her mother.

Pictures of newborns in the magazine that Armin had subscribed to for Anna. Those bloodstained little humans with their miserably distorted faces. They have to love their mothers - they've no other choice. Anna smiled to herself. A little home-made boy friend - or rather a girl friend? "Armin, what are you wishing for, - a girl or a boy?"

He sat down next to her on the bed. "Why don't you want me to come to the clinic with you?" "I can fight better when you're not there, believe me." "And afterwards? After the delivery?" "Oh Armin, that's hard to explain. I just want to be by myself first so I can get used to being a mother. Please, let me."

Of course, of course, he respected all her wishes. How friendly and trusting he had become. As though he got younger every day in expectation of the child. And softer. At that point she had almost won.

The delivery. Heart palpitations just at the thought of the word. Still three weeks until the date.

And then, one morning in the armchair, the plan. Suddenly it was there. Her brain had produced it, without her noticing it, and offered it to her. She had accepted at once.

On March 22 Anna knew as she woke up that this was the day. She stepped out of bed and walked over to Armin in the bathroom. He was taking his morning bath, greeting her with a friendly glance. There was no talk. She just stroked his hair once. He accepted these gestures, though they were completely foreign to him.

She took the small suitcase. Baby things, both in pink and light blue, diapers, powdered milk, bottles. For herself comfortable travel clothes.

A note for Armin: "Labors started, have left for the clinic. Please don't try to find out which - as promised. Everything will be alright. Anna."

By train she went to Frankfurt. The town appeared suitable to her: Not too far away, four hours by train, she didn't know anyone there - so why not Frankfurt? The two old ladies in her compartment nodded at her pleasantly. From today on she had to stop eating. Not a single calory is going to pass my lips, she

vowed to herself. Nothing but black tea, well alright - perhaps some buttermilk too, but otherwise really nothing. After giving birth one does have a fat belly for a while. Everyone knows that. She must buy a girdle, a tight dress. In the pharmacy they had something like diet pills. There was so much to be done.

On her first day in Frankfurt she went to a comfortable hotel with pink-flowered curtains. She was so hungry that she couldn't sleep. The child! Now, this moment, she was losing it. It was starving in her body. Nonsense. Tears. For the first time since the beginning of pregnancy, tears of helplessness again. Without breakfast she took off at 10 o'clock. Head scarf, wide coat, sunglasses, suitcase in her hand. The pedestrian mall should offer opportunities. She must not appear to be looking for something. Staring at the displays in the store windows, she observed the street from the corners of her eyes. How few children there were!

At half past three the first two baby carriages. The one was being watched by an older sister while the mother went into the store, the other had a dachshund attached to it. A dog - no, she didn't have the guts for that.

Every night a different hotel, to be on the safe side. Her feet hurt.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, pouring rain. Dizzy with hunger. Lonely at night.

At 2 a.m. she called Armin and told him with joy in her voice that she had given birth to a healthy boy. Idiot! But Armin:

overwhelmed, happy. She quickly hung up. Friday again the whole day in the pedestrian mall. Nothing. Her stomach rebelled. Blacking out. She leaned against a wall. Who was she without a child? Impossible to return. Without Armin, without home, soon without money. Worst of all: without any meaning.

She forced herself to calm down, to work more systematically. The birth announcements in the municipal register. She checked off the boys. A foreigners' child wouldn't be bad... the parents would be more helpless than Germans. Franco Martini and Kenan Osaydin lived in the same street in Bockenheim. Renewed courage. She took a taxi to go there, waited in entrance halls. She was cold, but she felt determination growing inside her. All day neither Frau Osaydin nor Frau Martini left the house with their babies. The next day she waited again. Always keeping the suitcase with the baby things next to her. Finally some sun.

Frau Osaydin - that must be her - small, fat and with a head scarf, carrying Kenan in her arm, a small bundle.

With two other women, Frau Osaydin went into the grocery store at the corner. Suddenly pounding heartbeats. Anna entered the store, stood behind her. A sweet child! "May I... may I hold it for a moment?" Frau Osaydin didn't understand. Anna held out her arms. Frau Osaydin smiled, nodded and placed Kenan in Anna's arms. The other women nodded to Anna, said something, in Turkish? She tensed her muscles. Did the door open from inside or outside? There she was running already, with Kenan tightly pressed to her body. She was fast. Behind her, yelling, then a clattering. She heard gasping sounds.

Someone grabbed her by her coat, a woman with a red face. Still running, Anna turned around and hurled her suitcase against the woman's belly. She lost her head scarf - that damned blue hair,- the woman doubled up, stood still. Anna kept running, stitches in her side. Made two street crossings. A taxi. Sigh of relief. Kenan was silent. "To the Central Station, please." Sweet little Kenan. No, Jan. Jan.

Until the time of departure she sat with Jan in the ladies room. Gave him a bottle, sang to him. A quiet child. The blue wool jacket looked good on him. She put on lipstick and covered her head with a scarf.

When the train reached Würzburg, Jan had almost become her child. The memory of the days in Frankfurt was already fading. Her brain was doing a good job. It made the images of memory lose their colors, dimmed the contours. Anna smiled. Jan clung to her index finger. Strong. A fighter like her.

During the ride home from the Munich Station Jan drooled a little on her shoulder in his sleep. She had won. Her son. Her friend. She was happy.

Fathers are crazy. Completely crazy. Had Armin ever looked at her with anything like the soft, butter-soft, expression he now had for his son? Cautiously, very cautiously, he picked up Jan and kissed him.

"Black eyes and black hair, like my grandfather."

Anna smiled. Jan started to cry. A very normal child. No, she could not nurse him. No milk, that happens to many women. Now Armin took her into his arms and thanked her for

the handsome, healthy child. "But he has my eyebrows, don't you think?" Yes, of course, he had Armin's eyebrows, she could see that too now. He wanted to diaper Jan, Anna had to show him how. Delighted, Armin touched Jan's arms and legs, his feet the size of Armin's thumb, his plump belly with the navel-bandage. Goodness, what if Kenan had been circumcised...She noticed that her face was twitching. She would have liked to push Armin away. It was her child. Only her*s*.

Armin spent a long time sitting next to the cradle and watching his sleeping son. Anna went to lie down on the bed next door. First thing in the morning she must color her hair.

Later they both had a glass of wine together. Armin was more of a stranger to her than he had ever been. He stroked her, rewarded her, but his unaccustomed caresses had no effect on her. She still felt Jan's warm smell of milk and Nivea cream lingering in her nose. "I had never imagined that a child could be so exciting. I'll give him his bottle tonight." Anna wanted to contradict him. Her sleep was not important to her. She coughed briefly and leaned back. No need to be jealous. She had at least 16 years with Jan and Armin to look forward to. Why should she get petty now?

Armin took a week off, asked an assistant dentist to substitute for him. He bathed, fed, diapered Jan and carried him around in the house whenever he wasn't sleeping. It bothered Anna. The week would pass, then Jan would belong to her again.

The bleaching powder had a pungent smell and tickled her nose. Surprised to see how young she looked with blond hair.

Like a fifteen-year-old. She smiled at herself in the mirror.

Later, when she walked through the center of town to buy some new clothes, she was irritated at first to find that people no longer stared at her. Now she was like everybody else. Anna Blume, 21 years old, a mother. She liked this. She felt the determination in her face. Jan, my love - I thank you. In a children's boutique she bought lots of children's things in gay colors. A little red peaked cap. Jan was going to be the wildest, greatest kid ever.

Already before she entered the house she had a sense of foreboding. Armin sat in his armchair in the living room. Heart palpitations. Anna ran into Jan's room. She kissed him cautiously on the forehead and he grunted softly. She went next door into her room, feeling a sudden pain in her chest.

Armin remained standing in the doorway. His face calm and controlled as usual. "I have heard the news. In Frankfurt a woman with allegedly blue hair has kidnaped a Turkish infant. I do not wish to make any comment except the following: I give you until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning to return the child yourself. After 10 I shall take over." He left the room. Anna remained sitting on the bed. No use carrying on. She sat down next to the cradle. Turkish infant. What nonsense! Her Jan. Tears ran over her face, but she did not feel them. She had to think of something. Think of something good. A contract... but what did she have to offer to Armin? She didn't have anything left to sell him. This individual without imagination. This rich ice-block. His dumb, detached, cool manner.

She felt hot. Jan woke up, looked at her with his dark eyes, bawled. She picked him up. His skin, his smell, this small head with its small slow brain. She stroked his soft fuzzy hair. My child. Give up her life plan for the next sixteen years? What idiot could make such a demand on her? She locked the door. At one o'clock she heard Armin going to his room. A little later she sneaked into the kitchen to warm up Jan's milk. With bare feet on the cold tiles, her arms crossed. The house was completely silent. To imagine what it would be like with just herself and Jan in the house... She held the bottle to her lips to test the temperature. Jan sucked, satisfied, lowering his lids with every gulp. He was on her side. Anna smiled at him.

She did not sleep that night. Her muscles ached. She sat next to Jan's cradle and looked out the window. She would have liked to play the saxophone now - it sometimes used to help her when she was trying to think. Woman with blue hair, playing saxophone. No, that wasn't her any more. She tried to visualize Armin lying next door and sleeping, but she could no longer recall what his face looked like. As though it were hidden by a dense veil. She made several attempts to remember his nose, his eyes, his mouth, until she understood that her brain had intentionally covered up Armin's face. Of course. When the sky gradually turned lighter, her muscles relaxed, she felt rested and fresh. Of course, now she also knew how. Quietly she left the room. Armin would get up in half an hour. Act quickly, but no need to rush.

The hair dryer was on the upper shelf of the small bathroom cabinet. The nail scissors. The nail scissors. She couldn't find them, went to get a sharp kitchen knife. The insulating layer had to come off. She cut it open all around, about a quarter inch above the space where the coils disappeared inside the plastic shell of the dryer. A practical little dryer, that's what she had used. The copper coils exposed and shiny. She replaced the dryer in the cabinet, returned the kitchen knife to the kitchen and went back to the nursery.

Motionless, she waited. No more thinking now. She felt quite at ease.

Armin got up on time, let the water run into the tub while he was shaving. Five more minutes. She kissed Jan before she left.

Armin was lying in the water. They did not look at each other. She washed her hair in the sink. While she massaged the shampoo into her scalp, she looked at herself in the mirror. A pretty face, it would stay pretty for at least another ten years. The water turned yellow when she rinsed her hair. The blue hair was responsible. Responsible for everything. She took the dryer from the cabinet. Behind her Armin was splashing, soaping himself. Careful, the coils. She put the plug into the outlet and turned the dryer on. Softly, it started to hum. She kept looking at herself in the mirror as she let the dryer fall into the bathtub with a sudden, graceful motion. A big wave splashed over the edge, on to the rug, everything all wet. She looked down and, from the corner of her eyes, saw Armin twitching, an unattractive sight. sound. She had expected a scream. Nothing. Only the twitching.

It took so long. She looked back into the mirror. Her blue eyes were now almost black. The swaying water calmed down very slowly. Minutes passed before she turned around. His mouth, open, twisted. Fortunately, no blood. She pulled the plug out of the socket and for a moment saw her eyes again in the mirror. Blue. Light blue. There you go. Carefully, she took the dryer out of the water by the cord, dried it and placed it back into the cabinet.

Anna felt very grownup when she went to the kitchen to get Jan's bottle. She yawned. Jan was lying in his cradle with open eyes, and it seemed to her that he had been smiling before she came through the door. Soon he would learn to say "Mama". In how many months? They had so much time.

After Jan had finished his bottle and she had diapered him and put him back into his crib, she called the doctor. The heart, the heart. The police never entered the house.

She managed very well with the monthly 2800 marks which kept being automatically transferred to her account. Anna and Jan did not have extravagant needs. She stroked his head affectionately.

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CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

RECUEILLEMENT

Sois sage, ô ma Douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.
Tu réclamais le Soir; il descend; le voici:
Une atmosphère obscure enveloppe la ville,
Aux uns portant la paix, aux autres le souci.

Pendant que des mortels la multitude vile,
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,
Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile,
Ma Douleur, donne-moi la main; viens par ici,

Loin d'eux. Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,
Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;
Surgir du fond des eaux le Regret souriant;

Le Soleil moribond s'endormir sous une arche,
Et, comme un long linceul traînant a l'Orient,
Entends, ma chère, entends la douce Nuit qui marche.

André Gide.

I.

Haben Sie bemerkt, sagte Eduard, was für eine Art moralischer Geniskstarre M's Anmassung auf vollkommene persönliche Unfehlbarkeit herbeigeführt hat? Es ist eine Anmassung, die viele Leute haben. Ich hatte sie auch in meiner Jugend, und wenn ich jetzt in diesem Punkte andern gegenüber so empfindlich bin, so ist es nur darum, weil ich selbst die grösste Mühe hatte, davon frei zu werden. Meine Eltern hatten mich daran gewöhnt, nicht nach dem Diktat meines eigenen Wesens zu handeln, sondern nach einer moralischen Regel, die ausser mir stand und die ihnen auf alle Menschen anwendbar schien, sodass unter den gleichen Umständen jeder andere, so sehr er sich auch von mir unterscheiden mochte, die gleiche moralische Forderung vor sich sehen müsste, der er nicht entfliehen könnte, ohne Niederlagen zu erleiden und sich den Tadel der andern zuzuziehen, was noch nicht so schlimm wäre wie die Selbstverachtung, die meine Erziehung mir eingeprägt hatte, um mich mir unerträglich zu machen. In irgendeinem Zusammenhang nicht so zu handeln, wie ich handeln sollte, schien mir so verabscheuenswert, dass jeder innere Friede dadurch unmöglich gemacht würde, dieser Friede, ohne den ich nicht leben zu können glaubte, während im Gegenteil... Aber in dieser Zeit durfte ich nicht zugeben, konnte ich nicht einmal ahnen, dass das Neue und Eigenartige, das jeder Mensch in sich trägt, nicht nur der verächtlichste Teil seines Wesens sein müsse. Hier kommt ein grosser Irrtum ans Licht. Wer gewohnt ist, sich immer dem allgemeinen Massstab zu fügen, billigt ausserhalb dieses Maßstabs keine andere Herrschaft als die des Vergnügens. Ein Mensch scheint ihm Sklave, wenn er seinen Leidenschaften nachgibt, und wenn er sich seiner Leidenschaften entledigt hat und nur der Pflicht lebt, ist er für ihn kein Sklave mehr, sondern er scheint ihm frei, weil die Sklaverei, die er auf sich nimmt, eine moralische, banale und allgemein gebilligte Sklaverei ist. Er ruft aus: Oh, Herr, befreie uns von uns selbst, und die einzige Möglichkeit sich zu befreien, besteht für ihn darin, seinen ~~Gott~~ Denken, seinen Willen, sein Ich zu beugen, bis kein Wünschen mehr in ihm übrigbleibt, zu dem sein moralisches Ich nicht vollste Zustimmung geben könnte; so findet er die Illusion, frei zu handeln, wo schon allein seine Wahl nicht mehr frei ist, und der Zwang, dem er sich beugt, und die Mühe, die er dabei empfindet, bestätigen ihm zugleich den Irrtum, in den ihn seine Natur drängte und die Wahrheit dieses Maßstabs, der seinen aufrichtigsten Regungen Gewalt antut und sie entstellt.

Aber die strenge puritanische Erziehung, durch die meine Eltern meine Kindheit geformt hatten, die Gewohnheit und das Bedürfnis nach Disziplin liessen mich, als ich ~~end~~ den allgemeinen Maßregeln entrückt war, etwas ganz anderes ahnen als ein einfaches Sichgehenlassen, sodass ich nur die Schultern zuckte, wenn man mir vorwarf, ich könne nichts anderes anerkennen als die Lockungen des Vergnügens. Die Wiederentdeckung des naiven unter dem künstlichen Wesen schien mir keine so leichte Aufgabe, und diese neue Lebensregel, die ich mir zu eigen machte: nur nach den Gesetzen grösster Aufrichtigkeit zu handeln, erforderte eine

Entschlusskraft, eine Klarsichtigkeit, eine Anstrengung, die meinen ganzen Willen anspannte, sodass ich mir niemals moralischer schien als zu der Zeit, wo ich mir vorgenommen hatte, es nicht mehr zu sein, d.h. es nur noch auf meine Art zu sein. Und ich kam zu der Einsicht, dass die vollkommene Aufrichtigkeit, die meiner Ansicht nach den höchsten Wert eines Menschen ausmacht, die Aufrichtigkeit nicht nur in der Handlungsweise, sondern auch in ihrer Motivierung - nur zu erreichen ist mit der beharrlichsten, unermüdlichsten Anstrengung, mit dem klarsten Blick - ich verstehe darunter den geringsten Anschein von Selbstgefälligkeit und das grösste Mass an Ironie.

Bald schien es mir, als hätte ich fast gar nichts gewonnen, als handelte ich nur noch nach dem besten Motif, solange ich meine Handlungen einer Billigung unterwarf, die vorher eine Art von Überlegung und geistiger Abwägung erforderte, wodurch die Handlung verzögert und gehemmt wurde. So wählte ich seitdem die unvorbereitete, spontane Handlung als die einzige, die für mich in Betracht kam. Es schien mir, als würde meine Handlung umso aufrichtiger, wenn ich vor ihr alle Beweggründe wegfegte, durch die ich sie vorher zu rechtfertigen versucht hatte. Seitdem handle ich,ohne zu fragen, wie und ohne mir Zeit zur Überlegung zu lassen, und meine geringsten Taten scheinen mir bedeutender, seit sie nicht mehr begründet sind. So habe ich mich gleichzeitig von der Sorge, der Ratlosigkeit und dem Gewissen befreit. Vielleicht ist diese innere Gymnastik, der ich mich zuerst unterzog, nicht unnötig gewesen, vielleicht hat sie mir dazu verholfen, diesen Zustand der Freude zu erlangen, der mich meine Tat gutheissen liess, schon um des Vergnügens willen, das ich bei meinem Tun empfand.

Die Griechen, die uns nicht nur durch ihre Statuen, sondern auch durch sich selbst ein so schönes Abbild der Menschheit hinterlassen haben, kannten so viele Götter wie Instinkte, und ihr Problem bestand darin, den inneren Olymp im Gleichgewicht zu halten und nicht einen der Götter zu unterdrücken und herabzusetzen.

Wer die Menschheit liebt, wird ihr weniger mit seinen Taten Nutzen bringen als mit seinem Beispiel, ich möchte sagen, mit seinem Gesicht selbst, mit dem Bild, das er veranschaulicht, wenn es Glück und Aufrichtigkeit ausströmt.

"Ein glücklicher und intelligenter Gesichtsausdruck ist das Ende der Kultur," sagt Emerson, und das ist ein befriedigender Erfolg, denn er beweist, dass das Ziel der Natur und der Weisheit erreicht ist."

II.

Unsere Selbstgefälligkeit bewirkt, dass wir jedes Gefühl in uns übertreiben; oft leidet man nicht so sehr, wie man sich einbildet zu leiden.

Ich habe niemals entsagen können. Weil ich in mir die guten und schlechten Elemente gleichermassen begünstigte, habe ich nach allen Seiten gelebt. Aber wie soll ich erklären, dass dies Zusammenleben der Extreme in mir nicht so viel Unruhe und Leid mit sich brachte als vielmehr eine pathetische Verstärkung des Daseins-, des Lebensgefühls. Die entgegengesetztesten Strömungen haben nie ein gequältes Geschöpf aus mir machen können, denn die Qual begleitet einen Zustand, den man loswerden will, und ich wollte diesen Zustand gar nicht loswerden, der alle Wirkungsmöglichkeiten meines Wesens in Schwung brachte. Dieser Dialogzustand, der für so viele andere fast unerträglich ist, wurde für mich notwendig. Vielleicht auch deshalb, weil er bei den andern nur schädlich auf die Handlungsfähigkeit wirkt, während er bei mir nicht zur Unfruchtbarkeit führte, sondern mich im Gegenteil zum Kunstschaffen aufforderte und unmittelbar dem Schöpfungsprozess vorausging und mich so zu einem Gleichgewciht, zur Harmonie führte.

Man muss doch zugeben, dass für viele Seelen, wie ich glaube, für die am meisten abgehärteten, das Glück nicht in der Bequemlichkeit und in der Ruhe, sondern in dem Feuer der Bewegtheit liegt. Sie wünschen sich umsomehr eine innere Verbrennung, als sie sich darin unaufhörlich erneuern, und sie leiden nicht so sehr unter der Erschöpfung, wie sie ihre ewige Wiedergeburt geniessen. Ich kann ihnen von mir sagen, dass ich das Altern nur in dieser Ruhe eben empfunden habe, zu der ihre Moral einlädt,und die sie oft gerade dann nicht finden, wenn sie sich sehnsüchtig um sie bemühen. Ihr Glaube an das Seelenleben nach dem Tode wird genährt durch das Bedürfnis nach Ruhe und ~~die~~ durch die Verzweiflung, weil ihnen ihr Genuss auf Erden versagt ist.

Soll ich ihnen sagen, was michdavon abhält, an das ewige Leben zu glauben? Es ist die fast vollkommene Befriedigung, die ich in der Bemühung selbst und in der unmittelbaren Verwirklichung des Glücks und der Harmonie empfinde.

III.

Ich glich dem verlorenen Sohn, der all seine Güter vergeudet. Und dieser unwägbare Schatz, den die träge Tugend meiner Väter von Generation zu Generation geduldig für mich aufgespart hatte, nein, ich verachtete seinen Wert nicht. Aber der unbekannte Gewinn, den ich erhoffen konnte, wenn ich auf alles Feste verzichtete, schien mir bedeutend kostbarer. Wie eine Feuersäule leuchteten die Worte Christi vor mir auf, die ein erwähltes Volk durch die Nacht führen sollten, und in dieser tiefen Finsternis, die ich durchstreifen wollte, wiederholte ich sie immer aufs neue: "Verkaufe, was Du hast und gib es den Armen!" Mein Herz war erfüllt von Furcht und Freude, oder vielmehr von der Furcht vor meiner Freude. Denn es handelte sich nicht mehr darum, dachte ich, diese göttlichen Worte auszudeuten, um

das vollendete Glück zu erlangen. Es handäte sich darum, sie unumschränkt aufzunehmen, sie zu verstehen "im Geiste und in Wahrheit"; endlich handelte es sich vor allem darum, sie in die Wirklichkeit umzusetzen, denn, wie es im Evangelium heisst: "wer diese meine Rede hört und tut sie nicht ..."

Ich fing also an zu untersuchen, welche der Gedanken, Meinungen, Seelen- und Geistesarten, die mir am vertrautesten waren, ich am ehesten von meinen Vorfahren, meiner Erziehung, meiner puritanischen Bildung ererbt haben könnte, dieser Art moralischer Atmosphäre, die zuerst meine Stärke ausmachte und in der ich dann zu ersticken begann. Da ich das Abwerfen aller Äusserlichkeiten bis zum Extrem, ja bis zum Absurden trieb, wäre ich zweifellos zu einer völligen Verarmung gekommen - denn "was besitzt Du, das Du nicht ererbt hättest?" - aber andererseits war es gerade die völlige Verarmung, die ich als das höchste der Güter begehrte. So war ich entschlossen, auf jeden persönlichen Besitz zu verzichten und überzeugt davon, dass ich nur dann nach der Erreichbarkeit alles Möglichen trachten dürfe, wenn ich nichts mehr mein eigen nannte, und ich verschmähte jede persönliche Meinung, jede Gewohnheit, jedes Schamgefühl, meine Tugend selbst, wie man eine Tunika abwirft, um einen schattenlosen Körper der Berührung mit Welle, Wind und Sonne darzubieten. Gestärkt durch diese Entsagungen, empfand ich meine Seele bald nur noch als einen freischwingenden Willen? (volonté aimante) ja, so bezeichnete ich es für mich - der erzitternd allem Kommenden offenstand, allem gleich war, dabei unpersönlich, ein unbefangenes Nebeneinander von Gelüsten, Genäschigkeiten und Begierden. Und wenn ich vielleicht erschrocken gewesen wäre über die Verwirrung, in die mich diese Anarchie führte, konnte ich mich ja sogleich beruhigen bei dem Gedanken an die Worte Christi: "Warum fürchtet ihr euch?" So lieferte ich mich dieser provisorischen Verwirrung aus, in dem Glauben an eine echtere und natürlichere Ordnung, die aus sich selbst entstehen würde, wie ich meinte, und im übrigen fand ich die Verwirrung weniger schädlich für meine Seele als eine willkürliche Ordnung, die notwendigerweise erkünstelt wäre, weil ich sie ja nicht erfunden hätte. Göttlicher Strahl? rief ich aus, was sich Dir widersetzt, ist es nicht vor allem diese falsche menschliche Vernunft, die aus Angst, Mißtrauen und Hochmut geboren wird? Dir zuliebe verzichte ich auf alles. Dir liefere ich mich aus. Nimm allen Schatten von mir. ~~Begrixxerx~~ Entflamme mich!

Als ich dann erkannte, dass nichts uns mehr von Gott entfernt als der Hochmut, und dass nichts mich hochmütiger machte als meine Tugend, befiel mich ein Abscheu vor meiner Tugend und allem, womit ich prahlen könnte, was mich zu sagen veranlassen könnte: ich bin nicht wie Du, ein gewöhnlicher Sterblicher. Ich weiss wohl, dass dieses Übermass an Entsagung, diese Verleugnung der Tugend aus Liebe zur Tugend selbst,dem ehrfürchtigen Leser als ein schrecklicher Sophismus erscheinen wird. Paradox oder Sophismus, die seither mein Leben bestimmten, ob der d Teufel sie mir diktierte, werde ich in der Folge untersuchen. Im Augenblick genügt es mir zu sagen, dass ich mutig auf diesem neuen Weg vorwärtsschritt. Aber was heisst Weg? Mit jedem Schritt nach vorn drang ich ins Abenteuer mit dem Unbekannten.

Aus "Nourritures terrestres"
von André Gide.

Lass Dich nicht irreführen, Nathanael, durch den groben Titel, den ich für mein Buch gewählt habe. Ich hätte es Menalchus nennen können, aber Menalchus hat ebensowenig existiert, wie Du selbst. Nur der Name Mensch ist mein Eigentum, womit dieses Buch sich decken könnte, aber wie hätte ich dann wagen sollen, es zu unterzeichnen?

Ich habe mich ohne Vorbereitungen, ohne Schamgefühl daran gemacht, und wenn ich darin manchmal von Ländern spreche, die ich nie gesehen, von Düften, die ich nie gespürt, von Handlungen, die ich nie begangen habe,- oder von Dir, mein Nathanael, dem ich noch nicht begegnet bin,- so tue ich es nicht aus Heuchelei, und diese Dinge sind ebensowenig erlogen, wie Dein Name, Nathanael, der Du mich lesen wirst, den ich Dir gebe, da ich den Deinen noch nicht kenne.

Und wenn Du mich gelesen haben wirst, wirf dieses Buch weg und geh fort. Es soll Dir den Wunsch eingeben, fortzugehen, fortzugehen, ganz gleich von wo, von Deiner Stadt, von Deiner Familie, von Deinem Zimmer, von Deinen Gedanken. Nimm mein Buch nicht mit Dir. Wenn ich Menalchus wäre, würde ich Deine rechte Hand nehmen, um Dich zu führen, aber Deine Linke würde es nicht wissen, und diese Hand, die ich gedrückt hätte, ich würde sie loslassen, sobald wir fern von den Städten wären und ich würde Dir sagen: Vergiss mich! Möge mein Buch Dich lehren, Dich mehr für Dich als für es selbst zu interessieren, und dann mehr für alles andere als für Dich.

Suche nicht, Nathanael, Gott anderswo als überall zu finden.

Jede Kreatur weist zu Gott hin, keine offenbart ihn.

Sobald unser Blick sich bei ihr aufhält, wendet uns jede Kreatur von Gott ab.

Wohin Du auch gehst, Du wirst immer nur Gott begegnen. Gott, sagte Menalchus, ist das, was vor uns ~~xxxxx~~ ist.

Nathanael, Du wirst alles im Vorübergehen aufnehmen und Dich nirgends aufhalten. Präg' es Dir ein, dass Gott allein nicht provisorisch ist.

Nathanael, die Bedeutung sei in Deinem Blick, nicht in dem betrachteten Gegenstand.

Alles, was Du in Dir an unterscheidendem Bewusstsein bewahrst, wird sich von Dir unterscheiden bis ans Ende der Zeiten. Warum legst Du soviel Wert darauf?

Die Wünsche bringen Gewinn und die Befriedigung der Wünsche bringt Gewinn, weil sie dadurch vermehrt werden. Denn, ich sage es Dir in Wahrheit, Nathanael, jeder Wunsch hat mich mehr bereichert als der immer enttäuschende Besitz des Gegenstandes meiner Wünsche selbst.

...

Keine Sympathie, Nathanael, nur Liebe.

Für viele köstliche Dinge, Nathanael, habe ich mich an Liebe verbraucht. Ihr Glanz kam daher, dass ich unaufhörlich für sie glühte.

Ich wurde nicht müde dabei. Jede Glut war mir ein Verbrauch an Liebe,- ein köstlicher Verbrauch.

Ich war ein Kezter unter den Ketzerischen, immer zogen mich die abwegigsten Lehren an, die äussersten Umwege der Gedanken, die Abweichungen vom Gewöhnlichen. An jedem fremden Geist interessierte mich nur das, was ihn von andern unterschied.- Es gelang mir, die Sympathie aus mir zu vertreiben, weil ich darin nichts als ein allgemeines Gefühl wiedererkannte. Keine Sympathie, Nathanael,- nur Liebe.

Lieber ein dynamisch gesteigertes Leben, als die Ruhe. Ich wünsche mir keine andere Rast, als die im Todesschlaf. Ich fürchte, dass jeder Wunsch, jede Forderung, die ich nicht während meines Lebens erfüllt hätte, mich durch ihr Weiterleben quälen würden. Ich hoffe, wenn ich auf dieser Welt alles, was in mir wartete, ausgedrückt haben werde,- erfüllt, - völlig verzweifelt zu sterben.

Keine Sympathie, Nathanael, nur Liebe. Nicht wahr, Du verstehst, dass es nicht dasselbe ist. Aus Furcht, die Liebe zu verlieren, habe ich manchmal mit der Traurigkeit, dem Überdruss, dem Schmerz sympathisiert, die ich sonst kaum ertragen hätte. - Lass einem jeden die Sorge um sein Leben.

Du wirst dem gleich sein, Nathanael, der sich führen lässt von einem Licht, das er selbst in der Hand trägt.

Nathanael, ich möchte Dir eine Freude schenken, die Dir noch kein anderer gegeben hat. Ich weiss nicht, wie ich sie Dir mitteilen soll, und dennoch besitze ich sie, diese Freude. - Ich möchte mich viel intimer an Dich wenden, als es je ein anderer getan hat. Ich möchte zu dieser Stunde der Nacht kommen, wenn Du hintereinander viele Bücher auf- und wieder zugeschlagen hast, weil Du in jedem mehr suchtest, als es Dir enthüllen konnte; wenn Du noch wartest, wenn Deine Glut sich in Traurigkeit wandelt, weil Du Dich nicht gehoben fühlst. Ich schreibe nur für Dich. Ich schreibe Dir nur für diese Stunden. Ich möchte ein solches Buch schreiben, in dem Dir jeder Gedanke, jedes persönliche Gefühl zu fehlen schiene, in dem Du nur die Übertragung Deiner eigenen Glut zu sehen glaubtest. Ich möchte mich Dir nähern, damit Du mich liebst.

Die Melancholie ist nur erstickte Glut.

Jedes Wesen ist fähig zur Entblössung; jedes Gefühl zum Überschwang.

Meine Gefühle haben sich geweitet wie eine Religion. Kannst Du das verstehen: jedes Empfinden ist unendliche Gegenwart.

Nathanael, ich werde Dich das Glühen lehren. - Unsere Taten heften sich an uns, wie der Schein an den Phosphor. Sie zehren uns auf, das ist wahr, aber sie geben uns unsern Glanz.

Und wenn unsre Seele etwas wert gewesen ist, so nur darum, weil sie heisser gebrannt hat, als einige andere.

Ich habe euch gesehen, ihr Felder, die ihr im weissen Morgenlicht badet; ihr blauen Seen, ich habe in euren Fluten geschwommen -

und ich werde nicht müde, Dir zu wiederholen, Nathanael, dass jede Liebkosung der lachenden Luft mich lächeln gemacht hat; ich werde Dich das Glühen lehren.

Wenn ich von schöneren Dingen gewusst hätte, ich hätte Dir von diesen gesprochen - von diesen, wahrlich von diesen und keinen anderen.

Nicht Weisheit hast Du mich gelehrt, Menalchus - nicht Weisheit, aber Liebe.

...

Jedes Lächeln, das ich auf fremden Lippen fand, ich hätte es küssen mögen. Das Blut auf den Wangen, die Tränen in den Augen, ich hätte sie trinken mögen; in das Fleisch aller Früchte beissen, die sich von den Ästen mir zuneigten. Bei jeder Herberge grüsste mich der Hunger, bei jeder Quelle erwartete mich der Durst - ein Durst, der bei einer jeden anders war. Und ich wollte, es gäbe andere Worte, um andere Wünsche zu bezeichnen:

Worte des Schreitens, wenn sich ein Weg öffnete,
Worte der Ruhe, wenn ein Schatten einlud,
Worte des Schwimmens am Rande der tiefen Gewässer,
Worte der Liebe oder des Schlafes am Rand eines Bettes.

Ich habe kühn meine Hand auf jedes Ding gelegt und mir Rechte auf jedes Objekt meiner Wünsche zugestanden. - (Und übrigens, was wir wünschen, Nathanael, ist nicht so sehr der Besitz als die Liebe.) Vor meinen Augen wird alles irisierend, alle Schönheit kleidet sich schimmernd in meine Liebe.

LL

Wo Du nicht sagen kannst, gut, sag: dann nicht; Nathanael, darin liegt ein grosses Glücksversprechen.

Es gibt Menschen, die die Glücksmomente als von Gott gegeben betrachten - und die andern, von wem sollten sie gegeben sein, wenn nicht von Gott?

Nathanael, setze keinen Unterschied zwischen Gott und Dein Glück.

Ich kann Gott nicht mehr dafür dankbar sein, mich geschaffen zu haben, als ich es ihm übelnehmen würde, nicht zu sein,- wenn ich nicht wäre.

Nathanael, man soll von Gott nur natürlich sprechen.

Ich sehe wohl ein, dass die einmal anerkannte Existenz der Erde, des Menschen, meiner selbst natürlich scheint, aber was meinen Verstand verwirrt, ist die Bestürzung, es selber wahrzunehmen...

Auch ich habe Loblieder gesungen und ich habe geschrieben

die Runde
der schönsten Beweise für die Existenz Gottes.

Nathanaël, ich werde Dich lehren, dass die schönsten dichterischen Regungen die sind, in denen sich tausendundein Beweis der Existenz Gottes ausdrückt. Nicht wahr, Du verstehst, dass es sich hier nicht darum handelt, sie anzuführen, vor allem nicht darum, sie einfach anzu führen;- und dann gibt es solche, die nur die Existenz beweisen, und was uns fehlt, ist auch der Beweis ihrer Fortdauer.
Oh ja, ich weiss wohl, dass es das Argument des heiligen Anselm gibt.
Und die Geschichte von den vollkommenen Inseln der Seligen.-
Aber, leider, Nathanael, kann nicht jeder dort wohnen.

Ich weiss, dass es die Übereinstimmung der Mehrzahl gibt.-
Aber Du glaubst an die kleine Zahl der Erwählten.
Es gibt den Beweis dafür, dass zwei mal zwei vier ist.-
Aber, Nathanael, nicht jeder kann rechnen.

Es gibt den Beweis für die erste treibende Kraft,
weil der eine vor dem andern da war.
Nathanael, es ist schade, dass wir nicht dabei gewesen sind -
Wir hätten gesehen, wie der Mann geschaffen wurde - und die Frau,
wie sie staunten, nicht als kleine Kinder geboren zu sein;
und die Zedern von Elbrouz, die müde, schon hundertjährig geboren waren,
Und die Berge, schon ausgehöhlt von den Wassern.
Nathanael, dass wir nicht zur Morgendämmerung dagewesen sind! Waren wir zu faul, um aufzustehen? - Wünschtest Du nicht zu leben? Ach, ich wünschte es bestimmt. Aber zu dieser Zeit war der Geist Gottes wohl kaum erwacht, er hatte so lange ausser der Zeit über den Wassern geruht. - Wenn ich dabei gewesen wäre, Nathanael, ich hätte ihn gebeten, alles ein wenig grenzenloser zu machen, - und antworte mir nicht, dass nichts und niemand etwas davon gemerkt hätte.
Es gibt den Beweis durch die letzten Ursachen.
Aber nicht alle finden, dass der Zweck die Mittel heiligt.
Es gibt Menschen, die Gott beweisen durch die Liebe, die man für ihn empfindet. Deshalb, Nathanael, habe ich alles Gott genannt, was ich liebe, und ich hätte alles lieben mögen. Fürchte nicht, dass ich es Dir aufzählen werde... übrigens würde ich nicht bei Dir anfangen; ich habe viele Dinge den Menschen vorgezogen, und nicht sie habe ich über alles auf Erden geliebt. Denn Du darfst Dich darin nicht täuschen, Nathanael, was am stärksten in mir ist, ist gewiss nicht die Güte, - und ich glaube auch nicht am besten - und es ist auch nicht die Güte, die ich am meisten bei den Menschen achte. Nathanael, stelle Deinen Gott über sie. Auch ich habe Gott gelobt, ich habe für ihn Gesänge geschrieben, und ich glaube, ich habe dabei fast ein wenig übertrieben.

-"Macht Dir das Spass, sagte er zu mir, solche Systeme aufzustellen?
- Nichts macht mir mehr Spass als eine Ethik, antwortete ich,

und ich befriedige damit meinen Geist. Ich geniesse keine Freude, wenn ich sie ihm nicht zuführen kann.
- Und erhöht das die Freude?
- Nein, sagte ich, aber es legitimiert sie vor mir."

Gewiss, es hat mir zuweilen gefallen, dass eine Doktrin und sogar ein vollständig geordnetes Gedankensystem meine Handlungen vor mir selbst rechtfertigte; aber oft habe ich darin nur das Obdach meiner Sinnlichkeit sehen können.

. . . . . .

Oh, wenn Du wüsstest, wenn Du wüsstest, Erde, die Du uralt bist und so jung, wie bitter und süss, wie köstlich das kurze Menschenleben schmeckt.

Wenn Du wüsstest, ewige Idee des Daseins, was die nahe Todeserwartung dem Augenblick an Wert verleiht.

Oh, Frühling! Die Pflanzen, die nur ein Jahr leben, drängen ihre schwachen Blüten stärker empor;- der Mensch hat nur einen Frühling im Leben und der Nachklang einer Freude ist nicht Nein neuer Zugang zum Glück.

...

Sendung.

Jetzt wirf mein Buch fort, Nathanael. Mach Dich frei davon. Verlass mich. Verlass mich, jetzt belästigst Du mich; Du hältst mich zurück; die Liebe, in die ich mich für Dich gesteigert habe, beschäftigt mich zu sehr. Ich bin es müde, so zu tun, als wolle ich jemanden erziehen. Wann habe ich gesagt, dass ich Dich nach meinem Vorbild ~~/~~ formen wollte? Weil Du anders bist, als ich, liebe ich Dich. Ich liebe in Dir nur das, was anders ist. Erziehen!- Wen könnte ich denn erziehen, ausser mir selbst? Nathanael, soll ich es Dir sagen? ich habe mich unaufhörlich erzogen. Ich fahre fort. Ich achte mich nur in dem, was ich tun könnte.

Nathanael, wirf mein Buch fort, begnüge Dich nicht damit. Glaube nicht, dass Deine Wahrheit von irgendeinem andern gefunden werden könnte. Schäme Dich, wenn Du das denkst. Wenn ich Dir Deine Nahrung suchen würde, hättest Du keinen Hunger, sie zu essen; wenn ich Dir Dein Bett machen würde, wärest Du nicht müde, um darin zu schlafen.

Wirf mein Buch fort; merk es Dir, dass darin nur eine von tausend möglichen Haltungen dem Leben gegenüber angedeutet ist. Suche die Deinige. Was ein anderer genau so gut getan hätte, wie Du, tu es nicht. Was ein anderer genau so gut gesagt hätte wie Du, sag es nicht - genau so gut geschrieben wie Du, schreib es nicht. Binde Dich in Dir nur an das, was Du nirgends anders als in Dir selbst weisst, und forme aus Dir, ungeduldig oder geduldig, das unersetzlichste der Wesen.

MA BOHÈME

(Arthur Rimbaud)

Ich ging, die Haende in zerfetzten Taschen -
mein Paletot war nur noch Illusion.
Ich war, oh Muse, Dein getreuer Sohn
und wollte gern von jeder Liebe naschen.

Ein Loch war in der Hose und im Schuh -
doch Reime fand ich auf dem Weg wie Beeren;
ich traeumte, dass die Sterne Frauen waeren
und hoerte ihrem zarten Knistern zu.

So sass ich manche Nacht am Strassengraben,
um meine Stirn mit frischem Tau zu laben,
und fuellte mich mit Kraft und Lebenslust.

So sass ich reimend in der Schattenruhe
und zog die Baender meiner wunden Schuhe
wie Leiersaiten gegen meine Brust.

BALLADE VILLON

Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine,
Chauld comme feu, et tremble dent à dent,
En mon païs suis en terre loingtaine;
Lez un brazier fiçonne tout ardent;
Nu comme ung ver, vestu en president;
Je ris en pleurs et attens sans espoir;
Confort reprens en triste desespoir;
Je m'esjouys et n'ay plaisir aucun;
Puissant je suis sans force et sans povoir;
Bien recueilly, debouté de chascun.

Rien ne m'est seur que la chose incertaine;
Obscur, fors ce qui est tout évident;
Doubte ne fais, fors en chose certaine;
Science tiens à soudain accident;
Je gaigne tout, et demeure perdant;
Aud point du jour, diz: "Dieu vous doint bon soir!"
Gisant envers, j'ay grant paour de cheoir;
J'ay bien de quoy, et si n'en ay pas un;
Eschoicte attens, et d'homme ne suis hoir;
Bien receuilly, debouté de chascun.

De rien n'ay soing, si metz toute ma paine
D'acquerir biens, et n'y suis pretendant;
Qui mieulx me dit, c'est cil qui plus m'attaine,
Et qui plus vray, lors plus me va bourdant;
Mon ami est qui me fait entendant
D'ung cygne blanc que c'est ung corbeau noir;
Et qui me nuyst croy qu'il m'aide à povoir.
Vérité, bourde, aujourd'huy m'est tout un.
Je retiens tout, riens ne sçay concepvoir;
Bien receuilly, debouté de chascun.

L'ENVOI

Prince clement, or vous plaise savoir
Que j'entens moult, et n'ay sens ne sçavoir;
Parcial suis, à toutes lois commun.
Que fais je plus? Quoy? Les gaiges ravoir,
Bien receuilly, debouté de chascun.

TO THE LATER-BORN

Truly, I live in times of darkness!

The harmless word is foolish. A smooth forehead
Suggests a lack of sensitivity. The laughing one
Has not yet received
The terrible news.

What times are these, when
A talk about trees is almost a crime
Because it implies a silence about so many misdeeds!
The one there calmly crossing the street,
Can he still be reached by his friends
Who are in need?

It is true: I still earn a living.
But believe me: this is pure chance. Nothing
Of what I do gives me the right to eat my fill.
By chance I have been spared. (When my luck runs out
I'll be lost.)
They tell me: Go on eating and drinking! Be glad you can!
But how can I eat and drink if
I grab from the starving what I eat and
My glass of water is what the dying craves?
And yet I am eating and drinking.

I also would like to be wise.
The old books tell you what wisdom is:
To keep out of the strife of the world and to spend
The short time without fear.
Also to do without violence
To return good for evil
Not to fulfill your wishes but to forget
Is considered wisdom.
All this I cannot do:
Truly, I live in times of darkness!

2

Into the cities I came at the time of disorder
When hunger prevailed.
Among the people I went at the time of revolt
And I rebelled with them.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

My food I ate between battles.
My bed I spread among murderers.
To love I attended without care
And nature I saw without patience.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

The roads led into the swamp in my time.
My speech betrayed me to the butcher.
I accomplished little. But the rulers
Sat more securely without me, so I hoped.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

The strength was limited. The goal
Remote in the distance.
It was clear to the view, though hardly
Within my reach.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

3

You who will emerge from the flood
In which we perished
Remember
When you speak of our frailties
Also the time of darkness
Which you have escaped.

Changing the countries more frequently than our shoes
We went through the wars of the classes, despairing
When there was only injustice and no rebellion.

And yet we know:
Even hatred against corruption
Distorts the features.
Even anger about injustice
Makes the voice hoarse. Oh, we
Who meant to prepare the ground for kindness
Could not be kind ourselves.

But you, when the time will come
For man to be a helper of man
Remember us
With forbearance.

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It is true: I still earn a living.
But believe me: this is pure chance. Nothing
Of what I do gives me the right to eat my fill.
By chance I have been spared. (When my luck runs out
I'll be lost.)
They tell me: Go on eating and drinking! Be glad you can!
But how can I eat and drink if
I grab from the starving what I eat and
My glass of water is what the dying craves?
And yet I am eating and drinking.

I also would like to be wise.
The old books tell you what wisdom is:
To keep out of the strife of the world and to spend
The short time without fear.
Also to do without violence
To return good for evil
Not to fulfill your wishes but to forget
Is considered wisdom.
All this I cannot do:
Truly, I live in times of darkness!

Into the cities I came at the time of disorder
When hunger prevailed.
Among the people I went at the time of revolt
And I rebelled with them.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

My food I ate between battles.
My bed I spread among murderers.
To love I attended without care
And nature I saw without patience.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

The roads led into the swamp in my time.
My speech betrayed me to the butcher.
I accomplished little. But the rulers
Sat more securely without me, so I hoped.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

The strength was limited. The goal
Remote in the distance.
It was clear to the view, though hardly
Within my reach.
Thus I spent the time
That was given to me on earth.

3

You who will emerge from the flood
In which we perished
Remember
When you speak of our frailties
Also the time of darkness
Which you have escaped.

Changing the countries more frequently than our shoes
We went through the wars of the classes, despairing
When there was only injustice and no rebellion.

And yet we know:
Even hatred against corruption
Distorts the features.
Even anger about injustice
Makes the voice hoarse. Oh, we
Who meant to prepare the ground for kindness
Could not be kind ourselves.

But you, when the time will come
For man to be a helper of man
Remember us
With forbearance.

FRANCOIS VILLON

BALLAD

I die of thirst close to the flowing fountains;
Aglow with heat, my teeth are chattering;
In my low homeland I'm on distant mountains,
And near the stove I can't help shivering;
Bare as a worm, yet vested as a king,
I laugh through tears and wait in hopelessness,
Finding my solace in the worst distress,
I live for pleasures, though enjoying none;
While potent, I am weak and powerless,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

Nothing seems sure to me but the uncertain,
Nothing obscure but what is evident;
I do not doubt a thing unless it's certain;
I hold that science is pure accident;
In winning all I lose each single cent;
When day appears, I say: "God bless your night!"
Flat on the ground I'm frightened by the height;
I'm well-to-do, though money I have none;
Expecting legacies, I have no legal right,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

I care for nothing, using no excuses
To strive for goods which not for me are meant;
He serves me best who heaps me with abuses
And speaks the truth the more he's insolent;
My friend is he who proves in argument
That a white swan's a raven black as night;
And he who hurts me helps me out of spite.
It's one to me if right or wrong is done.
My thoughts escape the more I hold them tight,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

L'ENVOI

Most clement Prince, I beg you to believe
That words I know, though sense I can't perceive;
Mine is the law that rules the common run.
What most I do? Why? Wages I retrieve,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

RECEUILLEMENT

Sei brav, mein Schmerz, und etwas mehr gelassen.
Du riefst die Nacht: sie steigt herab, kommt her,
Die Stadt mit ihrem Dunkel zu umfassen,
Das friedlich sein mag oder sorgenschwer.

Wenn dann die menschlichen gemeinen Massen,
Gepeitscht von gnadenloser Lustbegier,
Im Fest die Reue finden auf bereiten Gassen,
Gib mir die Hand, mein Schmerz, bleib ihnen hier

Ganz fern. Sieh die verstorbnen Jahre an den Raengen
Des Himmels in verjaehrten Trachten haengen,
Den laechelnden Verlust, der auf den Wassern gleitet,

Im Totenschlaf die Sonne unter einem Bogen,
Und wie ein langes Leichentuch zum Osten hingezogen,
Hoerst du, mein Herz, die Nacht, wie sanft sie schreitet?

BALLADE VILLON

Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine,
Chauld comme feu, et tremble dent à dent,
En mon païs suis en terre loingtaine;
Lez un brazier fiçonne tout ardent;
Nu comme ung ver, vestu en president;
Je ris en pleurs et attens sans espoir;
Confort reprens en triste desespoir;
Je m'esjouys et n'ay plaisir aucun;
Puissant je suis sans force et sans povoir;
Bien recueilly, debouté de chascun.

Rien ne m'est seur que la chose incertaine;
Obscur, fors ce qui est tout évident;
Doubte ne fais, fors en chose certaine;
Science tiens à soudain accident;
Je gaigne tout, et demeure perdant;
Aud point du jour, diz: "Dieu vous doint bon soir!"
Gisant envers, j'ay grant paour de cheoir;
J'ay bien de quoy, et si n'en ay pas un;
Eschoicte attens, et d'homme ne suis hoir;
Bien receuilly, debouté de chascun.

De rien n'ay soing, si metz toute ma paine
D'acquerir biens, et n'y suis pretendant;
Qui mieulx me dit, c'est cil qui plus m'attaine,
Et qui plus vray, lors plus me va bourdant;
Mon ami est qui me fait entendant
D'ung cygne blanc que c'est ung corbeau noir;
Et qui me nuyst croy qu'il m'aide à povoir.
Vérité, bourde, aujourd'huy m'est tout un.
Je retiens tout, riens ne sçay concepvoir;
Bien receuilly, debouté de chascun.

L'ENVOI

Prince clement, or vous plaise savoir
Que j'entens moult, et n'ay sens ne sçavoir;
Parcial suis, à toutes lois commun.
Que fais je plus? Quoy? Les gaiges ravoir,
Bien receuilly, debouté de chascun.

FRANCOIS VILLON

BALLAD

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Aglow with heat, my teeth are chattering;
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Und wie ein langes Leichentuch zum Osten hingezogen,
Hoerst du, mein Herz, die Nacht, wie sanft sie schreitet?

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

RECUEILLEMENT

Sois sage, ô ma Douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.
Tu réclamais le Soir; il descend; le voici:
Une atmosphère obscure enveloppe la ville,
Aux uns portant la paix, aux autres le souci.

Pendant que des mortels la multitude vile,
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,
Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile,
Ma Douleur, donne-moi la main; viens par ici,

Loin d'eux. Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,
Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;
Surgir du fond des eaux le Regret souriant;

Le Soleil moribond s'endormir sous une arche,
Et, comme un long linceul traînant a l'Orient,
Entends, ma chère, entends la douce Nuit qui marche.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

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Sei brav, mein Schmerz, und etwas mehr gelassen.
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Lola Gruenthal
107 West 86th Street
New York 24, N.Y.

den 6. Februar 1962

Herrn
Max Frisch
Suhrkamp Verlag
Frankfurt am Main

Sehr geehrter Herr Frisch:

Es kommt mir verschroben vor, Sie mit diesen formellen Worten anzureden, nachdem ich die letzten Wochen in Ihrer unmittelbaren Nähe verbracht habe, aber da Sie nichts davon wissen, wuerde es Ihnen noch verschrobener erscheinen, wenn ich die Grenzen der Konvention schon in meiner Anrede ueberschreiten wuerde. Ich fuehle mich ohnehin sehr gehemmt Ihnen gegenueber, weil mir durchaus bewusst ist, dass alles, was ich spontan zum Ausdruck bringen moechte, allzu leicht den Eindruck des Ueberspannten und Ueberschwaenglichen machen koennte. Trotzdem will ich es versuchen.

Ich habe einige Ihrer Werke gelesen, schon vor laengerer Zeit zwei Ihrer frueheren Stuecke und jetzt zuletzt Andorra und das Tagebuch. Dieser letzte Eindruck war so stark, dass ich das zwanghafte Beduerfnis hatte, Ihnen zu schreiben. Andorra las ich hintereinander in einem Zustand innerer Erregung und Erschuetterung, der jeden kritischen Abstand verhinderte. Ich muss es wiederlesen, um mich von dem ueberwaeltigenden Eindruck des unheimlich Tragischen etwas mehr zu distanzieren und es auch in Einzelheiten (besonders vom Gesichtspunkt der dramatischen Entwicklung vielfacher innerer Spiegelungen) bewusster zu erfassen. Beim Lesen des Tagebuchs erging es mir aehnlich. Ich habe alle meine taeglichen Aufgaben vernachlaessigt und mich darauf gestuerzt, wie man es vielleicht als ganz junger Mensch tut, wenn einem ein Dichter als Persoenlichkeit begegnet und einem alles andere daneben unwesentlich erscheint. Eines meiner ersten Erlebnisse dieser Art war die Begegnung mit Andre Gide. Wenn man aelter und angeblich reifer wird, erwartet man kaum noch, von einem gegenwaertigen Kuenstler so persoenlich angesprochen zu werden, und man begnuegt sich damit, die grossen Toten immer wieder zu beschwoeren, um irgendwo eine Gemeinschaft zu fuehlen.

Jetzt bin ich steckengeblieben, weil ich die Stelle suchte, an der Sie ueber die Sympathie des Lesers schreiben, die fuer den Autor in der Auseinandersetzung mit sich selbst den notwendigen Hintergrund darstellt. Entschuldigen Sie die verunglueckte Zusammenziehung Ihres Gedankens, aber ich konnte die Stelle nicht finden, und es ist ja auch nicht noetig, dass ich sie vor Ihnen zitiere. Ich wollte mich nur darauf stuetzen, um zu sagen, dass ich weit mehr als

Sympathie beim Lesen Ihres Tagebuchs empfunden habe. Begeisterung ist das einzige Wort, das mir zutreffend erscheint, obwohl es natuerlich auch ueberschwaenglich klingt, aber es gelingt mir nun einmal nicht, eine wuerdige Haltung einzunehmen. Dankbarkeit ist das naehoste, das mir einfaellt. Jetzt muss ich doch zum mindesten andeuten, was in Ihren Aufzeichnungen diese Gefuehle in mir ausgeloest hat. Vor allem die unerbittliche Ehrlichkeit in Ihrer Untersuchung des eigenen Ich und der verschiedensten Phaenomene unserer "grossen Zeit", die uns auf allen Seiten den Ausblick ins Freie verstellen. Dazu kommt Ihre Hoeflichkeit dem Anderen gegenueber, allem was dem eigenen Wesen und Beduerfnis fremd ist. Ich glaube, der Begriff "Hoeflichkeit", den Sie waehlen, ist ein sehr bescheidenes Wort fuer das schwere Bemuehen, sich der eigenen Vorurteile zu enthalten oder zum mindesten, sich staendig ihres Vorhandenseins bewusst zu bleiben. Ich bewundere Ihren Mut, den Sie wahrscheinlich auch als einen inneren Zwang bezeichnen wuerden, den Mut, sich mit "unbehaglichen Fragen" auseinanderzusetzen und damit die "reine Kunst" als Ausweg zu vermeiden. Gleichzeitig bewundere ich die Form und Farbe Ihres Ausdrucks, die immer dem Inhalt gleichwertig sind, ich bewundere die Einfachheit Ihrer Darstellung bei aller Differenziertheit des Erlebens, die Beziehung zwischen Aussen und Innen, die vollkommen harmonisch wirkt. Ich bewundere auch Ihren Humor und Ihre Guete, die wiederum, wie Sie sagen werden, Bestandteile Ihrer Natur sind (man koennte sie auch als Scheu vor dem Pathos und Weichheit bezeichnen), an denen man ebensowenig aendern kann wie an einer zu langen oder zu kurzen Nase. Jetzt habe ich Sie wieder falsch paraphrasiert, aber ich hoffe, Sie werden auch daran keinen Anstoss nehmen.

Um Sie nicht laenger mit unzulaenglich formulierten - und fuer Sie vielleicht peinlichen - Begruendungen meiner Begeisterung zu ermueden, moechte ich eine durchaus praktische und konkrete Frage an Sie richten. (Aha, werden Sie sagen, jetzt kommt der Haken!) Wuerden Sie bereit sein, mir die englischen Uebersetzungsrechte fuer Ihr Tagebuch zu uebergeben? Ich weiss, dass die "Brandstifter" demnaechst hier aufgefuehrt werden sollen und dass Bemuehungen im Gange sind, die Rechte fuer "Andorra" zu erwerben. Falls die Rechte fuer das "Tagebuch" nicht schon vergeben sind, wuerde es mir als eine ausserordentlich lohnende Aufgabe erscheinen, es fuer das amerikanische Publikum vorzubereiten. Ich wuerde dabei zunaechst an eine Auswahl denken, die moeglichst Verschiedenes enthalten koennte (also nicht nur auf das Tagebuch mit Marion beschraenkt waere) und entweder in Taschenbuchform oder in einer der guten literarischen Zeitschriften hier erscheinen koennte. Finden Sie diese Idee abstossend?

Ich schicke Ihnen mit anderer Post eine Prosauebersetzung von mir, um Sie (hoffentlich!) zu ueberzeugen, dass ich etwas vom Handwerk verstehe. Ich habe mich viele Jahre lang fast ausschliesslich mit Uebersetzungen befasst und mir immer nur Aufgaben gewaehlt, mit denen ich mich weitgehend identifizieren konnte. Zur Zeit arbeite ich am Brooklyn College als "research assistant" an einer Studie ueber "teacher personalities". Soweit ich es uebersehen kann, wuerde diese psychologische Arbeit nicht mit der Uebersetzung konfliktieren, d.h., ich glaube, es liesse sich zeitlich ermoeglichen, besonders wenn ich mich zunaechst nur auf eine Auswahl einstellen wuerde.

Jetzt weiss ich wieder nicht, wie ich enden soll. Ich bleibe am besten bei der konventionellen Floskel, die immerhin der Anrede entspricht, die Sie aber durchaus woertlich auffassen duerfen:

Ihre aufrichtig ergebene

Lola Gruenthal
107 West 86th Street
New York 24, N.Y.

February 18, 1963

The Editor
The New Yorker
25 West 43rd Street
New York 36, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

I was so disturbed by Mr. McCarten's arrogant capsule review of Max Frisch's play "Andorra" that I feel compelled to overcome my inhibition about writing letters to editors. Mr. McCarten shows a most cynical disregard for the reader's need and right to be accurately informed as well as for the author's right to be judged on the basis of his own artistic intentions. Of course, the critic has the right to condemn a work if the playwright fails to communicate his ideas in the actual stage presentation, but the fact that Mr. Frisch's play found understanding audiences and critics all over the world except on Broadway seems to point to a lack of perception bordering on deliberate misinterpretation on the part of our "theatre experts" of whom Mr. McCarten is an outstanding example. His summary of Mr. Frisch's"propositions, self-evident to any civilized man, that xenophobia is bad, that anti-Semitism is bad, and that incest isn't to be recommended, either" would probably not be accepted by any literate high-school teacher as a satisfactory answer to the question "What is the author trying to say?" A more serious sophomore student might have pointed out that the central theme of the play is the distortion of living reality through pre-conceived ideas and projections which finally lead to destruction, - not only the physical destruction of one individual but also to the destruction of human relation-ships and human values. To disregard this level of inter-pretation on which the entire action of the play is based, - as Mr. McCarten does in the conclusion of his analysis with the glib sentence ..."to pursue 'Andorra' through all its ins and outs would, I'm afraid, send you into a deep, dream-less sleep" - is as characteristic of "Andorran" behavior as any of the guilty innocents of Frisch's imaginary country might display.

The ironic points which attracted Mr. McCarten's attention in the play seem to bear little relevance to the work as a whole which is charged with a much deeper and subtler irony than one would assume from his arbitrary selection. I doubt that Mr. Frisch was prompted by any Biblical associations in making his Andri choose to become a carpenter.

I also wonder why Mr. McCarten is so obsessively concerned about the fact that the characters, except Andri and Barblin, are not introduced by their names on the playbill. Isn't it obvious that they are designed as prototypes, although each one of them comes to life with his own personal characteristics? Perhaps Mr. McCarten also finds it objectionable that Büchner failed to invent names for all but the central figures in "Wozzek", a play which shares many stylistic and thematic aspects with "Andorra".

I am afraid I am wasting my breath and your time. But perhaps I am not the only reader who was moved to express a similar criticism.

Sincerely yours,

FOREGROUND

The inn keeper, now without his apron, steps up to the witness stand.

Inn K. I admit: We were all mistaken about that matter. That was a long time ago. Of course, I believed what everybody believed then. He himself believed it. Until the end. A Jewboy ~~xxx~~ who had been saved by our teacher from the black ones over there, ~~thatixsxwhatxxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~thxuxhxx~~ that was the story, and we thought it was great how the teacher ~~xxxedxfxrxhixxxsxfxx~~ took care of him as though he was his own son. At least I thought it was great. It wasn't me who tied him to the ~~pxixx~~ post. None of us could have known that Andri was his own son, the son of our teacher. Nobody can say that I mistreated him when he was my scullery boy. It wasn't my fault what happened afterwards. That's all I can say after all this time. It wasn't my fault.

First Scene

I Outside of a house in Andorra. Barblin is white-washing the high, narrow wall with a brush attached to a long stick. An Andorran soldier in khaki uniform is leaning against the wall.

Barblin If you weren't ~~looking~~ staring at my legs all the time, you could see what I'm doing. I'm whitewashing. Because tomorrow is St. George's Day, in case you've forgotten. I'm whitewashing my father's house. And you soldiers, what are you doing? You're hanging around in ~~the~~ all the streets, with your thumbs in your belt, waiting for one of us to bend down so you can steal a look into her blouse.

(Soldier laughs)

I ~~a~~m engaged.

Soldier Engaged?

Barblin Don't always laugh like a pooka oo!

Soldier Does he have a pi~~e~~geon chest?

Barblin Why?

S. because you keep him hidden away.
B Leave me alone!
S Or flat feet?

B Why should he have flat feet?

S Anyway, he doesn't go out to dance with you.

(B. continues whitewashing)

Perhaps he is an angel! (Soldier laughs.)

Perhaps that's why I've never seen him.

B I ~~a~~m engaged!

S I can't see the little ring either.

B I ~~a~~m engaged,

(B. dips the brush into the pail)

and anyway - you I don't care for!

In the foreground, ~~right~~ to the left, a jukebox. While Barblin is whitewashing, the carpenter, ~~enters xxx xxx xxx xxx~~ a heavy man, enters ~~on~~ from that side, followed by Andri dressed as a scullery boy.

Carpenter Where is my cane?

Andri Here it is, Sir.

Carp. What a nuisance, always those tips, as soon as you put your purse away -

Andri hands over the cane and receives a tip which he puts into the juke-box. With the sound of the music the carpenter walks across the ~~scene in~~ front of the stage where Barblin has to move her pail since the Carp. makes no attempt to move around. Andri dries a plate, his movements following the rythm of the music, then he disappears and the music with him.

Barb. You're still standing around?

Sold. I'm on furlough.

Barb. What else do you want to know?

Sold. Who is going to be your bridegroom.

(B. whitewashing.)

~~They're~~ all of them are whitewashing their fathers' house, because tomorrow is St. George's Day, and the coal bag is running about in all the streets, because tomorrow is St. George's Day: Keep on whitewashing, ~~little~~ dear fair virgins, whitewashing the house of your fathers, so that we shall have a white Andorra, ~~little~~ dear fair virgins, a snowy white Andorra!

Barb. The coal bag you said - ~~what~~ whom do you mean by that?

Sold. Are you a virgin?

(Soldier laughs.)

So you don't care for me.

Barb. No.

Sold. You're not the first one who said that, but in the end I got ~~xhexxxxnyxxxy~~ each one of them, if I liked her legs and her hair.

(B. sticks her tongue out at him.)

And her red tongue, too!

(S. takes out a cigarette and looks up at the house.)

Which one is your room?

(Enter: a priest pushing a bicycle.)

Priest This ~~I like~~, Barblin, ~~this I like very much~~ is a pleasure to see, a real pleasure. We shall have a white Andorra, ~~little~~ fat virgins, a snowy white Andorra, if only there won't be a cloudburst over night.

(Soldier laughs.)

Is your father not home?

Soldier If only there won't be a cloudburst over night! That means his church isn't as white as it pretends to be - we've found that out - because his church too is ~~also~~ made of earth ~~only~~, and the earth is red, and when there is a cloudburst it messes up your whitewash as though they had slaughtered a pig on it - that snowy white cover on your snowy white church.

(S. puts out his hand for the rain.)

If only there won't be a cloudburst over night.!

(S. laughs and moves off.)

Priest What is this fellow doing here?

Barblin Is it true, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Reverend, what the people are saying? That they're going to attack us, the black ones over there, because they envy us for our white

houses? One morning at four they'll come with a thousand black tanks and they're going to roll all over our fields, and they'll come down from the sky with parachutes like grey grasshoppers.

Priest Who says that?

Barblin Peider, the soldier.

(B. dips the brush into the pail.)

Father is not home.

Priest I should have known.

(Pause.)

Why has he been drinking so much recently? And then always he uses vile language and insults the whole world. He forgets himself. Why does he always talk such nonsense?

Barblin I don't know what Father talks about in the bar.

P. He is seeing ghosts. Doesn't he know that all of our ~~every citizen in our country everyx was~~ countrymen were indignant at the black ones over there when they acted as though it ~~were~~ was the slaughter of the innocents at Bethlehem? Doesn't he k remember how we all collected clothes for the refugees at that time? He says we are not better than the black ones over there. Why is he saying that over and over again? The people are annoyed at him, and I am not surprised. A teacher should not talk like that. And why does he believe every rumor that is spread around in the bar?

(Pause.)

Nobody has been persecuting your Andri -

(B. pauses and listens.)

so far they have not ~~touched~~ harmed a hair of hhis head.

(B. continues whitewashing.)

I can see, you do things thoroughly. Mx You're not a child any more, you're working like a grown up girl.

Barblin I'm already nineteen.

Priest And not engaged yet?

(B. is silent.)

I hope this Peider will have ~~no chance~~ [illegible] with you.

Barblin He ~~won't.~~ [illegible].

Priest He has a dirty look in his eyes.

(Pause.)

Did he frighten you? He's just showing off. Why should they attack us? Our valleys are narrow, our fields are stony and steep, our olives are not more juicy than elsewhere. What should they want from us? Whoever wants our rye has to get it with a sickle and he has to bend low at every step. Andorra is a beautiful country, but it is poor. A peaceful country, a weak country - - a pious country as long as we fear God, and that we do, my child, don't we?

(B. whitewashing.)

Don't we?

Barblin And if they come anyway?

(A vesper bell rings briefly and monotonously.)

Priest I'll see you to-morrow, Barblin. Tell your father St. George doesn't want to see him drunk.

(Priest gets on his bicycle.)

Or better do'nt tell him anything, otherwise he'll

just get mad. But take care of him.

(Priest rides off noiselessly.)

Barblin And if they do come anyway, ~~your Honor~~ Reverend?

In the foreground at the right, next to the jukebox the Somebody appears; behind him Andri in his kitchen clothes.

Somebody Where is my hat?

Andri Here you are, Sir.

Somebody A sultry evening. I think there is a thunderstorm in the air...

Andri hands him the hat and gets a tip which he puts into the jukebox without pressing the button yet. He only whistles and looks at the list of records while the Somebody crosses the ~~scene in front~~ front of the stage where he stops before B who is still whitewashing and ~~who~~ has not noticed that the priest is gone.

Barblin Is it true, ~~your Honor~~ Reverend, what the people are saying? They say, ~~Once~~ When the black ones come, the first thing they'll ~~at once~~ do is get everyone who is a Jew. They'll tie him to a post, they say, and they'll shoot him in the neck. Is that true or is it a ~~rmor~~ rumor? And if he has a bride, she'll be shorn, they say, like a mangy dog.

Somebody What kind of speeches are these?

Barblin (looks up startled.)

Somebody Good evening.

Barblin Good evening.

Somebody A pleasant evening today.

Barblin (takes the pail.)

Somebody But sultry.

Barblin Yes.

Somebody There is something in the air.

Barblin — What do you mean?

Somebody — A thunderstorm. How everything is waiting for the wind: the leaves, the awnings and the dust. Still I can't see a cloud in the sky, but I can feel it. Such a hot silence. The mosquitoes feel it too. Such a dry and lazy silence. I think there's a thunderstorm in the air, a heavy thunderstorm. It would do the country good...

B. goes into the house; the somebody walks on; Andri starts the juke-box, the same record as before, and disappears, drying a plate. The scenery now shows the town square of Andorra. The carpenter and the teacher are sitting outside the bar. The music has stopped.

Teacher — You see, I am talking about my son.

Carp. — I told you: fifty pounds.

Teacher — my foster son, I mean.

Carp. — Fifty pounds, I said.

(Carp. knocks a coin on the table.)

I must go.

(Carp. knocks again.)

Why does he want to be a carpenter of all things? It's not easy to be a carpenter if you don't have it in your blood. And why should he have it in his blood? I only mean to say... Why not a broker, for instance? Why doesn't he try the stock exchange? I only mean to say...

Teacher — Where does this post come from?

Carp. — I don't know what you're talking about.

Teacher — There!

Carp. — You're quite pale.

Teacher I'm talking about a post!

Carp. I don't see any post.

Teacher Here!

(The carpenter has to turn around.)

Is that a post or isn't it a post?

Carp. Why shouldn't there be a post?

Teacher It wasn't ~~t~~here yesterday.

(Carp. laughs.)

There's nothing to laugh about, Prader, you know very well what I mean.

Carp. You are seeing ghosts.

Teacher What is it there for, this post?

Carp. (~~knocks~~ Taps with the coin ~~on~~ the table.)

Teacher I am not drunk. I see what is there, and I say what I see, and all of you can see it too -

Carp. I must go.

Carp. throws a coin on the table and gets up.

As I said: 50 pounds.

Teacher Is that your last word?

Carp. My name is Prader.

Teacher Fifty pounds?

Carp. I don't haggle.

Teacher You are a fine man, I know... Prader, this is usury - 50 pounds for a carpenter's apprenticeship, that's usury. That's a joke, Prader, you know that yourself. I am a teacher - I have my modest salary, I don't ~~xx~~ own a fortune like a master carpenter - I don't have ~~no~~ 50 pounds, to tell you the plain truth,

I just don't have them.

Carp. Then let's forget it.

Teacher Prader -

Carp. I said: 50 pounds.

(Carp. leaves.)

Teacher They'll be surprised when I tell them the truth. I'm going to force these people to look into their own That'll make feet mirror, ~~so~~ their laughter ~~will be far~~ frozen.

(Enter the inn keeper.)

Inn K. What did you have?

Teacher I need a Rye.

Inn K. Trouble?

Teacher 50 pounds for an apprenticeship!

Inn K. I heard it.

Teacher I'll scrape it together.

(Teacher laughs.)

If you don't have it in your blood!

(Inn K. wipes the tables with a rag.)

They are going to find out about their own blood.

Inn K. You shouldn't get upset about your own countrymen; that's bad for the kidneys, and it doesn't change your countrymen. Of course, it's usury! The Andorrans are good-natured people, but when it's a ~~question~~ matter of money - that's what I've always said - then they are just like the Jew.

(Inn k. is about to leave.)

Teacher Where did you all find out what the Jew is like?

Inn K. Can -

Teacher — Tell me where?

Inn K. — I have nothing against your Andri. What do you take me for? If I did, would I have hired him as a scullery boy? Why do you look at me like this? I have witnesses. Haven't I said again and again that Andri is an exception?

Teacher — Let's not talk about it!

Inn K. — And exception to the rule -

(Ringing of bells.)

Teacher — Who put up that post there?

Inn K. — Where?

Teacher — I'm not always drunk, no matter what the Honorable Reverend thinks. A post is a post. Somebody did put it up. It wasn't there yesterday. And such things don't grow by themselves.

Inn K. — I don't know.

Teacher — What is it for?

Inn K. — Perhaps the building commission, I don't know, the street commission - they have to do something with the tax money - perhaps they're building, some kind of reconstruction, who knows, perhaps the ~~sewe~~ sewer system -

Teacher — Perhaps.

Inn K. — Or the telephone -

Teacher — And perhaps not.

Inn K. — I don't know what's the matter with you.

Teacher — And what is the rope doing there?

Inn K. — How do I know.

Teacher — I'm not seeing ghosts, I am not crazy, I see a post that can be used for all sorts of things -

Inn K. — So what about it -

(InnK. goes back into the bar. The teacher is alone. Again bells tinkling. The priest in his vestments crosses the square with rapid steps; he is followed by altar boys carrying censers. The Inn k. returns with a drink.

Inn K. — So he wants 50 pounds?

Teacher — I'll scrape them together.

Inn K. — But how?

Teacher — Somehow.

(T. empties the glass.)

Sell some ~~ground.~~ land

(Inn K. sits down with T.)

Somehow...

Inn K. — How much ~~ground~~ land do you have?

Teacher — Why?

Inn K. — I ~~ax~~ buy ~~ground~~ land any time. If it doesn't cost too much. I mean - If you really need the money urgently.

(Noise inside the bar.)

I'm coming!

(The inn k. puts his hand on the T.'s arm.)

Think it over, Can, take your time. But ~~more than~~ 50 pounds is all I can give you -

(Inn k. leaves.)

Teacher — "The Andorrans are good-natured people, but when it's a matter of money, then they're just like the Jew."

(T. puts the empty glass to his lips once more while Barblin, dressed for the procession, steps up to him.)

Barblin — Father?

Teacher — Why aren't you in the procession?

Barblin — Father, you promised not to drink on St. George's Day -

Teacher — (places a coin on the table.)

Barblin — They'll pass by here.

Teacher — 50 pounds for an apprenticeship!

Now there is the sound of loud and clear singing, ringing bells; the procession moves past in the background; Barblin kneels down, the teacher remains seated. People have come out on the square; all are kneeling down, and ~~looking~~ above the kneeling figures ~~one sees~~ pennants; the holy virgin ~~is~~ being carried past, accompanied by fixed bayonets. As the people cross themselves, the teacher gets up and goes into the bar. The procession is slow and long and ~~very~~ beautiful. The singing disappears in the distance, the ringing of bells is still heard. ~~Andri steps out of the bar~~ As the people join the procession, Andri steps out of the bar and keeps aside; he whispers:

Andri — Barblin!

Barblin — (crosses herself.)

Andri — Don't you hear me?

Barblin — (gets up.)

Andri — Barblin?!

Barblin — What is it?

Andri — I'm going to be a carpenter!

(Barblin is the last one to follow the procession. Andri alone.)

Andri — Today the sun shines green in the trees. Today the bells are ringing for me too.

(He takes off his apron.)

Later I shall always remember that ~~at~~ this moment I shouted ~~with~~ for joy. While actually I'm only taking off my apron, and I'm surprised how quiet I am. One ~~would~~ Feels like ~~to~~ throwing one's name up into the air like a cap, and yet I'm only standing there and rolling up my apron. This is what happiness means. I'll never forget the way I'm standing here now...

(Racket in the bar.)

Andri Barblin, we're getting married!

(Andri leaves.)

Inn K. ~~Out with~~ Get out! He is ~~dead~~ ~~drunk~~ drunk, and then he always talks nonsense. Get out, I said.

(Soldier with his drum stumbles out of bar.)

Inn K. Not one more drop for you.

Soldier I'm a soldier.

Inn K. That we ~~know~~ can see.

Soldier ~~N~~ame is Peider

Inn K. That we know.

Soldier Well -

Inn K. Stop this racket, man!

Soldier Where is she?

Inn K. It's no use, Peider. If a girl isn't willing, you have to let her go. Put your drum sticks away. You are ~~tight.~~ Soaked Don't forget that you represent the Army.

(Inn k. goes back into the bar.)

Soldier Bastard! That's what I'm fighting for. They don't deserve it. But I'm fighting. That's for sure. Down to the last man, that's for sure - better dead

than defeated, that's why I say: All right - I'm a soldier, and I have my eye on her...

(Enter Andri, who puts on his jacket.)

Soldier Where is she?

Andri Who?

Soldier Your sister.

Andri I have no sister.

Soldier Where is Barblin?

Andri What do you want from her?

Soldier I'm on furlough and I have my eye on her...

(Andri has put on his jacket and is going to walk ahead when the soldier trips him and Andri falls down; soldier laughs.)

A soldier is no scarecrow. Understand? Think you can just run along. I'm a soldier, that's for sure, and you're a Jew.

(Andri gets up silently.)

Isn't that right that you are a Jew?

(Andri is silent.)

But you're lucky, you're damned lucky, because not every Jew is as lucky as you are, that is, you ~~have a chance to be popular.~~ can try to please.

(Andri wipes off his pants.)

I said: ~~to be popular~~ to please!

Andri ~~With whom?~~ Please whom?

Soldier ~~With~~ the Army.

Andri You stink of booze.

Soldier What did you say?

Andri Nothing.

Soldier I stink?

Andri ~~As far as~~ From off seven feet and against the wind.

Soldier Watch what you're saying.

(S. tries to smell his own breath.)

I don't smell anything.

(Andri laughs.)

It's not funny, when you are a Jew, it's not funny, you,

for a Jew must try to please.

Andri Why ?

Soldier (roaring)

A soldier's life is lots of fun,

he loves his girl and trusts his gun

and follows regulations:

fall in, fall out,

and turn about -"

Don't stand there staring at me like a gentlemen!

A soldier's life is lots of fun:

he loves his girl and trusts his gun -"

Andri Can I go now?

Soldier What did the gentleman say?

Andri I'm not a gentleman.

Soldier A scullery boy, then.

Andri No longer.

Soldier Such a one can't even be a soldier.

Andri Do you know what this is?

Soldier Money?

Andri My wages. I'm going to be a carpenter now.

Soldier — Disgusting!

Andri — Why?

Soldier — I said: disgusting!

(S. hits the money out of Andri's hand and laughs.)

There!

(Andri stares at the soldier.)

That's all such a Jew can think of: money.

(Andri makes an effort to control himself, then he bends down and picks up the coins from the pavement.)

So you don't want to try and please?

Andri — No.

Soldier — That's for sure?

Andri — Yes.

Soldier — And you want us to fight for you and your kind? Down to the last man - do you know what that means: one bataillon against twelve bataillons - they've figured it out - better dead than defeated, that's for sure - but not for you!

Andri — What's for sure?

Soldier — We Andorrans are no cowards. Let them come with their parachutes like grasshoppers down from the sky - they won't get through, as sure as my name is Peider - not with me there. That's for sure. Not with me there. They'll learn their lesson!

Andri — Who will learn their lesson?

Soldier — Not with me there.

(They are joined by an idiot who can only grin and nod.)

Did you hear ~~that again~~ what he said? He thinks we are afraid.

Because he is scared himself. We won't fight, he says, down to the last man, we won't die because ~~xhey xre x~~ of their superior strength, we'll pull in our tails , we'll make into our pants until it comes ~~up to~~ out of our boots - that's what he dares to say ~~x~~to my face, to the face of the ~~A~~rmy!

Andri I haven't said a word.

Soldier I'm asking you: did you hear it?

Idiot (nods and grins)

Soldier An Andorran is not afraid!

Andri You said that before.

Soldier But you are afraid!

Andri (is silent)

Soldier Because you are a coward.

Andri Why am I a coward?

Soldier Because you are a Jew.

Idiot (grins and nods.)

Soldier That's all, and now I'm going...

Andri But not to Barblin!

Soldier How his ears are getting red!

Andri Barblin is my bride.

Soldier (laugh~~s~~)

Andri That's the truth.

Soldier (roaring:)

And when it's night
We start to fight
And when it's light
We're out of sight -"

Andri Get going!

Soldier Bride, he said.

Andri Barblin will turn her back ~~to~~ on you.

Soldier Then I'll take her from behind!

Andri You are a beast.

Soldier What did you say?

Andri A beast.

Soldier Say that again. How he trembles! Say that again. But out loud so that the whole square can hear it. Say that again.

(Andri leaves.)

Soldier What did he say there?

Idiot (grins and nods.)

Soldier A beast? ~~Mexaxbeast?~~ I am a beast?

Idiot (Nods and grins.)

Soldier That one is not going to please me.

SECOND SCENE

Andri and Barblin on the threshold outside Barblin's room.

Barblin — Andri, are you sleeping?

Andri — No.

Barblin — Why don't you kiss me?

Andri — I'm awake, Barblin, I'm thinking.

Barblin — All night long.

Andri — If it's true what the others are saying.

Barblin has been resting on his knees; now she sits up and loosens her hair.

Andri — Do you think they are right?

Barblin — Don't start that again now!

Andri — Perhaps they are right.

(Barblin is ~~occupied~~ busy with her hair.)

Andri — Perhaps they are right...

Barblin — Look what you did: I'm all disheveled.

Andi — People of my kind, they say, have no feeling.

B. — Who says that?

Andri — Many of them.

B. — Look at my blouse, will you!

Andri — All of them.

Barblin — Shall I take it off?

B takes off her blouse.

Andri — People of my kind, they say, are lecherous but without feeling, you know -

Barblin — Andri, you think too much!

B. leans back on his knees again.

Andri — I love your hair, your red hair, - it feels so light and warm and it has a bitter taste - Barblin, I shall

die when I lose it.

A. kisses her hair.

And why aren't you sleeping?

Barblin (listening.)

Andri What was that?

B. Only the cat.

Andri (listening.)

B. But I saw her.

A. Was it really the cat?

B. You know they're all asleep....

(B. lies ~~down~~ back on his knees again.)

Kiss me!

Andri (laughs)

B. What are you laughing at?

A. I have to be grateful!

B. I don't know what you're talking about.

A. I'm talking about your father. He saved me, and he would find it very ungrateful if I seduced his daughter. I am laughing, but there is nothing to laugh about if you have other ~~one~~always ~~has~~ to be grateful to people for ~~being~~ your life.

(Pause.)

Perhaps that's why I'm not cheerful.

Barblin (kisses him.)

Andri Are you quite sure, Barblin, that you want me?

B. Why do you always ask that?

Andri The others are more cheerful.

Barblin The others!

Andri Perhaps they are right. Perhaps I'm a coward - otherwise I would go to your old man and tell him that we're engaged. Do you think I'm a coward?

(One hears people hollering in the distance.)

Andri They are still hollering.

(the hollering stops.)

Barblin I am not leaving the house any more, so that they won't bother me. I am thinking of you, Andri, all day long, when you are at work, and now you are there, and we are alone - I want you to think of me, Andri, not of the others. Do you hear me? To think only of me and of us. And I want you to be proud, Andri, proud and gay, because I love you above all others.

Andri I am afraid when I'm proud.

Barblin And now I want a kiss.

(Andri kisses her.)

Many, many kisses!

(Andri is thinking.)

I am not thinking of the others, Andri, when you hold me in you arms and kiss me - believe me, I am not thinking of them.

Andri But I am.

Barblin You and your others - all the time you're thinking of them!

Andri They've tripped me up again.

(A church bell strikes.)

Andri I don't know why I'm different from all others. Tell me: Why? I can't see it...

(Another church bell strikes.)

Andri It's already three.

Barblin Let's go to sleep!

Andri You're bored with me.

(Barblin is silent.)

Shall I put out the candle? You can go to sleep, I'll wake you at seven.

(Pause.)

This is not superstitition, oh no, this is real: there are people who are cursed, and the others can do with them what they want - they only have to look at you, and suddenly ~~xkx~~ you are just the way they see you. This is the evil. It is there in everyone - no one wants to have it, and where should it go? Into the air? It is in the air too, but it doesn't stay there long, it has to get into a human being so that some day they can get hold of it and kill it...

(Andri ~~/~~ picks up the candle.)

Do you know a soldier named Peider?

(Barblin mumbles sleepily.)

He has an eye on you.

Barblin That one!

Andri I thought you're asleep already.

(Andri blows out the candle.)

From ANDORRA

by Max Frisch

translated by Lola Gruenthal

Scene Six

Outside of Barblin's room, Andri is sleeping alone on the threshold. Candlelight. A large shadow appears on the wall: the soldier. Andri snores. The soldier is startled and hesitates. A churchbell strikes the hour. Seeing that Andri does not move, the soldier ventures to the door, hesitates again, then opens the door. Another churchbell strikes. Now the soldier steps over the sleeping Andri, and finally, since he has already gotten that far, into the dark room. Barblin's scream is stifled by a hand put over her mouth. Silence. Andri wakes up.

Andri

Barblin!?...

(Silence)
Now it's quiet again outside. They've stopped their drinking and howling. They're all in bed now.

(Silence)

Are you asleep, Barblin? I wonder what time it is. I've been sleeping. Four o'clock? The night is like milk, you know, like blue milk. Soon the birds will start. Like a flood of milk drowning the earth...
(A noise inside)
Why did you lock your door?
(Silence)
Let him come up, your old man, let him find me on his daughter's threshold. I don't care. I won't give up, Barblin, I'm going to sit on your threshold every night, and if he drinks himself to death because of me, I'll still be here every night.

(He lights a cigarette.)

Now I'm wide awake again...

(He sits and smokes)

I'm no longer sneaking around like a begging dog. I've learned to hate. I don't cry any more. I laugh. The meaner they treat me, the easier I find it to hate them. Hatred is a good schemer. It makes me feel safe. Now I can look forward from one day to the next, because I have a scheme, and nobody knows about it, and when I appear to be intimidated, I'm only pretending. Hatred makes you cunning. Hatred makes you proud. Some day I'll show them. Since I've started hating them, I sometimes feel like whistling and singing, but I don't do it. Hatred makes you patient. And tough. I hate their country that we're going to leave, and their faces, all of them. I love one single human being, and that is enough.

(He listens.)

The cat is still awake, too!

(He counts some coins.)

Today I've earned a pound and a half, Barblin, a pound and a half in a single day. I'm saving now. And I also don't go near that jingle box any more -

(He laughs.)

If they could only see how right they are: All the time I'm counting my money!

(He listens.)

There is still one of them shuffling home.

(Chirping of birds)

Yesterday I saw this Peider, you know, the one who has an eye on you. He tripped me up, remember? Now he grins every time he sees me, but I don't care -

(He listens.)

He is coming upstairs!

(Steps in the house)

We've already got forty-one pounds, Barblin, but don't tell anyone. We will get married. Believe me, there is another world where nobody knows us and where they won't trip me, and we'll go there together, Barblin. Then all his screaming and shouting won't bother us any more.

(He smokes.)

Good that you locked your door.

(Teacher enters.)

Teacher My son!

Andri I'm not your son.

Teacher I've come, Andri, to tell you the truth before it is ~~the~~ day ~~start~~ again...

Andri You've been drinking.

Teacher Because of you, Andri, because of you.

(Andri laughs.)

My son -

Andri Stop that!

Teacher Will you listen to me?

Andri Hold on to a lamp post, but not to me. I can smell you.

(Andri breaks away from him.)

And don't always say "My son" when you're tight.

Teacher (staggers)

Andri Calm yourself: your daughter has locked the door.

Teacher Andri -

Andri You can hardly stand up.

Teacher I am concerned about you...

Andri You needn't be.

Teacher Deeply concerned...

Andri Mother is crying and waiting for you.

Teacher I didn't expect this...

Andri What didn't you expect?

Teacher That you would refuse to be my son.

(Andri laughs.)

I have to sit down...

Andri Then I'll go.

Teacher So you won't listen to me?

Andri (takes the candle)

Teacher Then don't.

Andri I owe you my life. I know. If it means that much to you, I can say it once every day: I owe you my life. Even twice a day: I owe you my life. Once in the morning and once in the evening: I owe you my life, I owe you my life.

Teacher I've been drinking, Andri, all night I've been drinking to be able to tell you the truth. I drank too much...

Andri I can see that.

Teacher You owe me your life...

Andri I owe it.

Teacher You don't understand me...

(Andri is silent.)

Don't just stand there - when I am telling you about my life...

(Cocks are crowing.)
So my life doesn't interest you?

Andri I am interested in my own life.

(Cocks crowing.)

Now the cocks are crowing already.

Teacher (staggers)

Andri Don't pretend that you are still able to think.

Teacher You despise me...

Andri I am looking at you. That is all. I used to admire you. Not because you saved my life but because I believed that you were not like the others, that you were not thinking their thoughts, that you had courage. I trusted you. And then it became clear, and now I am looking at you.

Teacher What became clear?

(Andri is silent.)

I am not thinking their thoughts, Andri. I tore up their school-books, I wanted to get others -

Andri That is an old story.

Teacher Do you know what I did?

Andri I'm going now.

Teacher Tell me if you know what I did...

Andri You tore up their school-books.

Teacher I lied.

(Pause.)

You don't want to understand me...

(Cocks crowing.)

Andri At seven I have to be in the store. I've got to sell chairs, to sell tables, to sell cabinets and to rub my hands.

Teacher Why do you have to rub your hands?

Andri "Can one find a better chair? Does it shake? Does it squeak? Can one find a cheaper chair?"

(Teacher stares at him.)

I have to get rich.

Teacher Why do you have to get rich?

Andri Because I'm a Jew.

Teacher My son!

Andri Don't touch me any more!

Teacher (staggers)

Andri You make me sick.

Teacher Andri -

Andri Stop crying.

Teacher Andri -

Andri Go and piss.

Teacher What are you saying?

Andri Don't cry the booze out of your eyes; if you can't hold it, I say, go.

Teacher You hate me?

Andri (is silent.)

(Teacher leaves.)

Andri Barblin, he's gone. I didn't want to hurt him. But it gets worse and worse. Did you hear him? He doesn't know any more what he is talking about, and then he looks like someone who is crying... Are you asleep? (He listens at the door.)
Barblin! Barblin?
(He shakes the door, then he tries to ram it; he moves back for a new assault, but at this moment the door opens from within: in the doorway the soldier appears, lit by the candle. He is barefooted, his pants are half unbuttoned, the rest of his body is bare.)

Soldier Scram!

Andri This cannot be....

Soldier Scram, you, or I'll make meatballs out of you.

FOREGROUND

The soldier, now in civilian clothes, takes the witness stand.

Soldier I admit: I couldn't stand him. I didn't know, of course, that he wasn't one, they always said he was one. I couldn't stand him from the beginning. But I did not kill him. I only did my duty. An order is an order. Where would we be if we didn't obey commands! I was a soldier.

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From FAULKNER LETTERS TO COWLEY

"I am trying primarily to tell a story, in the most effective way I can think of, the most moving, the most exhaustive. But I think even that is incidental to what I am trying to do.... I am telling the same story over and over, which is myself and the world.... I am trying to go a step further /than Thomas Wolfe/.... I'm trying to say it all in one sentence, between one Cap and one period. I'm still trying, to put it all, if possible, on one pinhead. I don't know how to do it. All I know to do is to keep on trying in a new way... Life is a phenomenon but not a novelty... Art is simpler than people think because there is so little to write about. All the moving things are eternal in man's history and have been written before, and if a man writes hard enough, sincerely enough, humbly enough, and with the unalterable determination never, never to be quite satisfied with it, he will repeat them, because art like poverty takes care of its own, shares its bread."

(1953)

To Joan Williams: "...And now, at last, I have some perspective on all I have done. I mean, the work apart from me, the work which I did, apart from what I am.... And now I realise for the first time what an amazing gift I had: Uneducated in every formal sense, without even very literate, let alone literary companions, yet to have made the things I made. I don't know where it came from. I don't know why God or gods, or whoever it was, selected me to be the vessel. Believe me, this is not humility, false modesty, it is simply amazement."

To a young unknown black poet whose manuscripts Faulkner read and helped him with:" Put the passion in it, but sit on the passion. Don't try to say to the reader what you want to say, but make him say it for to himself for you. I will edit the second one and send it to you when I get it right.... Your idea in both is all right."

/no date - marked 1826/

Lieber Bauernfeld! Mich freuts dass Du fliegst, ich sehe Dich wie den Archi-
varius /Name illegible/ Deine Schwingen entfalten, indess wir unsern soliden
Q....schritt fortleben /?/. Was mich so am Reisen freut ist dass man wieder
die Wonne der Armuth fuehlt und der Kindheit, was braucht man, was schaetzt
man, was sucht man, das man hier alltaeglich in Fuelle hat; gruesse mir
Deine 2 /Word illegible/ Koechin u. Dein Fraulein wenn sie ueberschwenglichen
Herzens sind wie Du, so preise ich sie gluecklich dass sie in der Wueste
sind, dort sind sie Koeniginnen u. ich fuerchte hier waeren sie sehr wenig,
so sehr die Hasen /?/ von der ersten meiner Phantasie schmeicheln, sie soll
nur mitkommen, aber wie kann sie Stierbauch heissen das schadet wieder aller
Illüsion, ihr habt nicht einmal geschrieben ob sie nicht haesslich ist.
Schwinds Ueberschwenglichkeit macht ihn auch so undankbar gegen das Schicksal
dass er sein Glueck nicht einmal erkennt dass ich gestern 5 Fraulein bey ihm
angetroffen die den halben Tag bey ihm waren u. wovon die eine bildschoen
/2 words illlegible/ ist und lieber nach Grinzing / ...an die ... von Windsor/
several words illegible) geht, aber er ist ein Mahler u. wird wohl Antike /?/
suchen. Sein Bild ist in der Ausstellung und nimmt sich dort minder schoen
als im Zimmer aus, sie haben es aber auch in ein Kammerl /?/ zu altem Schund
gehaengt in besserer Gesellschaft wuerde es mehr respektiert werden. Hempel ? Henzel /?/
besonders aber Eichholzer /?/ haben mich mit ihren Bildern erzuernt. Die
3 Koenige von Kugelwieser /?/ und ein kleines Bild von /name illegible/,
Maria mit Engeln , sind die besten historischen Sachen, einige herrliche Land-
schaften von Steinfeld R... /name illegible/ ~~Olivier~~ Olivier u. Reinhold /?/ erbauen,
mehrere
~~xxxxxx~~ Miniatur...(part of word illegible/ sind huebsch sonst fast lauter
Schmarren ein ungarischer Koenig der an Verzuckungen stirbt und seine Dame
die an der Starrsucht leidet /not sure/ sind grausame Erscheinungen und der
Ironie halber merkwuerdig.

/written on the margin:/ Ich weiss dass /name illegible/ nach Dir verlangt
ich glaube der S.../illegible/ Sonette halber. Es soll ihm schlecht gehn
mit Geld.

/no date - marked 1826/

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Schmarren ein ungarischer Koenig der an Verzuckungen stirbt und seine Dame
die an der Starrsucht leidet /not sure/ sind grausame Erscheinungen und der
Ironie halber merkwuerdig.

/written on the margin:/ Ich weiss dass /name illegible/ nach Dir verlangt
ich glaube der S.../illegible/ Sonette halber. Es soll ihm schlecht gehn
mit Geld.

Von Theatersachen melde ich Dir nur dass eine Dslle Schechner die Stadt durch ihren wunderbaren deutschen Gesang revoltiert /?/. Seit der M.... /name illegible/ soll keine solche Stimme die Luft erschuettert haben, dazu noch jugendlich, huebsch und lebendig. Schubert hat sie gehoert und stimmt in die Hymne ein. Wenn er nur eine Oper fuer sie schriebe, vielleicht ist Deine dazu recht wenn er nur kein gar so ewiger Barbar waere neulich als ich ihn frug warum er durch die ganze Krankheit mich nicht besucht habe antwortete er ganz unschuldig: Man trifft Dich ja niemals zu Hause. Die Zauberwiese/?/ ist Dir schon weggenommen, der Buergermeister von Teplitz hat sie operatisch /?/ verarbeitet. Auf der Weiden /?/ fuehren die Josephstaedter den Don Juan auf und ein gewisser H. /name ill./ , ich glaube auch ein Schulkamerad, singt den Don Juan wie ich hoere mit Beifall Lebrun von Hamburg gastiert jetzt hier ich hoffe ihn doch einmal zu sehen, aber gestern gab er in stille Wasser sind tief /Name of a play, not indicated as such/ den gewissen Lieutenant das ist doch wenig, auch war ich auf die Weiden /see above/ in eine Loge eingeladen und die Zauberwiese /?/ noch einmal zu sehen die sich aber auf der kleinen Buehne viel besser ausnahm. Grill ist mit vielem Beifall in Hannover aufgenommen worden, fuer die Schechner wird jetzt die Iphigenie von Gluck einstudiert, bisher ist sie nur in der Schweitzerfamilie/aufgetreten. /Name of a play or opera?/ Mit der Phantasie /?/ soll vom Theater unterhandelt werden sie fuer die illegible Beatle (?) /name of a play,opera or character/?/ zu probieren sie soll sich ganz (?) garstig in der Sache verhalten u. die ihrigen /?/ die angebotenen 2000 Fl. wie eine Miserabilitaet behandelt haben.

Meine Pr. /word illegible/ Title of a book?/ sind also amgekommen und erfreuen mich durch ein huebsches Aeusseres, aber aergern mich durch viele Druckfehler. Sie haben nur Tr. /illegible word/ von der Censur wodurch mir die Vorbereitung erschwert und verleidet wird. Ruecksichtlich der Rezension nehme ich Dich beym Wort, aber ich mag auch so klein das Heft ist

doch keins schicken da es auch Dich unsinnig viel kosten wuerde. Ich bin jetzt gezwungen gewesen einen langen Absatz zu machen da gluecklich unser Qartier vermiethet, u. unsere Uebersiedlung nach Maehring vollbracht worden ist. Was es mich fuer Muehe und Arbeit auch Aerger gekostet hat alle Schraenke der Mama auszuleeren was ihr durch ihre Schwaeche unmoeglich war und danach unter stetem Straeuben /?/ und Disputieren vollbracht werden musste da sie nichts anruehren lassen wollte und noch in den letzten Stunden jedes alte Kuechenzettel durchlas bevor sie sich entschliessen konnte es wegzuwerfen. So musste ich jedes Stueck bei dem hoechsten Drang der Zeit foermlich erobern um es aus dem Wege zu schaffen, dazu noch fatale und grobe Fuhrleute und Traeger, ich habe selbst geschleppt und getragen dass ich kein Glied mehr ruehren konnte. Die Einquartierung ist der Deputierte des Adels /?/ von Mailand mit Frau und Tochter. Ein ganz angenehmer Mann mit dem ich vortreffliche franzoesiche Conversation pflege aber geitzig wie ein Jude von dem er und seine Familie auch ihr Aeusseres entlehnt haben. Wir haben ihm alle moeglichen Geraetschaften Silber und Tafelzeug geben muessen das war also eine fuerchterliche Confusion der neu angekauften Sachen die herein und der alten und fuer uns bestimmten die hinaus geschafft wurden. Nun sind wir in Maehring und das Quartier und der Garten sind allerliebst da auch das Wetter ziemlich guenstig ist lebten wir wie die Goetter wenn nicht im Hause die Maler die Fenster zittern machten ein Schlosser haemmerte ein Kind schriee eine Amme saenge und eine Menge Vorstaedter in einem an unseren stossenden Wirtshausgarten einen Mordslaerm schluegen wozu sie noch manchmal durch schmetternde Trompeten und entsprechende Begleitung aufgemuntert werden. So uebel diese Dinge sind liessen sie sich doch ertragen, aber dem armen Schwind der bey dem misslichen Grinzinger /ill. word/ ohnehin ziemlich nervoes ist wird dabei ganz aschgrau, da ueberdies auch meine Mutter immerfort lamentiert dass man ihr alles verlegt hat und sie nichts mehr finden kann,

habe ich ausser diesen Drangsalen noch ein Doppelfeuer von Klagen und Seufzern auszuhalten, zum Ueberfluss ist auch die Nanni /?/ im uebelsten Humor dass sie heraussen nichts bekommt und um alles hineinlaufen muss dass es kaum auszuhalten waere wenn nicht unter all diesen Stuermen wie ein /beginning of word ill./ ...schimmer Fels/?/ der alte treue /ill.word/ stuende der uns bei dieser ganzen /ill. word/ tapfer 1 geholfen und wie ein Esel geschleppt hat taeglich kommt er zu uns heraus um die Kleider zu putzen manchmal auch ~~xxxxxx~~ 2 Mahl immer keuchend u. beladen, auch ist ihm sein Weib niedergefuehrt /?/ und ziemlich beschaedigt worden aber er lacht und glaenzt immer vor Freude. Ich stehe taeglich vor 7 sage sieben Uhr auf und gehe um halb neun in die Stadt den Geschaeften obzuliegen die ziemlich gut gehen; um halb 2 sollte ich mit dem ~~Skakkarren~~ Stellwagen herausfahren versaeume ihn aber gewoehnlich und muss also in der Hitze hatschen. Dass wir gleich auf dem Felde sind ist hoechst erspriesslich und thut sehr wohl, man geht so doch alle Tage spatzieren und saugt das heitere Gruen ein. Heute soll Schubert heraus kommen, ich hoffe er wird Wort halten. S... /name ill./ ist nach Linz gereist und sein Bruder mit Meyerhof nach Karlsbad. Schubert hat 4haendige Maersche gemacht die wieder sehr schoen sein sollen, unter den neuen Liedern ist ~~un~~ im freien /song title/ jetzt mein Liebling. Schwind macht jetzt sehr huebsche Kinderspiele fuer T... /name ill./ u. hat die Kähuinkliadeu (?) /ill. noun/ aufs trefflichste abgeschlossen. Leb wohl und komm bald Dein Schober

Bud: Transforming Knowledge, Elizabeth Kamarck Minnich

suggest that change comes when thinking is released from old tangles of errors that have locked it into the past *and* when we learn to analyze the potential for real change in our very specific contexts. In that movement from the conceptual to the concrete, and from the concrete to the conceptual, is one of the most important conversations of all, the one that returns thinking to the world it helps illuminate, and, in turn, challenges that thinking to take account of particulars, individuals, specific situations.

For these deeply related efforts, we need realism and hope, philosophy and strategies, flexibility and stubbornness, honesty and imagination. Most of all, perhaps, we each need to find out how we work best, and to figure out how we can contribute, drawing on our own strengths, interests, and pleasures. It does little good to decide what ought to be done and how it ought to be effected with no reference to the specific people who will have to do the work. People who do what they are sure is 'right' in a way that goes against their grain can rarely keep up the effort very long, and they run the risk of becoming dogmatic, unhappy, and even dangerous. Those who work for what they believe in, in ways that suit them and their own particular strengths, can keep going longer while continuing to grow through their work.

If both thinking and acting are essential to freedom, as freedom is essential to them, then they are to be enjoyed for their own sake as well as for what they may lead us toward. The effort to think ourselves free does not suffice to make us free—by no means. But it does give us a profound experience of freedom as we do it. I suppose that is one of the reasons why, when people have asked me and others how we can stand to spend so much time thinking about how overwhelming, and unjust, the dominant systems are, I usually find myself saying, "Because I enjoy thinking, and I love the people with whom I have been privileged to do it."

Although the quotation from Anna Julia Cooper with which I opened this book may seem to imply, wrongly, that *everyone* will greet the newly re-emerging multicultural scholarships with great pleasure, she is certainly not wrong about how some of us have felt: "The darkened eye restored, every member rejoices with it."

But such moments do not last, and without institutional and political changes that are designed to open the structures and privileges of the few to the whole, they can become no more than the secret pleasures of yet another closed group. That is why it is important that we continue to reach out to others, to explain what

we are thinking and doing, to open ourselves to responses, questions, challenges. Every such conversation is, for all engaged in it, a new beginning and, indeed, an enactment of the ends we seek.

Surely it is time for the true grace of women
Emerging, in their lives' colors, from the rooms, from the harvests,
From the delicate prisons, to speak their promises.
The spirit's dreaming delight and the fluid senses'
Involvement in the world. Surely the day's beginning
In midnight, in time of war, flickers upon the wind.

O on the wasted midnight of our pain
Remember the wasted ones, lost as surely as soldiers
Surrendered to the barbarians, gone down under centuries
Of the starved spirit, in desperate mortal midnight
With the pure throats and cries of blessing, the clearest
Fountains of mercy and continual love.
These years know separation. O the future shining
In far countries or suddenly at home in a look, in a season,
In music freeing a new myth among the male
Steep landscapes, the familiar cliffs, trees, towers
That stand and assert the earth, saying: "Come here, come to me.
Here are your children." Not as traditional man
But love's great insight—"your children and your song."

Coming close to the source of belief, these have created
Resistance, the flowering fire of memory,
Given the bread and the dance and the breathing midnight.
Nothing has been begun. No peace, no word of marvelous
Possible hillsides, the warm lips of the living
Who fought for the spirit's grace among despair,
Beginning with signs of belief, offered in time of war,
As I now send you, for a beginning, praise.

—Muriel Rukeyser, "Letter to the Front: X"[6]

SERIE PIPER
Band 731

Zu diesem Buch

Fünfzig Gedichte von fünfzig zeitgenössischen Lyrikern enthält dieser Band – unter ihnen Rose Ausländer, Wolf Biermann, Hilde Domin, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Ludwig Fels, Erich Fried, Peter Härtling, Rainer Malkowski, Jürgen Theobaldy und Gabriele Wohmann.

Günter Kunerts Begleittexte zu den Gedichten wollen nicht als gültige oder auch nur annähernd verbindliche Interpretationen verstanden werden. »Beabsichtigt war, Lesarten für Gedichte vorzuschlagen, Gedanken angesichts poetischer Hervorbringungen zu äußern, und damit den Leser anzuregen, sein eigenes Lyrikverständnis zu entwickeln.«

Die für die »ZEIT« geschriebene, dort aber nur teilweise abgedruckte und für die Buchproduktion überarbeitete Serie liegt in diesem Band nun vollständig vor.

Günter Kunert, geboren 1929 in Berlin, lebt seit 1979 in der BRD. Arbeiten für Zeitschriften, Film, Fernsehen und Rundfunk und Veröffentlichung zahlreicher Prosa- und Lyrikbände. Heinrich-Mann-Preis der Akademie der Künste (Berlin/DDR), 1962, Visiting Associate Professor an der University of Texas in Austin, Texas 1972, Johannes-R.-Becher-Preis für Lyrik 1973, Mitglied der Akademie der Künste in Westberlin 1976, Mitglied der Akademie für Sprache und Dichtkunst in Darmstadt 1982, Stadtschreiber von Bergen-Enkheim 1983, Heinrich-Heine-Preis der Stadt Düsseldorf 1985.

LESARTEN

Gedichte der »ZEIT«

Herausgegeben von
Günter Kunert

Piper
München Zürich

Emerson

Baum
dein Auge am
Traumrand des
Mittags angesiedelt
glitzernd
wimpernlos
sieht alles
sieht nichts
sagt: solange hast
du gewartet
worauf?
du weißt es
du weißt es nicht
auf das Sprechen von
Lerche
Fisch
und Echse
auf das Lieben
der Menschen
den Stillstand der
Zeit
warte weiter
auf morgen
und noch ein Jahr
und noch eins
und noch
und

Der Baum des Lebens

Obgleich es nicht so aussieht, stammt dieses Gedicht doch aus zeitlicher Ferne: Aus der deutschen Romantik. Auch wenn es ein neueres Entstehungsdatum trägt; auch wenn es sich, nahezu alibihaft, als Titel den Namen des berühmten amerikanischen Naturphilosophen zugelegt hat. Daß die Autorin Deutsche war und es trotz ihres langen Amerika-Aufenthaltes geblieben ist, kann ihr Gedicht nicht verleugnen. Denn im Gegensatz zur neueren amerikanischen Lyrik, wo die Natur kaum allegorische Vorzeichen erhält und selten zum Identifikationsobjekt für die eigene innere Befindlichkeit gemacht wird, sondern das dem Menschen Äußerliche bleibt, bietet sich bei Lisa Kahn die romantische Einheit von Mensch und Natur wie eh und je dar. Das Subjekt dieser wenigen Zeilen, der Baum, ist niemand sonst als die Autorin selber, und die Ansprache richtet sie nur an sich; ein innerer Monolog unter der Tarnkappe – denn die dem Baum zugeschriebenen Erwartungen sind die der Dichterin. Warum macht sie sich zum Baum? Worauf zielen ihre Erwartungen? Der Zustand, da die Tiere sprechen, die Menschen sich lieben und die Zeit stillesteht, der Tod folglich abwesend ist, diesen Zustand kennen wir nur aus einem anderen Buch: Es heißt Bibel und beschreibt eben diesen paradiesischen Zustand an seinem Anfang; der Ort ist der Garten Eden. Aus diesem sind wir seit langem vertrieben, und nur die latente Sehnsucht hat ihn als Traumbild aufbewahrt: Eine Fata Morgana am fernen, versunkenen Horizont der Geschichte. Warum jedoch Lisa Kahn sich den Baum zur Selbstaussage gewählt hat, ließe sich mit einer kühnen, vielleicht zu kühnen Hypothese erklären. Sie, im Bannkreis einst Verfolgter lebend, mag sich einer anderen von Gewalt Verfolgten unbewußt verbunden gefühlt haben: Daphne, die im Moment höchster Gefahr zum Baum wurde. Für solche »Verwandtschaft« gibt es keinen Beweis, doch der Einfall hilft dem Verstehen. Das Gedicht, in dem so hoffnungslos immer weiter gehofft wird, spricht von dem Verlangen nach Harmonie und Frieden, einer Illusion, die, entgegen aller Erfahrung, unsterblich scheint.

Hesse

APRIL LETTER

(1952)

The actual flower ~~and~~ period of this spring was rainless; from the first primroses to the first anemones and camelias the earth was dry and dusty and always swept over again by the persistent north wind; at night one could sometimes see forest fires creeping up the mountains in long flaming lines, and it was moving and pathetic how, in spite of everything, the thousands and thousands of violets, crocusses, bluebells, eyebrights, dead nettles came out, how they held ~~they~~ their small tender heads up to the ruthless northwind, in spite of everything laughing and exuberant in their countless multitude. ~~uncountable numbers.~~ ~~Only~~ alone The green was holding back, in the woods as in the meadows; only the bamboo at the edge of my little copse was ~~waving with his~~ swaying in its light young green.

For most old people Spring is not a good season; it also did its share to bother me. The little pills and medical injections were of little help; the pains grew exuberantly like the flowers in the grass, and the nights were hard to ~~take~~ endure. Still, almost every day, during the short hours that I could spend outside, brought intervals of forgetting and abandon to the miracle of Spring, and sometimes there were moments of delight and revelation, each of which would have been worthy of preservation, if there had only been a chance of preservation, if these miracles and ~~mir~~ revelations could be described and ~~transmitted.~~ communicated. They come as a surprise, lasting seconds or minutes, these experiences in which an event in the life of nature talks to us and reveals itself to us, and when one is old enough it seems as though the whole long life with its pleasures and pains, with loving and cognition, with friendships, love relationships, with books, music,

travels and work had been nothing but a long detour leading to the ripeness of these moments ~~during which~~ when, in the image of a landscape, of a tree, of a human face, of a flower, God shows himself to us, when the sense and meaning of all being and happening presents itself. And indeed: though in youngers years we may have experienced the sight of a blossoming tree, of a cloud formation, of a thunderstorm more violently and more ardently, the experience that I mean requires advanced age, it requires and infinite sum of things seen, lived through, thought through, felt and suffered; it requires a certain destillation of the life forces, a certain frailty and proximity closeness of death in order to perceive in a minor revelation of nature the God, the spirit, the ~~mirakle~~ mystery, the ~~co-existence~~ meeting of opposites, the great one-ness. ~~Certain~~ To be sure, young people also can experience this, but more rarely and without this unity of sensation and thought, of sensual (sensory) and spiritual experience, of stimulus and consciousness.

At the time of our dry Spring period, before the showers and the succession of ~~storm~~ thunderstorms set in, I ~~used to go~~ often went frequently to a certain place in my vinyard where at that time ~~I~~ I ~~am used~~ used to build a fire on a piece of gardensoil as yet untilled unbroken. There, in the hawthorn bush which encloses the garden, a beechtree had been growing for years; it had started as a little shrub from a seed flown over from the forest; for several years I had ~~left it standing~~ let it stay only temporarily and somewhat reluctantly; I felt sorry for the hawthorn, but then the tough little winter beech-tree had kept growing so nicely that I finally accepted ~~her~~ it; now it is already a ~~fat~~ thick ~~heavy~~ little

tree, and I am doubly fond of it today, for the mighty old ~~hawx~~ beech-tree ~~thwrn~~, my favorite tree in the entire neighboring woods, has recently been cut down; the parts of its sawed up ~~st~~ trunk are still lying there, massive and powerful like capitals of columns. In all likelihood my little tree is a child of that beech-tree.

I had always been pleased and impressed when I observed with what tenacity my little beech-tree was holding on to its leaves. When everything else has long been bare, it will still stand in the gown of its faded leaves through December, January, February; the storm tears at it, snow falls on it and drops off again, the dry leaves, at first dark brown, turn lighter, thinner, silkier, but the tree does not let them go; they have to protect the young buds. Then, ~~at~~ sometime ~~in the~~ each Spring, always later than one would expect, the tree would be changed overnight, having lost the old foliage and replaced it with moist, tender new buds. This time I was a witness of this transformation. It was soon after the rain had made the landscape green and fresh, ~~xxmx~~ ~~an hour in the~~ an afternoon, ~~around~~ about the middle of April; I had not yet heard ~~thexcuckoo~~ any cuckoo this year, nor ~~xxxx~~ discovered any daffodil in the fields. Only a few days ago I had ~~xtxx~~ been standing there in the strong north wind, shivering and with my collar turned up, watching with admiration how the beech-tree stood unperturbed in the tearing wind and hardly let go of any leaf; tenacious and brave, tough and defiant, it held its bleached old foliage together.

And now, today, in the gentle windless warmth, as I stood by my fire and broke the wood, I saw it happen: a soft, gentle breeze came up, only a breath, and the long-~~saved~~ preserved leaves floated away in hundreds and thousands, soundless, effortless, willing,

weary of their endurance, weary of their defiance and their bravery. What had ~~held~~ for five, six months, ~~offered resistance~~, holding on and offered resistance surrendered in a few minutes to a nothing, a breath, because its time had come, because the bitter endurance was no longer necessary. Away it ~~flew~~ drifted and ~~fluttered~~ floated, smiling, ripe, without fighting. The little wind was much too weak for the ~~drive~~ the small leaves that had become so light and thin to be drifted far away; like a soft rain they drizzled down, covering path and grass at the feet of the little tree a few of whose buds had already burst open and and turned green. What had revealed itself to me in this surprising and moving scene? Was it death, the lightly and willingly consummated death of the winter foliage? Was it life, the urging and jubilating youth of the buds which, with suddenly awakened will, had made room for itself? Was it sad, was it exhilarating? Was it a warning to me, the old one, also to let myself float and fall, a warning to remind me that perhaps I was taking up space that belonged to the young and stronger ones? Or was it a challenge to follow the example of the beech-tree's foliage, to keep on my legs as long and as tenaciously as possible, to stand firmly and to resist, because then, at the right moment, the parting would be easy and serene? No, it was, like any vision, a visual manifestation of the great and eternal, of the ~~unification~~ meaning of opposites, their merging in the fire of reality; it did not mean anything, it did not propose any warning, or rather, it meant everything, it meant the mystery of being, and it was beautiful, it was bliss, it was ~~meaning~~ significance, present and a find for the beholder, ~~comparable to~~ like an ear full of Bach, an eye full of Cezanne. These names and interpreations were not the experience, they came only later; the experience itself was

only vision, miracle, mystery, as beautiful as it was solemn, as lovely as it was inexorable.

In the same place, near the hawthorn bush and the beech-tree, after the world had assumed a succulent green and the first cuckoo call had sounded in our wood on Easter Sunday, on one of those ~~misty~~ mildly moist, changeable, windswept, sultry days preparing the leap from spring into summer, the great mystery spoke to me in a visual experience that was no less symbolic. On the heavily clouded sky, which still kept throwing glaring sun flickers into the budding green of the valley, a great cloud theater was taking place; the wind seemed to be blowing simultaneously from all sides, but the south-north direction prevailed. Restlessness and passion filled the atmosphere with great tensions. And in the midst of the scenery there was again a tree suddenly imposing itself upon my vision, a young, beautiful tree, a poplar in the neighbor's garden, ~~freshly~~ covered with fresh leaves. Like a rocket it shot upwards, ~~swaying, wavering, elastic,~~ slender, short with its pointed top, in the wind intervals standing bolt upright like a cypress, with increasing wind gesticulating with its hundred thin branches slightly combed apart. Back and forth the top of the majestic tree rocked and reared up with its softly glittering whispering foliage, enjoying its strength and green youth, in a soft-spoken wavering like the tongue of a seale; now giving in as in a teasing game, now willfully recoiling. (I remembered only much later that I had once before, decades ago, with open senses observed the branch of a peach tree in this game and traced it in the poem "The Blossoming Branch").

With joy and without fear, even wantonly, the poplar surrendered branches and leaves to the greatly increasing wind, and

what ~~she~~ it sang to the stormy day, what it wrote with its pointed top into the sky, was beautiful, was perfect, was as serene as it was solemn, ~~xxxmuxh~~ was doing as much as suffering, play as much as fate; again it contained all opposites (friends) and opposite meanings. Not the wind was victorious and strong for being able to ~~shape~~ shake and twist the tree, not the tree was victorious and strong for being able to jump back elastically and triumphantly out of each submission; it was the interplay of both, the harmony of movement and rest, of divine and ~~worldly~~ earthy powers: The infinitely rich pantomime of the tree-top's dance in the storm was ~~only~~ no more than an image, no more than revelation of the ~~war~~ universal mystery, beyond strength and weakness, good and evil, doing and suffering. For a little while, for a small eternity, I read in it that which is usually ~~veiled and~~ concealed and mysterious, represented in pure perfection, purer and more perfect, as though I were reading Anaxagoras or Lao Tse. And here it also seemed to me that, in order to see this image and to ~~w~~ read this writing, more was required than ~~not only~~ the gift of a spring hour; it required also the ways and devious ways, the follies and experiences, the desires and sorrows of many years and decades, and I looked upon the dear poplar, ~~to~~ to whom ~~I owed~~ (had presented me with) the gift of this vision, as upon a boy, an inexperienced and ignorant one. Many frosts and snowfalls would have to wear him down, many storms would have to shake him, many strokes of lighning would have to graze him and wound him until he too might be ~~capable of~~ able to gaze and listen, eager for the great mystery. -

HERMANN HESSE

THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV

or THE DECLINE OF EUROPE

Associations to a reading of Dostoevssky

(1919)

Nichts ist aussen, nichts ist innen;
denn was aussen ist, ist innen.

(There's naught without, there's
naught within;
for without is what's within.)

The thoughts conveyed here are not presented in an organized and pleasing form. I confess to a lack of this particular gift, and moreover I consider it a sort of arrogance for an author to construct, as so many do, an essay out of some associations, trying to give the impression of completeness and conclusiveness, although only a minor part of it consists of thought while the far greater portion is nothing but stuffing. No, I who believe in the"decline of Europe", and particularly in the decline of the European spirit, have less reason than anyone to strive for a form which/would mean to me nothing but a masquerade and a lie. I say what Dostoevsky himself says in the last book of the Karamazovs: "I shall do better not to apologize. I will do my best and the reader will see for himself that I have done all I can."

In the works of Dostoevsky, and most emphatically in the "Karamazovs", I find what I personally call the "decline of Europe" expressed and prophetically predicted with overwhelming

lucidity. The fact that European youth, and German youth in particular, sees its great writer in Dostoevsky, not in Goethe, not even in Nietzsche, seems to be of decisive significance for our destiny. When we look at the most recent writing from this angle, we find everywhere an approximation of Dostoevsky, though it may often be nothing but an imitation which strikes us as childish. The ideal of the Karamazovs, an ancient Asiatic-occult ideal, is beginning to turn into a~~n~~ European one, is beginning to swallow the European spirit. This is what I call the decline of Europe. This decline is a home-coming to the mother, a return to Asia, to the sources, to the Faustian "mothers", and, as any death on earth, it will inevitably lead to a new birth. These events evoke a sense of "decline" only in <u>us</u>, the contemporaries, just as, upon leaving an old beloved homeland, only the aged experience a sense of sadness and irreversible loss while the young see only the new, the future, before them.

But what kind of "Asiatic" ideal is it that I find in Dostoevsky and that appears to be in the process of conquering Europe?

It is, in brief, the rejection of any established set of ethics and morals in favor of an all-understanding, all-accepting attitude, a new, dangerous, terrifying holiness, as predicted by the old man Zossima, lived by Alyosha, expressed with utmost conscious awareness by Dmitri, and even more fully by Ivan Karamazov. With the old man Zossima the ideal of

of justice still prevails, good and evil still exist for him; he only prefers to give his love to the evil ones. With Alyosha this new holiness is taking on a much freer and more vital aspect. As he walks with almost amoral unconcern through all the filth and mud of his environment, he often reminds me of Zarathustra's noblest vow: "Once I had vowed to ~~rem~~ forswear all loathing!" But, behold, Alyosha's brothers carry this thought even further, they walk along this path even more firmly, and often it seems as though, despite all circumstances, the relation of the brothers Karamazov were being completely reversed in the course of the heavy three volumes of the book. Thus all established values become increasingly doubtful, and while the ~~holy~~ saintly Alyosha becomes more and more worldly, the worldly brothers become more saintly, and the most criminal and unrestrained brother, Dmitri, turns into the saintliest, the most sensitive, the most inward fore-seer of a new saintliness, a new moral, a new humanity. The more Karamazovish things are,-the more lascivious and drunk, the more unrestrained and vulgar they get to be - the more closely we perceive,beneath the surface of these vulgar manifestations, persons and actions, a glimmer of the new ideal revealing as they their inner spiritual values, their inner saintliness. Compared to Dmitri, the drunkard, killer and brute, as well as to Ivan, the cynical intellectual, those highly respectable types of the prosecutor and the other representatives of civilized society become shabbier, hollower and more worthless the more they appear to triumph on the outside.

PRUEFUNG

Du hast dein Antlitz von mir gewandt
und mir kein Zeichen gegeben.
Fern dem beschattenden Schutz deiner Hand
hast du mich unter die Menschen gesandt,
die in der Scheinstadt leben.

Hättest du mich in die Wüste verbannt,
mir bangte nicht vor den Löwen.
Wär ich gescheitert an steinigem Strand,
der einzig dir und den Möwen bekannt,
ich priese dich laut wie die Möwen.

Hier aber ist mir das Singen verwehrt.
Stöhnend wie in den Wehen
werd'ich von Aengsten und Zweifeln verzehrt.
Hast du mich dazu sehen gelehrt,
dich im Zerrbild von Fremden zu sehen?

Gib mir die Kraft zu deinem Gebot:
ohne dich zu dir zu gehen
und in der Wirrnis, die mich bedroht,
unbeirrt von Täuschung und Not,
schweigend vor dir zu bestehen.

1966

FROMMER WUNSCH

Ich möcht' mein Ich in einem Blumentopf begraben -
wenn es dann Blüten treibt, schau ich nur zu -
ich möchte endlich Innenräume haben,
die frei sind für ein grosses Du.

Dann hätt ich nicht zwei Seelen, die sich stritten,
ich waere ganz erfüllt von fremdem Sein,
dann brauchte keiner mich um Einlass bitten,
ich liesse jeden ungefragt herein.

Ich hätte all das Licht und all die Wärme,
die jetzt mein selbstbesessnes Ich verdrängt.
In seinem Schatten und in seinem Lärme
sitz ich und bleibe wie ich bin: beschränkt.

1935

Ich kann nichts sagen, ohne Dich zu meinen,
in jedem Wesen trittst Du mir entgegen,
ich sehe Dich als Ziel auf allen Wegen,
mein Lieben möchte sich mit Dir vereinen.

Du aber willst es nicht, dass wir Dich mischen
und Dich verweben mit dem andern Leben.
Du zwingst mich, was ich liebe aufzugeben,
denn immer wieder drängst Du Dich dazwischen.

Wen Du Dir wirbst, den lässt Du nicht entweichen -
oh, Du kannst grausam sein in Deiner Milde:
Du schufst den Menschen Dir zum Ebenbilde
und lässt Dich keinem Menschlichen vergleichen.

1936

PENELOPE

In order to be true I must deceive
those who have called me faithful to the dead.
Yet it is one who lives for whom I grieve,
for whom I nightly must undo my thread,
unweave my shroud of daily make-believe.

I am a woman ignorant of art
or beauty that displays itself for praise.
I only know the shuttle of my heart,
weaving its single pattern through my days'
entangled strands which I must take apart.

The gods destroy those daring to dispute
the wisdom of their destiny's dictate.
Thus I must love this labor without fruit
and without end until I shall salute
the one for whom I grieve and weave and wait.

1954

ANTWORT

Du fragst, wer ich bin -
ich weiss es nicht.
Bin ich Frau, bin ich Kind?
Ich habe tausendundein Gesicht.
Frag das Meer, frag den Wind,
wer sie sind.

Und fragst du wohin -
ich weiss es nicht.
Wo ist Ziel, wo Beginn?
Sieh, wie das Licht sich tausendfach bricht
und erlischt. Sucht das Licht
nach dem Sinn?

1932-34

LEIDENDE
(zu einer Zeichnung von Frans Masereel)

Oben, da plätschern im Flachen und Seichten
unbekümmert und lachend die Leichten.
Die aber, die von den Tiefen wissen,
werden von ihnen herabgerissen.
Durch das Gesetz ihrer Schicksalsschwere
fallen sie unaufhaltsam ins Leere,
und von des Strudels trichternem Schlunde
eingesaugt sinken sie nieder zum Grunde.

Sie aber kennen die Wollust des Sinkens -
und sie lieben die Qual des Ertrinkens -
und sie sehnen sich, unterzutauchen,
weil sie dann nicht mehr zu schwimmen brauchen.
Und sie werden zu Auserwählten,
Schermzensgeweihten, Leidensvermählten.
Denn dort unten im Strom der Gewässer
werden sie reiner, werden sie besser.
Wenn sie allein sind in Rudeln von Fischen
und mit der Flut ihre Tränen vermischen,
lernen sie dulden, lernen sie schweigen,
lernen sie, aus sich emporzusteigen.

1932-34

BILLIGER TROST

Unbehelligt von sämtlichen irdischen Plagen
scheinen die Toten ihr Totsein mit Fassung zu tragen.

Ob sie in Frieden ruhn oder sich zu den Lebenden legem,
ihr Tun oder Nichtstun ist gebilligt von Gottes Segen.

Sie brauchen den bösen Nachbar nicht mehr im Aufzug zu grüssen
und selbst die tödlichsten Sünden hörten sie längst auf zu
büssen.

Anstatt tröstliche Worte an einsame Freunde zu richten,
können sie sinnlose Verse wie diese dichten.

Es steht uns nicht an, nach ihrem Befinden zu fragen,
doch die Antwort liegt klar auf der Hand: die Toten
können nicht klagen.

NARZISS

Die hinter Masken Leben
spielen, erkennen sich nicht.
Mir ward die Sehnsucht gegeben
nach meinem wahren Gesicht.

Lag nicht in Echos Lallen
Lust, die als Liebe erscheint,
täuschend im Widerhallen
Sein und Erkennen verneint?

Suchend, das Selbst zu umschlingen,
das mir im Wasser entschwand,
wusst ich, ich muss dich durchdringen,
spiegelnder Widerstand.

Masslos in meinem Verlangen,
hab ich das Scheinbild zerstört
und jenes Einssein empfangen,
dem kein Gesicht mehr gehört.

1964

Es ist in Gott kein Ding
gross oder klein.
In einem Lebensring
ruht alles Sein.

Jedes Ding hat den Wert,
den man ihm gibt.
Jedes Sein wird verklärt,
wenn man es liebt.

Allein ist jedes Wort
ohne Gewicht.
Erst aus dem vollen Akkord
steigt ein Gedicht.

Leben kann Umweg sein
und Wiederkehr,
einzig und allgemein,
schwebend und schwer.

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schwebend und schwer.

1936

DER FALL DES IKARUS

Zu einem Bild von Breughel

Der Tag geht in den Abend über.
Der Bauer mit dem Pflug
folgt seinem Pferd und beide
haben den Kopf der Erde zugewandt.
Sie sind schon auf dem Heimweg.
Der Hirte neben seinem Hund,
auf seinen Stab gestützt,
schaut schräg nach oben,
nicht in den Himmel,
nicht nach den Schafen,
die einzeln und verstreut
ihr Futter suchen und von denen
nur die Hinterteile sichtbar sind.
Bald wird es Zeit,
die Herde
zum Aufbruch anzutreiben.

Der Fischer,
unten rechts am Ufer,
zieht sein schweres Netz ans Land.
Sein gewölbter Rücken
gleicht dem der Schafe.
Auch er hat seinen Kopf gesenkt.
Weit vorgebeugt,
hängt er
verfangen in dem eignen Fang.

Dicht am Strand
stehn lotusfarben,
wie Schirme aufgespannt,
die Segel eines grossen Bootes.
Am Mast die Männer sind
bereit zur Rückfahrt.
Der Wind ist günstig.

Weiter draussen gleiten
schon ein paar kleine Boote
zum Hafen hin.
Nicht allzu fern liegt er,
vom Licht verschleiert,
an der Grenze
zwischen Meer und Himmel.

Weiss wie Elfenbein
bewachen steile Felsen
die Bucht, auf der auch
Bäume grünen und Gesträuch.

Wo ist Ikarus?

Ganz vorn, dicht an der Bucht,
umkreisen Wellen etwas,
das kaum zu erkennen ist:
Ein Bein - es wehrt sich noch -
starr in die Luft gestemmt.
Ein zweites.
abgewinkelt,
wehrlos überschwemmt.
Kein Kopf - kein Körper.

Ein Mensch versinkt! Und da ist keiner,
der ihn vom Himmel fallen sah.

Das kleine Sonnenauge
blinzelt, halb versteckt
unter der blauen Decke
am Horizont.
Gleich wird es ganz verschwunden sein.
Ein matter Widerschein
erhellt den Himmel
und eine Strasse aus verglichnem Gelb
durchquert das glatte Meer.

Ruhig geht der Tag im Abend unter.

1986

DIE SAMARITERIN

Lass mich trinken, Herr, von deinem Quelle,
dass ich ewiglich nicht dürsten muss.
Lass mich nicht mehr an der Brunnenschwelle
schöpfen, ungestillt im Ueberfluss.

Lass mich werden, was sich mir verwehrte:
Wasser, das ins ewige Leben quillt.
Lass mich geben, was ich selbst begehrte:
Ueberfluss, der alles Dürsten stillt.

Du erkanntest, was ich je erfahren:
dass ich nie besass, was ich gewann.
Jetzt muss ich dich allen offenbaren
und mich prüfen, ob ich dienen kann.

1952

PERSEPHONE BRAUCHT HILFE

Irgendwann, ich weiss nicht mehr auf welche Weise, erfuhr ich, dass sie Hilfe suchte. Sie sei seit Ewigkeiten grenzenlos überfordert.

Kein Wunder, wenn man gezwungen ist, jedes Jahr zweimal den Aufenthalt zu wechseln. Kaum hat man angefangen, die lichte Unbegrenztheit der sommerlichen Räume zu entdecken, ist es schon wieder Zeit, zurückzuziehen in die düsteren, unterirdischen Gemächer. Und zu dem Gatten, der, eifersüchtig auf ihre Rückkehr lauernd, der unwillig vorübergehend Freigegebenen nicht einen zusätzlichen freien Tag gestattet, zu dem er nicht vertragsgemäss verpflichtet ist.

Die vielen Verantwortungen und Verrichtungen, die ihr auferlegt sind, auf Erden und im Schattenreich. Die Gäste, die ständig lamentieren, jeder nur mit sich selbst beschäftigt. Der fürchterliche Herr der Unterwelt, der sie nicht aus den Augen lässt.

Das arme Wesen, aus seiner kindlich verspielten Welt herausgerissen, entführt, verführt, verdorben, ewig kindlich bleibend, geliebt, betrauert, um sich selber trauernd, ohne Bewusstsein seiner selbst.

Vielleicht könnte ich ihr Demeter ersetzen, die Mutter, die sie anscheinend auch nur für ihre eigenen Zwecke braucht.

Ich könnte versuchen, die Schatten abzulenken, die ihr so lästig sind.
Neue Schattenspiele für sie erfinden.
Interviews mit ihnen machen. Sie dazu bringen, sich selbst zu fragen, ob sie sich eher tot als lebend fühlen oder ob ihr Zustand keinem der hiesigen Begriffe mehr entspricht.

Vielleicht liesse sich selbst Persephone dazu verleiten, mir die Geschichte ihres jährlich erneuten Lebens und Sterbens zu erzählen.
Ich könnte den Bericht dann ausarbeiten und ihn - vielleicht durch einen neuen Orpheus - in der Welt verbreiten lassen.
Nein, das wäre nichts für Orpheus, aber ich würde sicher andere Boten finden.
Der Titel: UNTERGRUNDSBERICHT. Wie ich mein Leben und Sterben schöpferisch gestalten lernte.
Das könnte fuer viele Seelenkranke nützlich sein....

1999

„Sie hätte singen

Nicht reden sollen diese neue Seele.“

STEFAN GEORGE „NIETZSCHE“

VERWANDLUNG

II

Wir spüren Dich auf unsres Daseins Höhen
Als Kraft, die unsrer Seele Flügel leiht.
Doch wie erkännten wir Dein göttlich Wirken
Im Grauen unsrer dumpfen Niederungen?

Wenn aus dem Kreis der selig freien Geister
Die Seele jäh in Abgrundtiefen stürzt,
Ist im Alleinsein sie so leidbefangen,
Dass sie nur ihres Schluchzens laut vernimmt.

Dann stöhnt sie unterm Fluch der Erdenbindung,
Die unausweichlich sie zu Boden zwingt,
Bis plötzlich – folgend meinem Spruch: Es werde! –
Ein Tagesschein in ihren Kerker bricht.

Da öffnen sich die tränenmatten Augen
Und schaun im Dämmern meine Gegenwart;
Da fügen, statt sich ~~wirr~~ hirr im Raum zu drängen,
Der Klage Töne einig sich zum Lied.

IM PARK

Wo gerad die Knospen ahnend sich erschlossen,
Im warmen Strahl Forsythien aufgeblüht,
Zerstört ein Eishauch, was sich lenzhaft münt,
Begräbt ein Tuch von Schnee das zarte Sprossen.

Wild zerren Stürme an den jungen Zweigen,
Als wäre neu entbrannt des Winters Mut.
Nachts tobt auf Wiesen der Dämonen Hut,
Am Morgen starrt der Park in weissem Schweigen.

Die Menschen, die in dankbarem Entzücken
Sich schon gesonnt im ersten Frühlingsschein,
Schliesst wieder Frost in ihre Häuser ein,
Und jäh erlosch das Licht in ihren Blicken.

»BLAUE BLUME EINSAMKEIT«

[Ein Bild von Melchior Lechter]

Weisst Du, oh Schwester, dass die blaue Blüte,
Nach der sich Deine Wünsche heiss verzehrten,
In einer Lichtung tief im Wald erglühte,
Fernab vom Gang der Freunde und Gefährten?

Ihr wallt auf Eurer Strasse – ernsthaft, heiter,
Beschwingt im Glücke der Gemeinsamkeit.
Da tönt ein Ruf in Dir: »Geh dort nicht weiter!
Dich führt Dein Weg nun in die Einsamkeit.«

Und schon umfängt Dich dunkle Waldesstille,
So tief dringt keines Vogels Stimme mehr:
»Hier ist kein Pfad! So fügte dies Dein Wille,
Dass Irrgang meiner Sehnsucht Blüte wär?«

Da quillt ein Licht aus hoher Himmelsferne,
Die Bäume weichen, Deinem Schritt versöhnt,
Und Deinem Blick erblüht im Schein der Sterne
Die blaue Blume, die Dein Leben krönt.

VON DEN DINGEN

Ich ahne Dich ringsum in allen Dingen,
Sie sind nicht tot, nur ruhend ganz gelöst.
Ich weiss, dass atmend sie Dir Lieder singen,
Und dass Du Dich in ihrem Preis erhöhst.

Denn manchmal, wenn ein Schauern sie durch-
Hat sie ein Strahl berührt, golden, mild. [zittert,
Dann wird der graue Stein, vom Sturm verwittert,
In einem Nu zu Deinem Spiegelbild.

O könnte mich der Bund mit Euch erlösen
Vom Kreisen um des eignen Wirbels Mitte!
Dürft ich an Euch vom inneren Bruch genesen!
Ihr Dinge, bleibt Gefährten meiner Schritte!

Sie dünkt sich frei, weil sie das Band zerschneidet,
Das ihr zu schwachen Halt gewährt;
Sie dünkt sich stark, weil sie den Stoss nicht meidet,
Durch den sie wissend tiefsten Schmerz erfährt.

Da sich als morsch erwies die letzte Brücke,
Die sie als Steg erbaut zum festen Land,
Hat sie sie ganz zersprengt in tausend Stücke
Und sich auf ihre Insel stolz verbannt. –

Wie kommt es, dass sie – über sich den Himmel
Und in sich eines Liedes Melodie –
Nun doch sich sehnt nach menschlichem Getümmel,
Der Freunde Tröstungswort vermisst wie nie?

Verschweig uns nicht die Mahnung Deiner Stimme,
Wenn auch das Herz Dich übertönen will:
So sehr ersehnt es, ganz sich zu erfüllen,
Dass es ans Nein sich nicht gewöhnen will.

Da ~~eint sich Wünschen~~ werden Bitten dringlich zu Gebeten,
Um machtvoll sich zu Dir emporzuschwingen.
Doch Dein Gehör verschliesst sich solchem Flehen,
Denn Deine Gnade lässt sich nicht erzwingen.

Du überschaust das Kreisen aller Welten
Und weisst, dass, was ein Mensch für sich begehrte,
Ein dauernd Festgefügtes lockern könnte,
So dass Erfüllung sich in Unheil kehrte.

Doch wir sind in des Daseins Raum gebannt
Von Wünschen, die sich wild zusammendrängen
Und können nicht uns selber überschauen.
Was wüssten wir von Weltzusammenhängen?

Ist dies verhängt, dass mir Dein Sang versagt wird,
Wenn sich die Lauscher alle von mir wenden?
Dass Deines Spruches Einsatz nur gewagt wird,
Um sich in Hall und Nachhall zu vollenden?

So hat dies Glück an Deiner Worte Formung
Nur Dauer durch Bestätigung von draussen?
Fehlt ihm die Sicherheit der eignen Normung:
Das Gleichgewicht des Innen und des Aussen?

Da ich den Ruf, Gefäss zu sein, erfahren,
Für Deiner Laute reiches Überfliessen,
Mach mich nun stark, in mir Dich zu bewahren
Und ruhend, Deinen Inhalt zu umschliessen.

MOSTERD NA HET ETEN

Een lichte lyrische bevlieging in een taal van
eergisteren en in de vredeminnende geest van over-
morgen

Voltooid op 2 September – Bedoeld voor 14 Sep-
tember – Opgedist op 13 MEI 1945
voor EV de vertegenwoordigster

Du bewahrst mir Dein Herz; und finden wir uns wieder

Aus den Trümmern der Welt, so sind wir erneute Geschöpfe;

Ungebildet und frei und unabhängig vom Schicksal.

Goethe, "Hermann und Dorothea."

PROLOG

Leert einmal noch den goldnen Becher
Voll von Erinnerung,
Doch nicht wie Thule's alter Zecher!
Der Trank geb' Kraft und Schwung
Im hohen Sinn des "Stirb und Werde"!
Fort dann den Festgesang
Und glaubt ans Glück auf neuer Erde
Mit frischem Lebensdrang!

Geliebtes Ehepaar im Silberkranz!
Mit Euch sind wir im Geist und Herz heut ganz.
Es müsste viel geschehn bis zu dem Tage,
Dass ich erstmalig lyrisch Sahne schlage
Für ein gedenkenswertes hohes Fest.
Gleich Dir, mein Cütti, hass' ich wie die Pest
Ceremonielles hohles Ernstgetüe
Gleich bei Geburt, dann Hochzeit, letzter Rüke;
Die Bräuche zeigen stets Barbarisches.
Wir fühlen sie als närrisch Arisches –
Als Qual, wenn selber wir im Centrum stehen
Und schamvoll im Brimborium vergehen.

Jedoch: Intimen, leckren Festtagsschmaus
Mal ich zur Zeit mir garnicht hässlich aus;
Ihr habt ihn freundlich ja ins Aug' gefasst.
Macht nichts, wenn etwas später wird geprasst!
Dann wird die Feier tiefren Sinn noch zeigen,
Sobald des Grausens Schreckentöne schweigen.

Zum Zeichen aber, dass wir bei Euch weilen,
Nehmt unsere erinnerungsvollen Zeilen.
Nur Keine Angst! Ihr braucht nicht zu erbeben.
Ich werde Euch kein plümpje aan het hwedje kleben.

Das Kompliment für Euch ist tief vergraben.
Schatzgräberartig werdet Ihr es haben,
Sobald Ihr Euch in dies Poem versenkt,
An Freunde, Reisen, Heim und Gärtchen denkt.

Dass Ihr es wart, die dieses Leben hatten,
Dies ist das Kompliment für Silbergatten,
Nicht bloss der Götter und des Zufalls Gunst.
Gut leben bleibt des Daseins schwere Kunst.

In dem Vergangenen liegt so das Gleichnis.
Sein Unzulängliches wird erst Ereignis,
Wenn die Erinnerung mit leichten Schleiern
Den peinlich Erdenrest verhüllt beim Feiern
Und in der Glorie, die der Geist bescheert,
Der Dinge still verborgnen Sinn verehrt.

Der Erdenballast war vielleicht zu schwer,
Vielleicht traf oft die Schönheit uns zu sehr,

Als dass sich Leben gleich erfassen liesse.
Auch nur wer viel erlitten, ahnt die Süsse,
Die in des Daseins Glück verborgen liegt,
Um das die Welt sich heute selbst betrügt.

Ein holder Trost scheint mir, kein Grund zum Quälen,
Dass die Erfüllung wartet und ihr Fehlen
Im Augenblick nicht ihre Wirkung stört,
Die erst der Zukunftsernte angehört.

Selbst wenn die Gegenwart wir voll genossen,
Liegt doch in der Erinnerung beschlossen
Solch reines Leuchten, Strahlen, Jubeln, Leben,
Wie es die Wirklichkeit fast nie gegeben.

×

Verzeiht die üppige Gedankenlyrik!
Ein bess'res Kraut – so stark und süss wie Mirik –
Hab' ich in einer Büchse vor mir stehn.
Ich sah die ird'schen Güter von uns gehn,
Und wie ein Kind aus einem brennend Haus,
Allein paar Püppenlappen trägt heraus,
Griff ich die Büchse, voll bis obenhin
Mit Negativen. Ob gewünschter Sinn,
Durch all des Krieges finstre Stürmgewalten
Die Zeichen einstiger Freuden zu erhalten,
Mir glückt, wird – hoff' ich – bess're Zeit bald zeigen.
Dann soll für Euch ein Jubel-Album steigen!

Ihm wird es leichter als dem Song gelingen,
Wie sagt ich einst? - Euch "in die Knie' zu zwingen".

Ein paar der Negative und Copieen
Will ich schon heute aus dem Dunkel ziehen.
Ihr bringt mit Euch die Bilder froher Tage -
Erlaubt, dass ich's mit dem Kollegen sage -
Und manche liebe Schatten steigen auf...
Nicht lang gezaudert! Kommt nur froh herauf,
Die einst Ihr Euch dem trüben Blick gezeigt!
Die Jubilanten sind Euch wohlgeneigt.

Macht nichts, wenn aus gewaltigen bunten Mengen
Ein paar nur an die Oberfläche drängen
In leichtem Umriss und gedrängtem Torr.
O, man erkennt Euch und ergänzt Euch schon.....

x

PIZ LUCENDRO

Tiefe Schneespur auf Lucendrosee -
Riesengross der gleichbenannte Piz...
Wir verstiegen uns kurz vor der Höh.
Führer: unser Fritz.

CUTTI AM SEIL-
LEICHT VERSTÖRT

Dammerstock hast Du nicht rein genossen.
Auf dem Rhonegletscher fing's schon an:
Bei der schönsten Tour hat Dich verdrossen
Hohler Backenzahn.

Noch in Zürich hat er Dich gequälet,
Bis ein Zahnklempnéér Dir half. Enfin
Hat Dich wieder kräftig neu beseelet
Café Hügüenin.

Eishockey auf Winterolympiade — ST. MORITZ 1928
Die Kanadier zeigten grosse Form.
Wir, die Zuschauer im Sonnenbade,
Schwitzten ganz enorm.

PÊLE-MÊLE

Glöckchenschlittenfahrt im Sertigtale —
Lust'ges Skijöring im milden Trab —
Unter hellem Frühlingssonnenstrahle
Schwüngvolles Bergab:

Pischahorn, Parsenn und Nüllisgrätli —
Krokus — Rüth so gross wie Micky Mouse —
Jünglinge —
~~Eisc~~ paar stramme Schwizzer Mädli —
Grüssi! Lasst mi aus!!

Mein Gehirn — bums! — senkt und leicht verirrt sich
Bei der Höhenstrahlung und dem Schnee:
Wär' nicht Winterreise Vierundvierzig
Prima als Idee?
Ach, das Herz fängt an so wild zu pochen
Von dem Supra-Friedenstraum genährt....
Bei Versteifung von Finanz und Knochen
Scheint er mir verkehrt.

GLIENICKER SEE,
MENZ ETC. ETC.

Ausflugsbilder aus der Mark:
Wald und Wasser, Grün und Sand.
Gott, was war der Ford doch stark:
Acht Personen hielt er stand!

Unter ihnen Klaupe - Fraue,
Selber wohl nun schon am Steuer.
Sie die Herren, ich der Schklave -
Zeit, Du bist ein Ungeheuer!

TURGELS IM GRUNE-
WALDCAFÉ u. HALENSEE

Wellensittichehepaar:
Die Gesichter fein und adlig;
Dann zum Sprung ins Wasser klar:
Körperbau griechisch-untadlig.

ERNA HERBERTSTR.

Mit getüpfelt Crêpe-Satin Complet
Und mit Riesenkrempenhut von Klasse
Glänzt Du ganz gross, eine Wunderfee.
Neben Dir, stolz, Frack, der Hund von Rasse.

GESCHWISTERPAAR
KOMISCH & INNIG

Neunzehnhundertdreissig im August:
Sonnenblume, wie bist Du so schön!
Welch Erinnerungs- und Augenlust,
Das, was Du beschattest, anzusehn!

x

NEUES BACHSTELZENLIED

Der Umwelt wollt' es sich nicht fügen.
Tja, Harry zeigte tollen Wagemut.
Doch sprächʼ ich anders, würd' ich lügen:
Das Haus war gut.

Barockgeschnörkel lag ihm ferne,
Wie es auch scheenerhoekjes nicht vertrug.
Es hatte Licht, Luft, Sonne, Sterne
Mich dünkt genug.

Auf meinen Films sind wir beim Boccia,
Bei heftigem Schneeball-, leisem Schreibespiel,
Zur Siesta auf Parterre-Loggia,
Wo's lekker kühl.

Die schönsten Films vom Gartendache:
Wir tanzen fröhlich unsre Ringelreis
Mit Grazie und mit viel Gelache
Als Nackedeis

Und winden uns beim Kalten Strahle
Des Wasserschlauchs, den Cütti dirigiert,
Wie ein paar wild gewordne Aale -
Leicht stilisiert;

Dann Lesen, Schlafen, Spielen, Essen
In reinster "You can't take it with you"-Weis:
Jeder nach eigenem Ermessen ....
O, PARADEIS!

x

MUTTER ELLY

Das Bild von Mütter Elly trägt die Krone:
Im Grünen mit dem einen Enkelsohne
und beiden Enkeltöchtern sitzt sie da,
So glücklich, wie man sie nicht häufig sah.
Es ist der Garten, glaub ich, der Rotunde,
Wo dieser Film entstand zu guter Stunde.

Wie wird das Herze einem wieder weit,
Grossmütterstolz, die leichte Rundlichkeit,
Ihr Lächeln und die stille Distinktion
Verleihn der Elly rührend warmen Ton.
Die Kinder sind auch allerliebst zu schaun,
Wer muss nicht lachen über Ev, den Clown!

Solch süsse Wesen sollten später sein
Die sauren, die sich anders als der Wein
Nur allzuhäufig zu entwickeln pflegen?
Nein, hier will ich die schöne Hoffnung hegen,
Dass etwas bleibt vom holden Jugendflor.
Vergesst nicht mitzuwirken, Kinder, hoor!

×

OMA CLARA

Von Oma Clara ist kein Film zu finden.
Deshalb a metaphoric snapshot nun.
Was typisch ist, soll er nicht minder künden
Als es die celluloidnen Streifen tun. —

Ermüdet führ ich von der Astvoline
An einem Sonntag nach Dahlem' raus,
Und mit gastfrei = geschäftig = heiterer Miene
Empfing sie mich in ihrem hübschen Haus.

Schon sass ich in dem friedlich kleinen Garten.
Schnell hatt' ich mich erholt und wohl gefühlt.
Die Aufwarte liess nicht lang auf sich warten:
Vierfruchtkompott im Saft und eisgekühlt.

Ambrosia = Nektar schien es mir zu gleichen;
Welch einziges Aroma! Welch Geschmack,
Den anderes Kompott nie konnt' erreichen!'
Voll tief Behagen denk' ich an den Tag.

Und Oma, wohl erfreut durch mein Ergötzen,
Gab ihre Kochgeheimnisse mir preis:
Man muss das Obst getrennt aufs Feuer setzen,
Und dies und das noch, was ich nicht mehr weiss...

Ja, ihre Gäste gastlichst zu traktieren,
Lag stets in ihrem hausfraulichen Sinn.
Von ihrer Kochkunst fett zu profitieren,
Hoff' ich, komm' ich mit Ma zum Festmahl hin!

X

Raucht Euch der Kopf schon? Schuld ist mein Gedanke:
Wer viel und munter in das Blaue schwatzt,
Dem glückt's, dass auch ein Schuss ins Schwarze platzt.
Na, besser ist doch wohl ein Wort von Ranke,

Dem Mann, der uns die Strassenpracht bescherte,
In welcher fünfundzwanzig Jahr zurück
Herr Treuenfels nach Evna's jüngst Glück
Durch Lob der deutschen Unterschrift vermehrte.

Dass Ranke meinte: Schreiben von Geschichte
Soll klären, wie es "eigentlich" begann
Und wie es "eigentlich" sich weiterspann.
Das Gegenteil bisher tat das Gedichte.

Uff, Uff! Was stand bei uns im Unbeginn?
Wo traf ich Euch? – Schon stehn wir mittendrin..

Im Anfang war ein muntres Maskenfest,
Das heute mich entzückt noch denken lässt
Nicht nur an Ma in Tüll von leuchtend Grün,
Auch an den Reiz der spät'ren Schwägerin

Dass ich beim Ball von Cütti wenig schaute,
Lag daran, dass man Euch schon damals klaute
Paar Perser und noch anderes von Güte,
Die er noch aufzuspüren sich bemühte.

Der Freundschaftsfaden spann sich schnell dann weiter:
Nachfeier gab's bei Euch – gemütlich = heiter.
Im Hintergrunde brüllte einen Singsong
Ein Babs. Ich sah zugleich das erste Ping = Pong.
Ping = Pong und Babs - sie würden beide gross.
Das Babs wiegt selbst ein Babs nun auf dem Schoss,
Und aus dem Ping = Pong würde Tafel = Tennis
Which shows what worth and like a man is:

Der eine zeigte Ernst und höchste Kraft,
Der andre lieber seine Meisterschaft
Zu gleicher Zeit im Rundfunkreportage.
Als übel angebrachte Badinage
Hielt Nummer Eins das Spielen mit Gelall
Von Zwei und fehlte böse so den Ball.

Rolf spielte höchst graziL in Fechterposen
Und Fritzchen derb und ungezügelt = lose
Und Emil Strähne im Gesicht - erhitzt,
Max, alter Balljongleur, kühn und gewitzt.

Erzählt' ich bloss von diesen Kampfturnieren,
Ich könnte manchen Bogen noch beschmieren.
Warempel, van der Regenbürger nein
Ein langer Weg zum Soutelande fein!

Noch seh' ich unsre Berg = und Talbahnplanken
In Spinabad; wir hatten sie zu danken
Der Mühle dort. Ja, selbst auf Winterfahrten
Ging Ping-Pong über Tanzen, Schach und Karten.

x

Ball nun mal über Bord!
Ping-Pong in Ehre –
Doch kommt jetzt fort vom Spurt!
Als das Primäre
Sei er nicht anerkannt.
Was hat geschlagen
Um uns so fest das Band?
Niemand kann's sagen,
Dem nicht das Freundschaftsglück
Aus jungen Jahren
Leuchtet so hell zurück,
Wie wir's erfahren.

Heute noch zu mir spricht
2) Herz, Stimme, Geist, Gesicht
1) Von einem jeden
Als gingen Fäden
Zu jenen Freunden weit,
Die, ach, verschlungen
Raum, Zeit und Ewigkeit,
Ehe gesungen
Der Jugend Abschiedssang,
Eh' Ihrer Sendung
Und ihrem Überschwang
Ward die Vollendung.

x

Denket der Stunden jetzt, die wir zusammen mit Emil genossen,
Wenn er voll Temperament überzuschäumen begann.
Seht Ihr ihn noch in dem roten Kasak an brunt festlicher Tafel,
Wie er die Krebse "goûtiert" und voll Genuss den Wein
Oder beim Schach – Cigaretten qualmend und hingegeben –
Selbst dem abstrakten Spiel eigenstes Herzblut noch gab?

Doch welche Wandlung mitunter im traulichen Freundesgespräche!
Auf eine Lieblingsidee kam er häufig zurück:
Für einen rechten Mann gelte nur die Beziehung zur Sache,
Menschliche Relation – das sei die Haltung der Frau.
Nichts bedeute dem Manne Benehmen und freundlich Getändel!
Alles Gedanken und Tat! Sie nur erweisen ihn.

Ahntest Du garnichts oder zuviel von dem Charme Deines Wesens,
Der uns alle erwärmt? Würd'er Dir selber zur Last?
Oder quält' Dich Dein Drang zu rein wissenschaftlicher Forschung,
"Fern der Vergänglichkeit", wie Du Dir's gerne erträumt?
Oder priesest Du Tat voll Gefühl Deiner Ohnmacht im Hinblick
Auf das Verlaufen der Zeit, die Du so reichlich verschenkt?

Denn sie war fremder Begriff Deiner weiten russischen Seele.
Unpünktlich kamst Du gar oft, bliebst bis zum Grauen des Tags.
So war es einst auf des Bachstelzenweges erholsamem Dache:
Die Gesellschaft war fort, die zu Gaste geweilt,
Und Ihr wart alle abgekämpft: müde im Hause schon schlafen.
Warm und duftend die Nacht – da sollte Emil schon gehn?

Völlig unmöglich! So stieg er mit mir im Schimmer des Mondes
Zu Eurem Dachgarten hoch. Schweigend rückten wir da.
Bald aber liess keine Rüh ihm das neue Rätsel im "Uhu".
Müdigkeit Kannte er nicht, ging es zu lustigem Spiel.
Langsam errieten wir jene lange Kette von Worten.
Glücklich gelöst war bereits "Mythologisch Begriff."
"Fatzgelichter" hiess er und darnach Kam noch "Krankheitserscheinung",
Mit einem Buchstaben mehr zu den alten gefügt.
"Neunzehn Worte gefunden - muss auch das zwanzigste glücken!"
Sprach's und von neuem zerbrach Emil sich seinen Kopf.
Was erdacht' er nicht alles laut und schriftlich vergebens!
Schon Kam das Morgenrot deutlich am Himmel empor.

Da erschien ihm die Lösung, die schwierige: "Rauschgiftelend" —
Emil im Freudenrausch! Wisst Ihr noch, wie er dann war?
Ach, mein Stift ist zu schwach, ihn so blühend-farbig zu malen,
Wie ich im Leben ihn sah: eine Romanfigur,
Aus dem Vollen und echt wie von Gonscharow oder Tolstoi. — —
Lange schon ruht er nun aus von dem Trubel der Welt.

Hätt' er - fragt' ich mich oft - die verwilderten Zeiten ertragen?
Was wäre Leben für ihn, wie es sich jetzt uns gibt:
Unsicher, unfruchtbar, furchterfüllt, mühselig und verkümmert?
Nichts, das des Atmens sich lohnt, hätte es ihm wohl gedünkt.
Schiedest Du, Freund, vielleicht zu Dir günstiger Stunde ins Dunkel?
In der Erinnerung Weh sei es für uns der Trost.

x

Von neuem nehme ich die Films zur Hand.
Gleich auf den ersten schaue ich gebannt:
Im Schnee auf Skiern da im Sonnenschein
Das kann bloss Fritz auf einem Gipfel sein –
Um ihn das Panorama, weiss und stumm.
Schaut er sich schon nach unserer Abfahrt um?
Betrachtet er die Spur nur ungeniert,
In der er uns zum falschen Ziel geführt?
Ist er grad' im Begriff vorm Abwärtsschiessen
Kraftvoll zu spucken und "Nicht zu geniessen!"
Entschuldigend darauf hinzuweisen,
Um keine Etikette zu verletzen?

Wie lacht er dann; in seinen Augen blitzt es.
Ist es Verlegenheit, ist es Verschmitztes? –

Leb wohl, Du wackrer guter Kamerad!
Ich denk', dass er das richtge Ziel nun hat. –
Scheint es Dir auch vor mehr als hundert Jahren,
Dass, Erna, wir zum Anhalter gefahren –
Zum letzten Händedruck in Fritz' Coupé?

[Kein übler Zuwachs für Tiberias-See!]

×

Ein andrer Film aus Schweizer Wintertagen—
Und eine Stimme hör' ich düster klagen:
"Das kann heut' noch den schönsten Modder geben..."
Wes Stimme spricht so - leise und daneben,
Wenn von dem wolkenlosen Firmament
Die Wintersonne Köstlich auf uns brennt?
S' ist unser Hanns im Redensartentrott,
In dem er ausdrückt Trauer, Lust, Trost, Spott.

Als Arzt sprach gern er: "Was Du tust, das tue,
Mein gutes Kind, nur ruhig und mit Ruhe!"
Und die Patientin ging beglückt hinweg.
Er Kannte seiner Branche hohen Zweck:
Mit zuzusprechen und auch zu probieren,
Manch Leid von einem Punkte zu Kurieren.

Im Leben weiss er gut, was er begehrt.
Trotzdem: Die meisten Menschen er betört
Mit charmingly unsicherer Attitüde—
Ein bischen zögernd... pessimistisch... müde.
Im Grund voll Unrast und erfolgreich Streben
Nach Freuden— murmelnd stets: "Ein Hundeleben..."
Don't mind, old friend, my verses were not fine.
This time "the pleasure was entirely mine."

x

In Unrast ihm verwandt - mit zartem Knacks-
Nach aüssen still - teilweise lax wirkt Max.
Erfahrung mit Verstand macht manchen leise,
ja selbst passiv auf langer Lebensreise.
Sein Negativ ist schwer bezahlter Lohn
Für seltne Gaben: die Intuition
In seinem Fach, in Kunst und Wissenschaft,
In allem, was sein suchend Geist errafft,
Und echtes tout comprendre - pardonner.
Ich hoffe, Cütti, dass wie ich ihn seh',
Dich nicht am Festtag in die Wolle bringt.
Er ist der güte Mensch, der sücht und ringt
Und auch in der Romantik seiner Lüst
Sich stets des rechten Weges bleibt bewüsst.

Und Weg und Wandlung ist hienieden viel.
Chimäre bleibt doch stets das letzte Ziel.
Ich fühle Brüder ihn. Werft Keinen Stein!
Wer ist von üns schon, was er Könnte sein?!

×

Das Stichwort fiel... Von Rolf müss ich nün schreiben,
Dem ältsten Freünd, dem Künstler - ja Genie.
Ihr Könntet meinen: "Nicht so übertreiben!"
Beim Schildern seiner Physiognomie.

Jedoch ist jedes Wort warm wahr empfunden:
Ich würde, was im Geist ich bin, durch ihn,
An den ich mich noch heute fühl' gebunden.
Durch ihn begann die Kunst für mich zu blühn:

Mit seinem Aug' lernt' Malerei ich sehen,
Musik erst lieben durch sein klüges Spiel.
Sein Geist liess mir die Geisteswelt erstehen
Voll Leidenschaft; nie blieb sein Denken kühl.

Ein Menschenalter ging's in gleichen Gleisen.
Kein einziger Augenblick von Langeweil,
Wo ~~es~~ immer es auch war - daheim, auf Reisen,
Ward jemals dem Beisammensein zuteil.

So ähnlich ist es auch wohl Euch ergangen;
Ward Ihr nicht stets erfrischt und angeregt,
Von der Musik und Diskussion gefangen,
Wenn in Gesellschaft er voll losgelegt?

Oft konnte er sich stark und trotzig geben;
Dann wieder sass er weich am Flügel da
Und würde ganz aus dem "Pariser Leben"
Jean Stanislas, baron de Frascata.

Ich weiss wohl: Παντα ῥει, nichts hat Bestand.
Für Wahlverwandtschaft sei's nicht anerkannt!

x

Hier mag sich langsam nun der Vorhang senken.
Und wären Geld und Freiheit reichlich mein,
Müsst' Toscanini selbst Euch jetzt bedenken
Mit Mozart's Ausdruckskraft und Zauberschein
zu dem Reiche lenken
Und Eure Seelen ~~tief~~ ins Reich versenken
Von süssem Rausche, sprühend heitrem Sein,
Von zart Gemisch wehmütig = Komödiantisch -
Ganz leis beginnend und zum Schluss bacchantisch.

Fagotts = Oboen hört dann nächtlich klingen
Mit Bratschen = Celli, die auf samtnem Ton
Begleitende Figuren ihnen bringen.
Da schmettern silbern jubelnd Hörner schon
Und rot Trompeten, bis furioso singen.
Die andern überbrausend = unison,
Die Geigen ihren Prestolauf im Tutti
Zur schönsten Huldigung für Erna = Cutti!

x

EPILOG

Vorüber sei die Hochzeitsgeisterstunde –
Trotz Unvollständigkeit. Es wird zu spät.
Gewartet hab' ich noch auf gute Kunde,
Dass Euer Fest im Friedenslichte steht.
Stattdessen bleibt's beim Trost aus Miltons Munde:
They also serve who only stand and wait.
Doch diese Dienstzeit sei nun bald vergangen!
Mein Glaube ist so stark wie mein Verlangen.

Betrauert nicht, dass Euch nicht wird beschert,
Was einst als Lohn der Mühe und des Strebens
Das Schicksal gern den Menschen hat gewährt:
Im Sommer eines arbeitsamen Lebens
Die reife Ernte, friedlich-unversehrt.
Ihr sucht sie beinah ringsherum vergebens.
Der blut'ge Amoklauf der Weltgeschichte
Macht auch das beste Arbeitsziel zunichte.

Bedenkt: Solang' der Geist sich tätig regt,
Ist reichlich Raum zum Hoffen und zum Planen.
Solang ein Herze für das andere schlägt,
Stehn offen Euch noch alle Himmelsbahnen.
Und diese Erde, die sich doch bewegt,
Ist freudenreicher als in Not wir ahnen.
~~Stahl~~ Euch nicht selbst in dunkler Zeit die Sonne
~~Sie hat Euch selbst in dunkler Zeit gegeben~~
~~Der Zukunftstraum~~, das Enkelkind Yvonne?
~~Das ungeheure~~ Glück von neuem Leben.

So bleibt denn glücklich! Es ist viel geblieben,
Was Euch am Festtag freudig stärken kann.
Gross ist die Zahl der Menschen, die Euch lieben
Und die ein schönes Dasein Euch gewann.—
Ich habe, glaub' ich, nun genug geschrieben.
Im Geiste stossen wir die Gläser an,
Gedenket unser, wie wir Euver denken
Und Euch von neuem unsre Herzen schenken!

× 2. September 1944
=

ANMERKUNGEN

Einen eigenen Kommentar seinen Liedchen anzuhängen, ist eigentlich nicht des Sängers Sache. Aber ich hoffe, dass ich mir bei der Auflage meines Festgesanges in einem Exemplar und bei der Wohlgeneigtheit meines Lesepaares die Freiheit nehmen darf. Die einmaligen Zeitumstände rechtfertigen sie. Wir schreiben im Augenblick den 5. September 1° Uhr mittags.

Aus einiger Seite 21 Könnt Ihr das wahrheitsgetreue Datum entnehmen, an dem ich die Niederschrift vollendete. Es geschah bereits am 2. September, da ich dem reitenden Boten des Königs, Einem wahrhaft edlen Ehrenje=Ritter, dieser Tage erwartete und ihm gern das cadeautje mitgeben wollte. Nun wird es wohl auf andere Weise übermittelt werden müssen; dass wir selbst es in Eure Hände legen werden, so vermessen wagen wir nicht zu denken.

Die Entstehungsperiode des Werkchens klärt einige Stellen, die sonst unverständlich wären. Ich begann am 12. August, also nach dem Zusammenbruch des Aufstandes die Generäle in Deutschland und vor der Landung der Alliierten in Südfrankreich, und ich schloss am Anfang dieses für mich im Moment noch umfassbaren grossartigen Siegesvormarsches. Soviel über die Zeit meines dichterischen Gebärtswehen als Entschuldigung.

Mein Kommentar wird also wahrscheinlich mehr einem Tagebuch, einem Impromptu aus den Stunden unserer wildesten Emotionen ähneln. Ihr bekommt diese sozusagen kühlwarm übermittelt, aus der Milch der Weltgeschichte gezapft.

Ja, jetzt dürfte es wohl bald soweit sein, dass wir auf Opa Hüttenlatsche Weise sagen können: "Jetzt kommen sie..." und die Frage: "Wer?" und die Antwort: "Weiss ich?" überflüssig sind.
Das letzte, was wir gestern Abend hörten, lautete: "Die Alliierten im Trümmhorst und am Julianen-Kanal..."

Wie weit ist es von diesem Punkten nach Eindhoven? und das vielgeübte Spielchen, mit Streichhölzern Entfernungen auf der Landkarte auszumessen, geht wieder von schwankend zwischen Befürchtungen und Hoffnungen. Wij duimen voor Jullie!

So sitze ich in meiner Zelle gleich dem Heiligen Antonius "vastgeplakt" nur hat er es auf dem Düver-Stich etwas gemakkelijker und mindert benauwd. anstelle von Löwe und anderem Getier sitzt zu meinen Füssen Ma auf einer Ritsche. Sie wird nicht müde sich in Friedensvorstellungen zu ergehen: "Wollen wir erst zum Zahnarzt oder Friseur?" oder: "Ich möchte dann gleich beginnen..." Nein, mit welchen Tätigkeiten sie gleich beginnen möchte, das kann ich nicht alles zu Papiere bringen.
Doch dann vertieft sie sich zur Zerstreuung wieder in diese Seiten und wird zu meinem Kummer mit dem Rhythmus der Distichen nicht fertig, die ich unserem Emil zugedacht habe. Hoffentlich gehen sie Euch leichter ein. Holperig und zähflüssig waren sie vom Verfasser weder gedacht noch empfunden.
Auch sonst war ich bemüht, die scherzigen Gelegenheitsverse so glatt wie möglich laufen zu lassen, obwohl ich dabei mitunter gegen meine Krankheitigen Gedanken und Formen anzukämpfen und manches wieder umzugiessen hatte.
Von anderen Dessins besteht wieder eine einfachere erste Machart, die ich billiger abgeben könnte - wie z.B. für pagina 12:

Schwamm über Bord –
Kommt fort vom Sport!
Ping Pong in Ehre –
Doch das Primäre
war es für Keinen.
Was tat uns einen,
Was schuf das Band,
Das fest bestand?
Warum erst fragen?
Wer kann's ergagen,
Der's nicht erfahren
In jungen Jahren!
Denn nie zurück
Kommt Freundschaftsglück
Wie es uns schien,
Da alles grün.

Von Gegenwart –
Selbst noch so hart –
Dringt nichts hervor,
Neig' ich mein Ohr
Den Freundestönen,
Verhallten, schönen.
Zu mir noch spricht
Stimm' und Gesicht
Von einem jeden,
Als gingen Fäden
Zu ihnen weit
Durch Raum und Zeit,
Die sie verschlungen,
Bevor verklungen
Der Jugend Sang
und Überschwang.

×

Soviel über meine Hobelbank. – Wie sagte der alte Lieber –

6. September: Trotz Phanodorm haben wir nicht viel geschlafen. Um 8° rum wurde es still auf der Strasse. Denn seit gestern Abend gilt der – letzte? – Befehl des Höheren SS und Polizeiführers Nord-West, des Obergruppenführers und Generals der Polizei, Rauter [je schlimmer der Gangster – desto länger sein Titel]: " Om acht uur binnen ... Samenscholingen van allerlei aard, waarbij meer dan vijf personen bij elkaar staan, worden door wearmacht, SS en politie beschoten." Ätiologie tandem?!
[O, Catilina, Du Waisenknabe!]

Wie gewöhnlich lagen wir zu Bett ohne Verdüsterung [Wird jemand draussen in USA oder sonst wo in der Ferne die ganze Bedeutung dieses jahrelang gebrauchten terminus technicus begreifen?] und bei offenem Fenster.

Von der nahen Hauptstrasse kamen ab und an Geräusche: Motorräder, schwere Wagen auf Raupenbändern, ein einzelnes Gewehrschuss. Dann aus der Ferne zwei Salven aus ein paar Geschützen. Nach Mitternacht zog schliesslich Hüjo – abnehmend, hinter dünnem Gewölk herauf, und ich dachte an Lis, Ascher und die endlose Reihe der Lieben, die den Verbrechern in die Hände gefallen waren. Wo mögen sie sein? Wie mag es ihnen ergehen?

Von Natur neige ich mehr zur Idylle und zum Ausgleich. Doch beim Gedenken der Schandtaten, die die Schufte bewusst und mitleidlos längen als zehn Jahre verübten, spüre ich nichts von Sanftmut in mir. Wenn so eine friedfertige Seele fühlt, der Hass und Rache sonst fremd sind, wehe ihnen, die den Höllenspuk verursachten, und dem unseligen Volke, das mitmachte!

Das Militär und die Stoßkolonnen sind aus dem Vondelpark abgerückt. Was sie zurückliessen, waren leere Munitions- und Sandkisten. Die Menschen, vor allem die Kinder, schleppen sie weg, um sie als dammaakkuit zuhause zu verwenden. Man hört sie die mehr als einen meter hohen Kisten dumpf die Strasse schleppen und trudeln. – Der gutmütige Alte von der Rijwielstalling ist dabei, die Räder seinen Kunden zuzustellen. In der Stalling sind sie nicht mehr sicher. Es heisst, dass die flüchtenden Soldaten schon andere Stallungen ausgeplündert haben. Amsterdam zu den Fischen – das ist wohl ein Gedanke, der selbst heute noch seinen lieben Bewohnern unvorstellbar ist.

mann? " Zeichnen heisst weglassen..." Ähnlich ist es wohl mit dem Schreiben, ganz zu schweigen von der grossen Kunst, garnicht zu schreiben. Auf jeden Fall verdrücke ich mir jedoch die Sonettex, die ich noch auf der Pfanne hatte - im Anbetracht der Weltgeschichte und Euren Nerven.

5. September 40 Uhr: Ma registriert gewissenhaft jedes kleine Häufchen, das sie unten auf der Strasse vor der Rijwielstalling wahrnehmen kann: "Sieh nur, wie die sechs Männer dastehen und tuscheln und lachen! Hast Du nicht eben gehört? Der Chauffeur vom Lastauto sagte gerade: Ze zijn al in Wassenaar..." Leises Motorgebrumm in der Luft. Die Menschen, die in der Butterfabrik gegenüber arbeiten, kommen auf die Strasse und halten Ausschau in der Luft. Nichts zu sehen... Bericht von Miesje, der 12jährigen Tochter, die gerad' von der Strasse kommt: " Manöveranschläge über Einnahmezustand in den Strassen. Die Moffen halten alle Autos an und nehmen sie weg. Im Kleinen Warenhaus N. stehen Frauen Schlange für Orangelimonade, aber auch nach Brot und Kartoffeln beginnt die Jagd. Einschränkung der Gasstunden, des Zahlungsverkehrs..." Um 5° erscheint Hansje, der 9-jährige Sohn des Hauses: " Ze zijn in Den Haag en Komen vanavond tussen 6° en 8° hier!" Ma überschlägt sich vor Freude. In dem Augenblick bringt die Hospita, die heute ihren grossen Waschtag hat und unfreundlich aus Gewohnheit dreinblickt, einen Brief für mich aus Eindhoven. Post!! Der Seltenheitswert rangiert für uns seit langem in der Nähe von Silbernen Hochzeit. Und dann Zeilen wie diese: " 4 Sept. 1944 Beste E. Hierbij nog een kleine verrassing om nog de resterende dagen uit te houden. [Tabakkaart] Hopelijk gaat deze Brief nog weg; want wij verwachten de Engelsen hier vanavond of morgen nog. De wegen zijn vol met vluchtende Duitsers, vrachtautos, zieken-auto's en zelfs infanterie. Als ze achter de rivieren nu blijven steken, zijn jullie ook gauw bevrijd. Nog even de tanden op elkaar. Hartelijke groeten Jk." Keine Epitheta ornantia zu dem Verhalten dieses Mannes! Sie müssten im Augenblick hinter solcher Gesinnung und Handlungsweise und unserem Empfinden zurückbleiben. Vergessen aber werden wir diese Zeilen wohl nicht. - Nach Kargem Andijvie-Abendessen - macht nichts, unser leiblicher Hunger ist jetzt sowieso nicht spürbar - hören wir noch von Jopie, dem Herrn des Hauses, dass die Alliierten in Lisse schon sein sollen.

Um 10° abends ein Dämpfer auf den Freudenrausch: Een zekere Jeffrouw Jelsma zou vanmiddag nog in Den Haag geweest zijn. Ze heeft er niets van Engelsen gezien. En Rotterdam? Ook niets van aan ...
mit Phantasien und Hoffnungen klettern wir in unser Bett. Good night!

x

Am 24.8. geben die Rümänen den Kampf auf, am 3.9. die Finnen, und am 6.9. schwenken die Bülgaren von ihrem Bündsgenossen ab und zwar in so drastisch-komischer Weise, die den ganzen Irrsinn politischer Revolutzelei offenbart; nicht minder in Ungarn wo der Eisenfresser Ministerpräsident Szfejay "erkrankte". Nach vierzehn Tagen, am 29. August, stand im Telegraaf: "Zijn toestand verbeterde niet en hij moest ontslag. De Regering verklaarde zich solidair met hem en is afgetreden!" Wenn nür nicht mit diesem Helden-Theater der Menschheit Jammer so eng verknüpft wäre. — Wann wird der Zwang des wilden Staats-Kollektivismus weichen und das Einzelwesen in freier Gemeinschaft wieder ans Licht treten? It is a long way und eine unzeitgemäße Frage eines Lebewesens des vorigen Jahrhunderts.
Vorerst wollen wir nün erst wieder das Andijvie-Abendessen einnahmen. PS. Bei kommenden Festmahlen bitte Abstand zu nehmen von: Andijvie, postelijn, raapstelen, stoofsla — als het Kaan..

8. September: Wenn ich dem Telegraaf glauben soll, geschieht so gut wie nichts auf der Welt. Er brachte auf der Vorderseite, die ihm allein für Nachrichten zur Verfügung steht [die Rückseite bringt nür Annoncen, Börse, allerlei zu die Berühmten Tom Poes-Geschichten]: "Bestrijding van ratten en muizen een volksbelang" "Paprika toekomstige concurrente van de tomaat." "Geen melk in flessen", "Boom viel over de rijweg" — Am militärischen Berichten interessiert nür, dass anstelle von Hitleristen am Mont Cenis, Mont Genievre und auf dem Kleinen St. Bernhard am heftigsten - die alten Reute von Hannibal mit seinen Tank-Elefanten! — alliierte Truppen am Werk sind. Italien wird also nün auch noch von zwei Seiten angepackt. Für mich wichtiger, dass der Druck bei Lüik nüvermindert anhält. Denn Lüik-Eindhoven-A'dam liegen auf einer geraden Nord-Südlinie, und mit dem Eckpfeiler Lüik wird bald der Rest nach Norden frei. Hoffentlich sitzt Ihr nür nicht zu sehr im Kampfgewühle. Das sollen sie unter sich ausmachen.

9. und 10. September: Ich müss anfangen, mit Zeitraffen zu arbeiten, um de papierschaarste te voorkomen. Also keine Details von den merkwürdigen Gerüchten, die bei Kaltem Wetter an den beiden letzten Tagen hier wiederholt niedergingen. Vom Heeresbericht interessierte mich am Sonnabend nür, dass in Lüik die Citadelle noch Widerstand bietet. Mit grossen Hoffnungen in die neue Woche..... Eigentlich könnt' so stört mir nach dem heutigen Abendessen auf. auch Spinat auf vlige schwarze Liste mitaufnehmen. Ihr werdet vielleicht fragen: Keine anderen Sorgen? Ihr habt recht! Der Index für Genüsse ist mindestens so wichtig. Bitte, vorzümerken: Komijn, Lorbeer, Nelke! — —

11. und 12. September: Einziges Lebenszeichen der noch vorhandenen Post wieder ein Lüftalarm von kaum einer Minüte, der erste seit vielen Tagen. Telegraaf: "Op de lijn Verviers-Metz dringt de vijand over een breed front tegen onze achterlinievestingen op." Das heisst ein Angriff auf Deutschland von Köln bis in die Gegend von Karlsrühe - und müsste nicht eigentlich vor Verviers Lüttich gefallen sein und müsste dann nicht langsam der nördliche Flügel bis Eindhoven und darüber hinaus in Bewegung kommen? Ich fange an, eine kräftige Prise morgenluft zu wittern. Auch Amsterdam hat

Jegliche Nachricht über die Front fehlt uns heute. Der Hausherr muss wohl in ein leer gewordenes deutsches Nest gefallen sein: Er kam in einem beneidenswerten Zustand voll von Ouzo klare nachhause und war weit entfernt von Vernehmungsfähigkeit über die Lage. Der Telegraaf brachte: "Geallieerde aanval op linie Leuven - Namur - Sedan" und ein Dementi über Gerüchte um Breda: "Een bericht, dat door de Britse radio omgeroepen is, dat Engels - Amerikaanse troepen Nederlands grondgebied hebben bereikt en Breda bezet, is niet juist. Men houde zich dus aan officiele mededelingen en late zich niet op sleeptouw nemen door voorbarige gerüchten."
Warum sind sie nicht mehr voorbarig? Wie steht es mit Eindhoven? Was ist Wahrheit? - Sicher hat man im achtzigjährigen Krieg besser gerüstet, wie es um Lüik und andere Nachbarplätze stand als wir heute mit unseren Kommunikationsmitteln, die uns in einer Sekunde übermitteln könnten, was in 20000 km: Entfernung vorgeht. Sollte hier in dieser ewig neugierigen Stadt, wo jedes Herausgehen eines verrosteten Fietsgestells aus einer Gracht zum gewaltigen événement für die Passanten wird, niemand wissen, wie es um Eindhoven etc. aussieht? Ich möchte es fast nicht glauben.
Ich greife wieder zum Atlas: Stimmt es, was der Telegraaf-Bericht aus Berlin meldet, dass die Deutschen an den Albert-Kanal "volgens plan" zurückgegangen sind, würde Eindhoven noch nicht frei sein. Keine angenehme Vorstellung - Und wie steht's mit den Übergängen über die Flüsse nach Norden, nach Amsterdam zu?
Da lasse ich die Karte schnell wieder entmutigt sinken. Es ist mir zu unübersichtlich, was der ehrwürdige Vater Rhein da zum Schlusse anstellt - mit sich und mit der Maas, um von der Schelde erst garnicht zu sprechen. Welche Fülle von Wasser und Namen, unergründlich miteinander verfilzt! Nein, das lerne ich nicht, da warte ich lieber auf die Befreiung. - Gewissenhaft entferne ich noch aus meinen Zigarettenstummeln die letzten Restchen Tabak für neu zu drehendes Kraut, dann zu Bett.

7. September Nach dem gestrigen sommerlich warmen Tag heute kalter Nordwest mit Regenböen. - Seit vielen Tagen der erste Luftalarm, der kaum eine Minute dauerte und wie ein Lebenszeichen der noch vorhandenen Pest wirkte. Mittagsbericht von Zopic: Alliierte Truppen stehen im Bereik. das wäre 10 km südlich von Eindhoven. Auch die Zeitung von beträchtlicher Inhaltslosigkeit. Von den Häfen und Truppen in Nordfrankreich kein Wort. Dasselbe Stillschweigen über das Heer, das sich zwischen Sereth und Pruth verteidigte und wohl umzingelt würde. Deutlich sichtbar zwischen den Zeilen wird allein der aussenpolitische Aufstieg Russlands:

sie sehr nötig: Volgens Telegraaf Kolenpositie zeer precair." Van 10°–4° nüüt geen trams, beperking van gas- en electriciteitsgebruik. Gebruikt de closetspoeling alleen, wanneer het strikt noodzakelijk is! De Kolen raken op. Wij tellen nü met dagen. Gemis aan electriciteit betekent ook stopzetting van vivelering en broodfabrieken." Abends nach 8° Uhr, wenn niemand mehr auf der Strasse sein darf, hängen die Menschen, meist ehepaarweise, aus den Fenstern, als ob friedlichstes Leben üm sie wäre, ünterhalten sich anfangs kräftig, rufen sich ein paar Scherzworte zü und Gütenacht, bis schliesslich auch der Allerletzte verstümmt. Bühnenwirksamer hätte es Max Reinhard selbst nicht herausgebracht. —

De Telegraaf: "De politiepresident van A'dam vestigt er de aandacht op dat in verband met de uitgaansverbod..... het hangen üit ramen na 8 üür is verboden..." Romantische Idylle scheint diesen Bürschchen nicht zü liegen – mehr das Gekratter von Gewehren, die die Landwacht patrouillen – wohl zür Erhöhung ihres eigenen Mütes – allnächtlich züm besten geben. Alles belanglos gegenüber dem einen Satz im Heeresbericht vom 12.9.: "Nördlich von ~~Eindhoven~~ Hasselt konnte der Feind mit starken Infanterie- und Tankstreitkräften in Richtung Eindhoven aufrücken." Entschüldigt meinen Schreibfehler! Ihr seht, das erregte unterbewüsstsein den Ereignissen voraüseilen und für Euer Jübiläüm mit dem herrlichsten Coup de théâtre verbinden.

13. September abends: De Telegraaf kommt. erster Blick: "Taai verzet ten N. van Hasselt. Doorbraakspogingen verijdeld." Müd damit sinkt meine Hoffnüng züm Nüllpünkt, dass Ihr morgen als Köstlichste Festgabe "Vrijheid = Blijheid" geschenkt bekommt. O, diese Ritardandi der Weltgeschichte [über ihre anderen Fehler erst garnicht gesprochen]! Doch in diesem Falle werdet Ihr auch züfrieden sein mit Mostard na het eten, wenn nür sonst alles güt geht. –

14. September ein Spätsommertag, mild- ozonreich und voll zarter Melancholie. Aüs dem Ozongeprickel destillieren wir üns im Geiste Champagner und aüs den schwermütigeren Lüftbestandteilen einen dünkel-dickflüssigen Bürgünder zü Eüeren Ehren.

Die Euch zügedachten Seiten liegen auf meinen Knieen statt in Eüeren Händen. Doch was weit schmerzlicher ist: Mars sich in der freündlichen Rolle eines deüs ex machina für den heütigen Tag aüszümalen, war eine meinem Gehirne entsprossene Phantasmagorie, der sich die Wirklichkeit nicht gewachsen zeigt.

Doch ich bleibe hoffen und denke zügleich an ünsere Elly; ihres Geistes haben wir in den letzten Jahren mehr als einen Hauch verspürt. Das meine ich keineswegs nür metaphorisch, sondern beziehe es auch auf ünser praktisches Verhalten. Sie möge üns allen weiter hilfreich-treü zür Seite stehen! Dan zal het waarachtig wel gaan..

In diesem Zeichen und mit übervollem Herzen ....

7. Februar 45: Soll es wirklich heüte ein halbes Jahr her sein, dass wir ~~gesagt vor einem halben Jahr~~ Mijnheer Claassen das letzte Mal sahen! Nein, aufwärts ist es mit üns in diesen düsteren Zeit nicht sich ~~sich~~ gegangen, und der Optimismüs will im Augenblick auch nicht recht gedeihen bei dem beträchtlichen Mangel, den wir an Wärme, Nahrüng und Licht leiden. Ma und ich süchen deren geistigen Ersatz in Erinnerüngen dürch Lektüre ünseren Verstehen, und ich füge noch ein paar allerletzte auf der letzten Seite bei...

EPILOG II

Wie lange rühen die Gesänge!
Nun Elend, Hunger Dü erlebst,
Bevülwen anders Dich Die Klänge
Vergangner Zeit und Dü erbebst,

Dass jene Schatten aüs Dir steigen,
Die im ErmattenDü nuch liebst,
Die wündersam sich zü Dir neigen,
IndemDü ihnen Dich ergébst.

Und Dü erfährst, dass alle Dinge
In Deines Herzens Tiefen sind
Und dass sie nür die bunten Ringe,
Den nahen ünd den fernen Wind,

Um Deine stille Mitte bilden,
Die ohne Gründ der Anfang ist:
Und also singst Dü im Erfüllten,
Des Sehnsüchtsklang Dü selber bist.–

Verzeiht den zarten Wahn, geboren
Aüs Kälte, Dünkelheit ünd Not!
Doch ohne ihn wär' ich verloren.
Ich fühlte nür das Reimwort: Tod!

ERINNERUNG hält mich am Leben
Und meine müt'ge Müse **MA.**
Wollt Ihr am Ende Beifall geben,
Für diese beiden sei er da!

FINIS OPERIS

distort, this frightful excuse

Future you ~~are being used~~ by Time
to obscure our view
Project too vast, too big a bite
for the heart to chew.

Who (would) ever have blamed you, Future,
for being late?
They all go their ways.
You are content to ~~increase~~ add to the weight
of ~~the~~ ~~an~~ absence that stays

N. B.

Today I have done nothing
But many things were do
took place (unpaid) -
Birds that ~~[illegible]~~
did find the
Shadows th

Located disco
~~tal van~~ Wood
re

rest

Doing nothing
sometimes restores the
balance of the ~~x~~
by (giving) ~~x~~ lending - to something
in the empty pan of the scale.

[illegible]

[illegible] perhaps exist

[illegible] that do exist ?

[illegible] their [illegible]

~~E D sometimes~~ [illegible]

[illegible] the balance of [illegible]

by ~~giving~~ that something a

~~[illegible]~~ [illegible]

(even) ~~[illegible]~~ the vacant pan of

the scale

~~Letting s'thing gain weight~~

~~&~~ in the scale's vacant

~~adding~~ also pan

by ~~giving~~ A weight to something

in the scale's empty pan

~~also~~

on the scale's vacant side

QUOTES FOR A LITTLE POCKET COMFORTER

Accept that some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue.

Robert C. Anderson

In three words I can sum up everything I have learned about life. It goes on.

Robert Frost

There is a time in the life of every problem when it is big enough to see, yet small enough to solve.

Mike Leavitt

Success is how high you bounce when you hit bottom.

Gen. George Patton

If you want to test your memory, try to remember what you were worrying about one year ago today.

E. Joseph Cossman

Knowledge is gained by learning, trust by doubt, skill by practice, and love by love.

Thomas Szasz

If it weren't for the last minute, a lot of things wouldn't get done.

Michael S. Traylor

Learn a new language and get a new soul.

Czech proverb

It's hard to detect good luck - it looks so much like something you've earned.

Fred A. Clark

The nice thing about meditation is that it makes doing nothing quite respectable.

Paul Dean

The best bridge between despair and hope is a good night's sleep.

E. Joseph Cossman

Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after another.

Walter Elliott

AMBIGUOUS REPLIES TO ORDINARY QUESTIONS

QUESTION : How are you?

ANSWERS: 1. I can't complain (my personal choice).

2. Normal (frequent in the former GDR)

3. You don't really want to know. (A weary Executive Assistant at the water cooler.)

QUESTION: Why didn't you do what I told you?

ANSWER: 'Cause I don't want to do what I'm opposed to do! (a 3-year-old girl to her grandmother in New York).

ANONYMOUS

Yesterday we stood with one foot on the edge of the abyss. Today we've gotten already one step further. (Graffiti seen in Berlin, capital of the GDR, several years before the Wall came down)

EMILY DICKINSON

Take all away
The only thing worth larceny
Is left - the Immortality -

ANONYMOUS PRINTER

Take all away -
The only thing worth
larceny is left -

The Immorality -

of the abyss. Today we're already one step further (as Graffiti says in Berlin ~~when it was still divided.~~) before the Wall came down,

~~Copy the poem~~

~~by making an~~ a change of one letter in the (~~word~~) title which, if cast a ~~spell~~ look, ~~just by~~ in a large ~~way~~ way ~~changed~~ ~~its~~ reputation among readers. ~~for the~~

~~Use~~ The last ~~two~~ text, after having been approved ~~by~~ ~~him~~ at diff. stages

p.

by various editors, ~~as well as by the~~ the text of the last poem read:

From a bilingual edition of ED poems

Drugs Store
Brewster

Jedes Einbekenntnis
Spucken.
Wer sich entschei-
dich die meisten
Einwohnerinnen Einbe-
sich bei

Labyrinth
Instructions
for the L.

1. At all stages try to divest yourself of preconceived ideas, e.g.
   a) that you will be able to master the L. better than anyone else
   b) that it is an impossible task destined to succeed by sheer force of trying to destroy you

Neither assumption is correct. The L. has been customized to fit your personal needs + specifications. If you cling to one of the other

ideas & continuously
as at intervals, you
the ~~as~~ will lose track
qualities is essential in
your effort: a steady
even rhythm and
an untiring continuous
effort. Descartes.
Warning:
Any attempt to modify
its design may have
irreversible con-
sequences for the
user who will
be held responsible
for ~~whatever~~ ~~else~~ resulting
other damage, incl.
loss of life & limb.

1. At any stage of
operations, direct
your attention
exclusively on the
next step ahead.

~~Assess~~

future
~~unrelated~~ reflections

2. Avoid speculations about ultimate goals, distances, ~~deadly~~ hard to find pos. & dangerous e.g. meeting free monsters rewards for achievement, ~~fear of~~ persistence for failure, etc.

3
Dimensions:
Shape & d. of the P.L. cannot be calculated ~~really~~ by estimated in the ~~place~~ course of the from the inside, i.e. during the ongoing process of (procedure).
This will be completed once the usual lab

is designed
realised the ~~es~~ to which
coincides with the
beginning.

It is not possible
to expedite this
process by simply
taking bodh antibiotics
~~given~~ for the
steps any given stage

[do not try ~~to~~ to avoid
myself of ~~precautions~~
a) illusions, ~~of~~
b) grandeur ~~as~~ of
c) feelings of impotency
at different stages.]

A U S T E R I A

(T h e I n n)

by Julian Stryjkowski

The action of the book takes place on the outskirts of a small provincial border town on the Austro-Hungarian side of the Carpathian Mountains. The time is the beginning of the First World War, and the local inn, a customary meeting place of the townspeople, becomes a shelter where they take refuge under the threat of an imminent Cossack attack.

Most of the events are viewed through the eyes of "Old Tag," the innkeeper. In his discussions with the Jewish townspeople and with the priest from a neighboring town, - a childhood friend of his and the only significant non-Jewish character who appears in the book, - Tag emerges as a wise old man, combining a deep knowledge of the ancient Jewish tradition with a realistic perspective of the world around him. As the story progresses, with the invading Cossacks coming closer, the townfolk in their relations to each other as well as in their reactions to the stress of the situation are portrayed in penetrating detail. The author focuses on various aspects of life in a small Jewish community with its particular customs, its observance of holidays, even under abnormal circumstances, its divergent attitudes toward the outside world, and its conflicting ways of dealing with unpredictable dangers.

An almost surrealistic element is introduced through the presence of a group of Chassidic Jews whose irrational behavior

is sharply contrasted with the circumspect common-sense approach of the other members of the community. While the "realists" among the townfolk have decided to use the inn as a hiding place where they can "sit it out safely and quietly" behind locked doors until the storm has blown over, the Chassidim cannot be dissuaded from continuing their ritual practice of communing with God by singing and dancing. Their ecstatic and noisy acts of devotion are interpreted by the others as completely irrational and self-destructive, since they can only serve to attract the attention of the enemy.

Without idealizing them or overlooking their shortcomings, the author portrays the Chassidim with considerable empathy. Toward the end of the book, the reader is left with the feeling that the Chassidic's seemingly irrational way of dealing with the situation is no more futile than any other in the face of incomprehensible events beyond human control.

The general atmosphere of irrationality is further accentuated by the tragic death of a young girl, Asia, who is killed by a stray bullet while trying to escape to a safer hiding place. The devastating effect of her death on the boy who loves her is described in episodes of great emotional impact.

Avoiding dramatic overstatement throughout the book, which ends without any definite conclusion, the author presents in compassionately elaborated detail a picture of the "human condition" within a limited framework. The fact that the action is confined to a single locale, -The Inn, - with dialogue used

as its primary vehicle, might make the novel well suited for eventual stage adaptation. In either form, the subject should be of interest for sophisticated audiences in this country.

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Bertolt Brecht

An die Nachgeborenen.

I

Wirklich, ich lebe in finsteren Zeiten!
Das arglose Wort ist töricht. Eine glatte Stirn
Deutet auf Unempfindlichkeit hin. Der Lachende
Hat die furchtbare Nachricht
Nur noch nicht empfangen.

Was sind das für Zeiten, wo
Ein Gespräch über Bäume fast ein Verbrechen ist
Weil es ein Schweigen über so viele Untaten einschließt!
Der dort ruhig über die Straße geht
Ist wohl nicht mehr erreichbar für seine Freunde
Die in Not sind?

Es ist wahr: ich verdiene noch meinen Unterhalt
Aber glaubt mir: das ist nur ein Zufall. Nichts
Von dem, was ich tue, berechtigt mich dazu, mich sattzuessen.
Zufällig bin ich verschont. (Wenn mein Glück aussetzt, bin
ich verloren.)

Man sagt mir: Iß und trink du! Sei froh, daß du hast!
Aber wie kann ich essen und trinken, wenn
Ich dem Hungernden entreiße, was ich esse, und
Mein Glas Wasser einem Verdurstenden fehlt?
Und doch esse und trinke ich.

Ich wäre gerne auch weise.
In den alten Büchern steht, was weise ist:
Sich aus dem Streit der Welt halten und die kurze Zeit
Ohne Furcht verbringen
Auch ohne Gewalt auskommen
Böses mit Gutem vergelten
Seine Wünsche nicht erfüllen, sondern vergessen
Gilt für weise.
Alles das kann ich nicht:
Wirklich, ich lebe in finsteren Zeiten!

II

In die Städte kam ich zur Zeit der Unordnung
Als da Hunger herrschte.
Unter die Menschen kam ich zu der Zeit des Aufruhrs
und ich empörte mich mit ihnen.
So verging meine Zeit
Die auf Erden mir gegeben war.

Mein Essen aß ich zwischen den Schlachten
Schlafen legte ich mich unter die Mörder
Der Liebe pflegte ich achtlos
Und die Natur sah ich ohne Geduld.
So verging meine Zeit
Die auf Erden mir gegeben war.

Die Straßen führten in den Sumpf zu meiner Zeit.
Die Sprache verriet mich dem Schlächter.
Ich vermochte nur wenig. Aber die Herrschenden
Saßen ohne mich sicherer, das hoffte ich.
So verging meine Zeit
Die auf Erden mir gegeben war.

Die Kräfte waren gering. Das Ziel
Lag in großer Ferne
Es war deutlich sichtbar, wenn auch für mich
Kaum zu erreichen.
So verging meine Zeit
Die auf Erden mir gegeben war.

III

Ihr, die ihr auftauchen werdet aus der Flut
In der wir untergegangen sind
Gedenkt
Wenn ihr von unseren Schwächen sprecht
Auch der finsteren Zeit
Der ihr entronnen seid.

Gingen wir doch, öfter als die Schuhe die Länder wechselnd
Durch die Kriege der Klassen, verzweifelt
Wenn da nur Unrecht war und keine Empörung.

Dabei wissen wir doch:
Auch der Haß gegen die Niedrigkeit
Verzerrt die Züge.
Auch der Zorn über das Unrecht
Macht die Stimme heiser. Ach, wir
Die wir den Boden bereiten wollten für Freundlichkeit
Konnten selber nicht freundlich sein.

Ihr aber, wenn es so weit sein wird
Daß der Mensch dem Menschen ein Helfer ist
Gedenkt unsrer
Mit Nachsicht.

Bertolt Brecht

To Posterity

Truly, I live in dark ages.
A guileless word is foolish. A smooth forehead betokens
A callous heart. He, who laughs,
Has not yet heard
The terrible news.

-

Ah, what times are these,
When to speak of trees is almost a crime,
For it means silence about so many atrocities.
And he, who walks calmly across the street, -
Is he not out of reach of his friends,
Who are in trouble?

-

It is true: I earn my living
But, believe me, it is only an accident.
Nothing that I do entitles me to eat my fill.
By chance I was spared. (If my luck fails me,
I am lost.)

-

They tell me: eat and drink. Be glad you have it!
But how can I eat and drink
When my food is snatched from the hungry
And my glass of water belongs to the thirsty?
Yet I eat and drink.

-

I would gladly be wise.
In the venerated books I read what wisdom is:
Keep out of the strife of the world, live out your little time
Without anxiety
And without resorting to violence,
Return good for evil -
To renounce your desires,
To forget them,
Is said to be wise.
None of this I can do:
Indeed I live in dark ages!

-

I came to the cities in a time of unrest,
When hunger reigned.
I came to the people in a time of uprising
And I rebelled with them.
(So the time passed away
Which on earth was given me.)

I ate my food between battles,
I laid me down to sleep among the murderers
When I loved, I loved with indifference
And I looked upon nature with impatience
So the time passed away
Which on earth was given me.

-

Roads, in my day, led only into morass
Speech betrayed me to the slaughterer
There was little I could do. But without me
The rulers would have felt more secure. This, at least
I hoped.
So the time passed away,
Which on earth was given me.

-

Men's strength was little. The goal
Lay far in the distance,
I could see it distinctly,
But it was barely in reach of me.
So the time passed away
Which on earth was given me.

-

You, who shall emerge from the flood
In which we are sinking,
Think,
When you speak of our weaknesses,
Also of the dark time
Which you escaped.

-

For we went, changing the countries more often than
our shoes,
Through the wars of the classes, despairing
When there was only injustice and no resistance.
And yet we know,
Even the hatred of infamy
Distorts our faces,
Even anger against wrong
Makes the voice harsh. Oh, we,
Who wished to prepare the grounds for kindness,
Could not ourselves be kind.

-

But you, when, at last, it may come to pass,
That man will be a helper of his fellow man,
Remember us with leniency!

BERTOLT BRECHT

BALLAD OF THE POOR B. B.

1

I, Bertolt Brecht, came from the black forests.
My mother carried me into the cities. I lay
Still in her belly then. And the cold of the forests
Will be inside me until my dying day.

2

In the city of concrete I am at home. From the very beginning
Supplied with every holy sacrament:
With papers. And with tobacco. And with brandy.
Suspicious and lazy and satisfied in the end.

3

I am friendly with people. I put on
A bowler hat just as they do.
I say: they are animals with a peculiar smell
And I say: what of it, I am one too.

4

In my empty rocking chairs in the morning
I sometimes seat some girls who pass by
And untroubled I look upon them and tell them:
In me you have one on whom you cannot rely.

5

Toward evening I gather men around me
We address each other as "Gentlemen"
They rest their feet upon my tables
And say: Things will get better for us. And I don't ask: when.

6

Toward morning in the grey dawn the pines piss
And their vermin, the birds, start to scream.
At that hour I finish my glass downtown and throw
My cigar end away and fall into a restless dream.

7

A generation of little weight, we sat
In houses supposed to last for eternity
(Thus we have built the long enclosures of the island Manhattan
And the thin aerials that chat with the Atlantic Sea).

8

What will remain of these cities is the wind that went
through them!
Cheered by his house is the eater: he empties it out.
We know, we are premises only
And the conclusion will be: nothing worth talking about.

9

During the earthquakes to come I hope I shall not
Let my Virginia go out through impotent rage
I, Bertolt Brecht, driven into the cities of concrete
From the black forests, inside my mother, at an early age.

Die Buesserin.

Ich hatt' einen kleinen Kummer,
geborn aus einer Suende klein;
ich fand ein Zimmer, feucht von duesterm Schimmer,
und schloss uns alle ein.
Ich sprach: "Oh weine, mein Kummer klein,
Und Gott, lass die Suende gestorben sein.
Ich leg mich auf den Boden hin
und denke, ach, wie schlecht ich bin."

Doch weh, mein frommes Denken,
es half mir leider nicht.
Der Schimmer gloomm trueb in dem Zimmer,
es brannte kein anderes Licht.
Mein Kummer klein wollte nicht traurig sein,
meine Suende klein schlief mir von selber ein,-
und meine Seele blieb allein,
ein gnadenloser Wicht.

Da stand ich auf im Zorne
und nahm ein Buch zur Hand,
flocht in mein Haar ein buntes Band,
um einem Burschen zu gefall'n, der vor dem Fenster stand.
Und, "Keines," sprach ich, "ist ganz klar:
dass ich ein boeses Maedchen war.
Doch kann ich halt nicht traurig sein,
will ich mich lieber freun!"

Paul Klee: Figurine des bunten Teufels (1927)

Bunt ist wie Singen
im dunklen Wald
Bunt macht aus Ängsten
ein Lachen

du Teufel im bunten
Flickenkleid
was treibt dich um
du spielst doch nur
die Rollen die
sonst keiner mochte

und was da früher war
der Part des himmlischen
Rebellen
dein Engelspart
den hast du längst vergessen

wie kannst du da
ein echter Satan sein
zum abgestürzten Licht
das Gegenbild
aus Höllenschwärze

du bist nicht Fisch noch Fleisch
du Tölpelkobold
Kaspar und Hanswurst
statt Angst zu machen
hast du selber Angst

mir tust du leid
im Grunde bist du nämlich
menschenähnlich
nur ein armer Teufel

Margot Scharpenberg

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Book Reviews

Edited by Jerry Glenn
University of Cincinnati

Review Essay: Belles Lettres 1991-92

Hier: Auf der Erde.
By Irmgard Elsner Hunt. Deutschschreibende Autoren in Nordamerika, vol. 3. Vermillion, SD: University of South Dakota, 1991. 55 pages. $5.00.

KPHTH: fertile and full of grace.
By Lisa Kahn. Trans. by Edna Brown and Peter Kahn. New York: Mellen Poetry Press. 1992. 58 pages. $9.95.

Augenzeugnisse: 25 Gedichte angeregt durch Skulpturen des Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museums Duisburg.
By Margot Scharpenberg. Duisburg: Gilles & Francke. 1991. 108 pages.

Ein Sprung im Schweigen: Gedichte und Zyklen.
By Richard Exner. Stuttgart: Radius. 1992. 155 pages. DM 24.00.

Hier, a collection of fifteen stories, reflects a wide range of experiences and perspectives of people living in a culturally diverse America. Major themes include: memories of frequent journeys between continents, the profound effects of writing in isolation, and the complex nature of woman and friendship. Central to Hunt's collection is a close observation of human behavior in two different cultures. It is interesting to explore how the form and meaning of her narrative vignettes are affected by her complex situation–that of an East-European who lived for over twenty-eight years in the United States and who writes in German.

The narratives twine together current events in Eastern Europe, Germany, and the United States with the author's most personal memories–of her Polish grandfather, a prominent writer in Germany; of her absent father; of her siblings; of her close friends who accompany her own path through life. Although a personal book, *Hier* is also an account of the immigration experience and the political issues of justice, gender, and language. The narrative voice has the same power when it speaks about "West German Chauvinism," "Eastern European Drama," the execution of mass murderer Ted Bundy. The reader hears the voice of a woman who has a clear vision of what life should be and is not afraid of giving the reader her elegant solution to human cruelty in the world: affection, tenderness, fondness.

The temporal and spatial reference in the title is central. *Hier* appears frequently throughout the stories and very specifically refers to the author's newly chosen country. She now lives in the small town of Fort Collins, Colorado, and therefore America becomes the point of reference. The forty-eight-year-old Elsner Hunt was born in Hirschberg (Silesia) and chose in 1964 to make the United States her new home. It was not until seventeen years after coming to America that her first collection of poetry, *Schwebeworte* (1981), was published. She has also established a reputation as a literary scholar.

It is not surprising that only two of the stories do not reflect the American experience. Since America was not an exile country or asylum for her, she was able to view this country and its people in a more favorable light than many exile authors. The American social reality is an important theme in Hunt's work. The reader receives a picture of everyday life in a small American city in an immediate context and usually from two different perspectives: in "Brief an einen Freund, den Maler K." (12), she achieves this double perspective by contrasting the one thing that is most apparent for any first-time visitor to North America–the incredible distances–with the perception in Germany.

Throughout the collection the polarities are subtly developed geographically, here (United States) and there (Europe), from North (Alaska) and South (Toscana, South Carolina) to East (Poland, former East Germany). A picture is painted in the reader's eye recreating the beauties of the American "soul and body landscape" ("Körper- und Seelschaften," 16). References to specific locations abound, evoking the flavor of Midwestern cities and the lives of average people there. Many short stories are interspersed with English, mostly phrases ("no plumbing," 14; "We'll keep you posted," 26; "far out west," 34) and colloquial speech ("Come on, let's hear the old record again," 38; "Honey," 35) which help create an authentic tone and rhythm. The reader enjoys the familiarity the author has with certain American customs and smiles at the playfulness with which some differences are expressed: "In Amerika wird ein

Christbaum Anfang Dezember oder noch früher (um Thanksgiving) aufgebaut und sofort nach Weihnachten abgeräumt und hinausgeschmissen. Die Frau wird den Baum ins *Seattle Engineering Department* fahren, wo er kleingeschnetzelt auf Baumfarmen zurückgebracht wird" ("Jahresende: Summa," 49).

A warm, familiar tone–as if a caring voice speaks directly to the reader–is prevalent throughout the collection. In "My Darling Julia" (41) a woman copies a love letter from a man who is writing it on a plane; she changes the words and invents new ones to fit a letter addressed to a man and translates the plagiarized love letter into German. The importance of language and writing is a recurrent theme throughout the collection. What hardships does a German-writing woman in America face? In a playful and humorous way she "curses" German language classes which might have enabled one to understand German. Actually she makes a plea for the necessity of German instruction in America ("Sie können nicht erahnen, welche Vorteile das Deutschlernen Ihnen bringt!" 43).

Besides being entertaining short stories in their own right, many of Hunt's narratives could serve as motivational reading examples in intermediate and advanced German classes. The directness and simplicity of language and the choice of subject matter (American lives and customs seen through a European filter) make these stories excellent tools for learning, and starting points for an analytical look at some differences.

Although critical towards some aspects of American life, Hunt never displays any anti-Americanism or German chauvinism. The strengths of the entire collection are perhaps best illustrated in "Brief an meinen Großvater K.," where she reflects on German unification through her "Americanized" perspective: "Vereinigung, Großvater, neu oder wieder? Deutschdeutscher Staat, demokratisches Polen daneben? Ich fände es schön, ästhetisch schön. Dies Schmerzhafte, Aberwitzige überwunden fände ich schön! Es unterstelle mir, die ich ein Vierteljahrhundert in Amerika lebe, keiner einen deutschen Nationalismus. Kein Patriotismus. Was die sind, weiß ich nicht. Die reine Ästhetik. Die kenn ich. Was schön ist, das weiß ich!" (32).

Hunt's picture of America is created with a German-speaking audience in mind, concentrating on specific American social and political values. The stories are also written with the purpose of illustrating different aspects of German-American daily life (of an educated middle-class woman writer) and of describing the inner growth achieved by the "immigration" process. Drawbacks of not knowing German are humorously dealt with ("My Darling Julia"), but humor cannot remove the pain caused by cruel human behavior.

The last story, appropriately called "Unfertiges Kapitel," emphasizes one of the characteristic aspects of short stories, open-endedness. A number of political and social issues in American society are mentioned:

freedom of speech, the right to burn the flag, freedom of women to retain control over their bodies, and freedom of expression. Suddenly, the American landscape becomes as desolate and dreary as the environment in which the speaker lives. The destructive image of a burnt land points towards the dark realities in American society. The reader is left with an unsettling view of contemporary America: "Verbrannt. Wer dort leben will dörrt aus verarmt. Wird karg liegt brach wie das braune Land" (55). The narrative voice observes these occurrences skeptically, but with personal concern: "Ich bin im heißen Land gewesen und habe es zitternd gesehen: es brennt" (54).

These last lines place Hunt in the spiritual company of Heinrich Böll, whom she mentions in the motto of the collection. She offers a wide enough range in her short stories to attract a large audience of German-American scholars, foreign-language teachers, students, and anyone interested in the perceptive and pointed prose of a German-American woman who writes about contemporary America.

Lisa Kahn, another well-known German-American author, now even captures an audience who knows little German but shares an interest in German-American poetry. Her book of fifty-two poems in German, *KPHTH: fruchtbar und anmutsvoll* (1988) appears now in an English translation by Edna Brown and Peter Kahn, *KPHTH: fertile and full of grace* (1992). The adjectives, taken from Homer, describe the Greek island. This poetic cycle becomes at times a modern travel guide through ancient Greece, where hordes of tourists (often German and American) can be found. In many cases, the English translations are accurate and elegant and one senses that they were closely scrutinized and re-drafted several times. At times, however, one wishes that the poet herself participated in the translation process, reviewing the German version, revising the translations, and suggesting improvements. The musicality of the original German poems, the familiar rhythm of phrases seem to be lacking in a few translated poems. Translating poetry can be a complicated and risky enterprise when translators attempt to capture the original tone, the poet's own characteristic style of speech. This edition of poetry could benefit from a side-by-side by presentation of the original poem facing the English translation. Nevertheless, this translation will be welcomed for courses in German-American literature and in German language classes.

Margot Scharpenberg, like Lisa Kahn, is one of the most widely published contemporary women authors (both have had books published in Germany) who live in the United States and write German poetry. Born and raised in Cologne, she moved to New York in 1962. Since 1957 she has published twenty collections of poetry and three volumes of prose.

Her new collection of poems, *Augenzeugnisse*, is reminiscent of some of her previous works, most recently *Verlegte Zeiten: 25 Gedichte angeregt*

durch das Frankfurter Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte–Archäologisches Museum (1988), *Moderne Kunst im Bildegespräch: 25 Gedichte zu Kunstwerken aus dem Museum Ludwig in Köln* (1982), and *Fundort Köln* (1979). The book contains twenty-five pictures of sculptures ranging from famous artists (Orpheus, Villon, Baudelaire, Däubler) to women models (Rose Beuret, "Pandora," "Die blonde Negerin," "Weiblicher Torso") to general art objects, and for each of them a poem by Scharpenberg. As in her earlier work, her poems are not mere descriptions of art objects one finds in a museum, but rather commentaries about the objects she sees. What most of the sculptures have in common is that they represent an essential form without much detail. Each visitor to a museum or reader of a poem adds a new perspective according to the experience they have. The poems preserve some of the quiet presence of the objects, but in addition they inspire the readers' imagination and therefore bring movement into the motionless and inert sculptures. Scharpenberg combines the stillness of the observation with the imagination of the viewer of art. The poetry collection is aptly entitled "Augenzeugen," a term which is explained by the author in an afterword: "Wir sind Augenzeugen bestimmter, vorübergehend fixierter Aussagen zu dauerhaften Fragen and reagieren familiär, d.h. vor jedem Urteil steht die Vertrautheit. Das kennen wir doch" (108). Not the knowledge of art history alone is important, but the personal, familiar approach to art. As Christoph Brockhaus mentions in the foreword, Scharpenberg successfully developed a method that combines the experience and recognition of a work of art for the visitor to a museum: "zwischen Gedicht and Sachkommentar steht die Reproduktion des Kunstwerks" (6). Factual explanations are provided by Petra Renkel and follow each poem and picture.

It is the form of the poems, however, that mediates between all three dimensions: the sculpture, the factual commentary, and the world of imagination and memory. Her intimate style remains similar to her previous works. As in *Verlegte Zeiten* she directly addresses the sculptures, speaking to them, questioning them in a familiar voice. The first poem, "Henry Laurens: Der Grosse Amphion (1952)," sets the basic tone:

> Stülp dir ein Vogel-
> mundstück über
> es sitzt
> wie angegossen
> leicht-
> händig verknüpft
> die Saiten

du fingerst vor aller
Augen das alte
Fadenspiel schnur-
stracks ins Gehör
das Spiel der Verwandlung

wie geht es denn weiter
man sagt daß du ehmals
Steine rührtest das rührt
heutzutag keinen

Rufer wie du
müssen die Klänge
sichtbar machen
durch Mark und Bein
aus dem verfremdeten Körper
schreit es:
steht auf

und du gehorchst
Vortänzer
Vormund
als erster
daß dir die Steine folgen
jeder zu seinem Ort

auch ich
sichtlich
klangverfallen
mich wandelnd
zu was und wohin bloß
zieh mit. (8)

The lines reveal a closeness that the reader encounters again and again. A growing number of words and phrases like "zuzuhören," "bloßgelegt," "ein offenes Insichhören," "reiner Klang zuhöchst," "süchtig trinken," Anmut / ausgesparter Züge," "wirf doch die Tarnung ab / daß ich dich sehe," "im Licht verschränkt," "die Glocke schweigt es / meinem Aug ins Ohr" point towards a new way of discovering the surroundings with all senses. The sculptures grow clearer in the poems, the poems in the sculptures.

Scharpenberg is truly "eine Wanderin in und zwischen den Welten" (7) and has the talent to fill in the empty spaces surrounding the sculptures with words and metaphors that prolong the instant. In the

very middle of the poetry cycle appears the following image of a 'complementary artist,' a term which can be used to describe Scharpenberg herself who makes reading a poem and looking at an art object two complementary ways of viewing life:

vergiß Verlust
wir sind Ergänzungskünstler
an unserem eigenen
wie am andern Leib
wir schlüpfen ein
den Leerraum überbrückend
und aus getrennten Stücken
wird Gestalt. (56)

Richard Exner, like Lisa Kahn and Margot Scharpenberg, is a poet who writes in German but lived in America. He emigrated in 1950 to the United States where he studied German and comparative literature; after teaching at Oberlin (1960-65), he was a professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara from 1965-91. Unlike Kahn and Scharpenberg, he recently decided to move back to Europe and make Munich his home. Many of his best works emerged from his travel experience in Europe and the United States. With his tenth volume of poetry, *Ein Sprung im Schweigen: Gedichte und Zyklen* (1992), Exner continues his concentration on universal themes of human existence, such as: death, love, times of childhood, and aging, but returns to an elegiac undertone which was pervasive in his earlier collections. With this thematization the reader is reminded of the lyric tradition of Rilke and Hölderlin, but Exner never loses his own lyrical tone which is best exemplified by the poem that gave this book its title:

Ein Sprung im Schweigen

. . . mit beiden
Händen dein Gesicht
umschließen die
Fingerkuppen an
die Schläfen und
über deiner Stirn
den Mund die
Neigung unseres
Schweigens

und
deine Augen meine
Augen geschlossen

wir sehen
mit den
Händen . . .

still-
halten und atmen
atmen bis alle
Schrift an uns
erlischt:
der Gruß
entspringt. (110)

The empty spaces between the lines echo the quiet, undisturbed present against the torrent of time. This mood is sustained throughout the collection which is divided into seven sections: "Menschenzeit," "Im Jahrhundert des Terrors," "Sprachrisse, Sprechrisse," "Gezeichnet: Jetzt," "Ein Sprung im Schweigen," "Ankunft Ankunft," and "Nachsatz," starting from a primary experience of mankind, which is expanded by political experiences of today, as well as by excursions into childhood experiences, and memory–his own and one characteristic of our time.

Now and then one hears a surprising closeness, a voice which discloses experiences of painful devastations ("Nach Hiroshima"), of futile attempts at surviving ("Namen. Schaut fest auf den Atlas / des Todes, denkt an den Rauch / über A., über B., über T . . . ," 47), of loneliness ("einer muß / immer fort / und beide überleben / Narben Narben," 31). The poem "Abschied" contains the painful phrases: "das Liebste in die Stichflamme / der Entfernung," and "Feuer in der Nacht wird uns / der Atem auf den Kissen / stocken wir liegen ein- / gerissen offen bluten aus" 29). Exner frequently employs images of natural elements, such as fire and water, to express the destructive as well as renewing powers of nature and human relationships. But as this example shows, Exner integrates the traditional into his own language, which reveals and communicates primary experiences. In many poems it appears as if the poet himself discovers his words and part of himself ("Ja / Jetzt / Jesse / Jesajah / Johannes . . . ," 91). "Ein Sprung im Schweigen" once again professes that writing extends the moment ("im Lied / lebt nur fort, / was du nieder- / schreibst," 83), and even the 'century of terror' with Auschwitz and Hiroshima could not silence this poetic voice.

The four poets under discussion are bound to affect and inspire the reader who will appreciate these remarkable collections of poems and short stories. The value of the books is that they again bring into the focus of German-American studies what has been often neglected and seemingly inaccessible: the poems of contemporary German-American writers. The publication and discussion of these books will at last give them the significance they deserve in literary studies.

Wright State University *Elfe Vallaster*

Paul Klee: Innenarchitektur (1914)

Ein Riesenauftrag
ich dürfte die Welt
- Weltinnenraum -
noch einmal frisch möblieren
in kleinem Maßstab
ein Kopfmodell
und nur von mir zu zensieren

das Äußere steht schon
ich hätte es gern
nach eigenem Wunsch erfunden
nun ahn ich den Umriß
und denke fern
ich bin wider Willen gebunden

wo Fenster sind
setz ich Scheiben ein
dem Mondlicht bahn ich die Bahn
ich hänge Bögen
für Morgenröte
Balkone stücke ich an

ach Schwarzmantillen
und Schattenecken
ich kontre mit Kuppelblau
das Äußere läßt sich jetzt
innen entdecken
zwei Seiten und eine Schau

Margot Scharpenberg

PROMETHEUS

Cover your heaven, Zeus,
With cloudy vapor
And test your skill, like the boy
Beheading thistles,
On oaks and mountain-tops;
Still you must leave me
My earth as it is
And my hut that you have not built
And my hearth
Whose glow
You envy me.

I know nothing poorer
Under the sun than you, gods!
Scantily you feed
Your sovereignty
On sacrificed tributes
And breath of prayer,
And you would starve
Were not children and beggars
Hopeful fools.

When I was a child,
Not knowing which way to go,
I turned my bewildered eye
To the sun as though there were
Above it an ear to hear my lament,
A heart like mine
To take pity on the distressed.

Who helped me
Against the Titans' wantonness?
Who saved me from death,
From slavery?
Did not you yourself achieve all this,
Sacredly glowing heart?
Glowing young and fair,
Deceived, in gratitude for your salvation
To the sleeper up there?

I honor you? What for?
Have you ever allayed the pains
Of the heavily laden?
Have you ever stilled the tears
Of the fearful one?
Was I not forged into manhood
By almighty time
And eternal fate,
My masters and yours?

Did you presume
That I should hate life,
Flee into wildernesses
Because not all
Blossom dreams bore fruit?

Here I sit, forming men
In my image,
A race to be equal to me,
To suffer, to weep,
To seek pleasure and to rejoice,
And not to respect you,
Like me!

~~Lola Sprecklack~~

Hans Magnus Enzensberger

DIE SCHEISSE

Immerzu hoere ich von ihr reden
als waere sie an allem schuld.
Seht nur, wie sanft und bescheiden
sie unter uns Platz nimmt!
Warum besudeln wir denn
ihren guten Namen
und leihen ihn
dem Praesidenten der USA,
den Bullen, dem Krieg
und dem Kapitalismus?

Wie vergaenglich sie ist,
und das was wir nach ihr nennen
wie dauerhaft!
Sie die Nachgiebige,
fuehren wir auf der Zunge
und meinen die Ausbeuter.
Sie, die wir ausgedrueckt haben,
soll nun auch noch ausdruecken
unsere Wut?

Hat sie uns nicht erleichtert?
Von weicher Beschaffenheit
und eigentuemlich gewaltlos
ist sie von allen Werken des Menschen
vermutlich das friedlichste.
Was hat sie uns nur getan?

H. L. G.

Hans Magnus Enzensberger

ON SHIT

All the time I hear them talking about it
as though everything were its fault.
Just look how gentle and modest it is,
placing itself beneath us.
Why then do we besmirch
its good name
and lend it
to the President of the U.S.,
the pigs, the war
and capitalism?

How transient it is,
and what we name after it,
how lasting!
We carry it on our lips,
the yielding one,
and mean the exploiters.
Why, when we have expressed it,
do we expect it in turn
to express our anger?

Has it not brought us relief?
Soft by nature
and totally lacking in violence,
it is of all human achievements
likely to be the most peaceful.
When has it ever hurt us?

Jack A.

Hans Magnus Enzensberger

ON SHIT

I keep hearing it mentioned
as if it was guilty of everything.
Just look how gentle and modest it is
as it settles beneath us!
Why do we besmirch
its good name
by lending it
to the American president,
to the pigs, to war,
and to capitalism?

How transient it is,
and how lasting the things
we name after it.
How yielding it is,
yet we carry it on our lips
and spit it against the exploiters.
We, who expressed it,
now further require
that it express our rage.

Didn't it bring us relief?
Of soft consistency,
strangely lacking in violence,
it is among all man's works
presumably the most peaceful.
Whatever harm has it done us?

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

RECUEILLEMENT

Sois sage, ô ma Douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.
Tu réclamais le Soir; il descend; le voici:
Une atmosphère obscure enveloppe la ville,
Aux uns portant la paix, aux autres le souci.

Pendant que des mortels la multitude vile,
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,
Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile,
Ma Douleur, donne-moi la main; viens par ici,

Loin d'eux. Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,
Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;
Surgir du fond des eaux le Regret souriant;

Le Soleil moribond s'endormir sous une arche,
Et, comme un long linceul traînant a l'Orient,
Entends, ma chère, entends la douce Nuit qui marche.

L. G. translated
from German
c. 1950

DREAM LIFE

Life appears like fantasy,
woven with a magic thread.
Am I what I seem to be?
Are you dreaming me instead?

Am I not a gift you brought
for yourself, and all I do,
all my feeling, all my thought,
is it not conceived by you?

What more beauty can I own?
What privation can there be?
Will not even walls of stone
yield to our intensity?

Lovely dream of life - the light
soon will make it seem untrue,
and you will deny the night
when I came to life through you.

AR 25164

Max and Lola Gruenthal Collection

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

Center for Jewish History

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NOW WHERE TO?

Now where to? My foolish foot
Would take off to Germany;
But my reason shakes its head,
And it seems to say to me:

Though the war is over now,
The courts-martial still are not;
And they say what once you wrote
Is enough for being shot.

Surely, being shot on sight
Is no comfort I would care for.
I've no gift for pompous poses,
And I am no hero therefore.

England would appeal to me,
If its coal fumes weren't so smelly,
And its Englishmen—their perfume
Sends convulsions through my belly.

Sometimes I feel drawn to sail
To America, the free
Bull pen occupied by brutes
Thriving on equality.

But I'm fearful of a land
Where tobacco's used for chewing,
Where their ninepins have no king,
Where there's no spittoon for spewing.

Russia holds a pleasant lure
With its empire vast and fair;
But the winter's cold combined
With the knout I could not bear.

Many thousand stars above
Nod to meet my saddened eye—
But my individual star
I can nowhere there espy.

In the golden labyrinth
Of the sky it lost its way,
Just as I myself am lost
In the turmoil of the day.

LOLA GRUENTHAL

JETZT WOHIN?

Jetzt wohin? Der dumme Fuss | Will mich gern nach Deutschland tragen; | Doch es schüttelt klug das Haupt | Mein Verstand und scheint zu sagen:

Zwar beendigt ist der Krieg, | Doch die Kriegsgerichte blieben. | Und es heisst, du habest einst | Viel Erschiessliches geschrieben.

Das ist wahr, unangenehm | Wär mir das Erschossenwerden; | Bin kein Held, es fehlen mir | Die pathetischen Gebärden.

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Manchmal kommt mir in den Sinn, | Nach Amerika zu segeln, | Nach dem grossen Freiheitsstall, | Der bewohnt von Gleichheitsflegeln.

Doch es ängstigt mich ein Land, | Wo die Menschen Tabak käuen, | Wo sie ohne König kegeln, | Wo sie ohne Spuknapf speien.

Russland, dieses schöne Reich, | Würde mir vielleicht behagen, | Doch im Winter könnte ich | Dort die Knute nicht ertagen.

Traurig schau ich in die Höh, | Wo viel tausend Sterne nicken— | Aber meinen eignen Stern | Kann ich nirgends dort erblicken.

Hat im güldnen Labyrinth | Sich vielleicht verirrt am Himmel, | Wie ich selber mich verirrt | In dem irdischen Getümmel.—

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*

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V. Women, Love, Marriage

In youth love is more tempestuous, but not as strong, as omnipotent as afterwards. It is also not as lasting in youth, for then the body is in love too, - it craves for physical revelations in love, and it lends to the soul the impetuousness of its blood, the abandance of its sinewy power. Later, when these have diminished, when the blood trickles more slowly through the veins, when the body is no longer in love, the soul alone, the immortal soul, turns to love. And since eternity is at its disposal, since it is not as frail as the body, it takes its time and begins to love less tempestuously but more lastingly, with more abysmal depth, with more superhuman power.

That Xanthippe's husband became such a great philosopher is a remarkable fact. To be still able to think amidst all this bickering! But writing became impossible: Socrates has not left a single book to posterity.

*

Anyone who gets married is like the Doge who is wed to the Adriatic Sea: He does not know what he will find in what he marries: treasures, monsters, unknown tempests.

*

VI. Assorted Ideas

Sages think up new thoughts and fools spread them.

*

There are exalted spirits, unimpressed by material splendor, to whom the throne means nothing but a chair covered with red velvet. There are lowly spirits to whom every ideal seems insignificant and to whom the pillory is nothing but an iron collar. They do not shy away from an iron neck-tie if that is the only means for them to assemble an audience. The audience is awed by their audacity, which they have acquired through the routine of disgracing themselves.

*

Time modifies our convictions by constantly compelling us to observe the opposite extreme. The garde municipal, who supervises the Can-can, in the end finds it not so indenent any more and perhaps even wishes to join the dance. The Protestant, after a long polemic with Catholicism, does not consider it nearly as gruesome as before, and he might even be inclined to hear a mass.

*

We have no understanding of ruins until we have become ruins ourselves.

*

There are people who believe they know all about a bird, since they have seen the egg whence it came forth.

*

When vice becomes magnificent, its effect is less shocking. The English lady,who usually felt a solemn dread of naked statues, was much less upset at the sight of a gigantic Hercules: "With such dimensions I don't find the thing quite so indecent."

*

X is one of those angels whom Jacob saw in his dream and who needed a ladder to descend from heaven to earth: The angelic wings are not strong enough.

*

The diamond might justifiably be proud if a poet compared it to a human heart.

*

VII. Pictures and Brush-strokes

A blind charlatan in the marketplace sells eye drops which prevent blindness. He himself did not believe in them and became blind. Tragic portrayal of blindness.

*

The Englishman who always takes his "Miss" (Engl. in original) to the beach and makes her look at naked men in order to immunize her against sensuality.

*

A sweet-pickled, squashed face with timidly petty eyes.

*

A smiling gait.

*

He was sparkling with dullness.

*

A face like a fetus in alcohol.

*

She wrote anonymous letters signed "A fair soul."

*

He praised himself so highly that the price of incense candles began to rise.

*

He made the greatest progress in ignorance.

*

Less hardened than human hearts whom I begged in vain, the rocks burst open and the soothing well poured forth.

*

HEINRICH HEINE

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In youth love is more tempestuous, but not as strong, as omnipotent as afterwards. It is also not as lasting in youth, for then the body is in love too, - it craves for physical revelations in love, and it lends to the soul the impetuousness of its blood, the abundance of its sinewy power. Later, when these have diminished, when the blood trickles more slowly through the veins, when the body is no longer in love, the soul alone, the immortal soul, turns to love. And since eternity is at its disposal, since it is not as frail as the body, it takes its time and begins to love less tempestuously but more lastingly, with more abysmal depth, with more superhuman power.

That Xanthippe's husband became such a great philosopher is a remarkable fact. To be still able to think amidst all this bickering! But writing became impossible: Socrates has not left a single book to posterity.

*

Anyone who gets married is like the Doge who is wed to the Adriatic Sea: He does not know what he will find in what he marries: treasures, monsters, unknown tempests.

*

VI. Assorted Ideas

Sages think up new thoughts and fools spread them.

*

There are exalted spirits, unimpressed by material splendor, to whom the throne means nothing but a chair covered with red velvet. There are lowly spirits to whom every ideal seems insignificant and to whom the pillory is nothing but an iron collar. They do not shy away from an iron neck-tie if that is the only means for them to assemble an audience. The audience is awed by their audacity, which they have acquired through the routine of disgracing themselves.

*

Time modifies our convictions by constantly compelling us to observe the opposite extreme. The garde municipal, who supervises the Can-can, in the end finds it not so indecent any more and perhaps even wishes to join the dance. The Protestant, after a long polemic with Catholicism, does not consider it nearly as gruesome as before, and he might even be inclined to hear a mass.

*

We have no understanding of ruins until we have become ruins ourselves.

*

There are people who believe they know all about a bird, since they have seen the egg whence it came forth.

*

When vice becomes magnificent, its effect is less shocking. The English lady,who usually felt a solemn dread of naked statues, was much less upset at the sight of a gigantic Hercules: "With such dimensions I don't find the thing quite so indecent."

*

X is one of those angels whom Jacob saw in his dream and who needed a ladder to descend from heaven to earth: The angelic wings are not strong enough.

*

The diamond might justifiably be proud if a poet compared it to a human heart.

*

VII. Pictures and Brush-strokes

A blind charlatan in the marketplace sells eye drops which prevent blindness. He himself did not believe in them and became blind. Tragic portrayal of blindness.

*

The Englishman who always takes his "Miss" (Engl. in original) to the beach and makes her look at naked men in order to immunize her against sensuality.

*

A sweet-pickled, squashed face with timidly petty eyes.

*

A smiling gait.

*

He was sparkling with dullness.

*

A face like a fetus in alcohol.

*

She wrote anonymous letters signed "A fair soul."

*

He praised himself so highly that the price of incense candles began to rise.

*

He made the greatest progress in ignorance.

*

Less hardened than human hearts whom I begged in vain, the rocks burst open and the soothing well poured forth.

*

REFLECTIONS

I. Personal Matters

My mother tells me that ~~during her pregnancy~~ she saw an apple hanging in a stranger's garden, but that she did not want to break it off ~~so that~~ lest her child ~~would not~~ become a thief. Throughout my life I have kept a secret craving for beautiful apples, but this was combined with a respect of other people's property and a loathing of larceny.

I have the most peaceful disposition. My wishes are: a modest cabin, a thatched roof, but a good bed, good food, milk and butter, very fresh, flowers ~~in front of~~ at my the window, ~~some~~ beautiful trees ~~in front of the~~ at my door; and if the good Lord wishes to complete my happiness he will let me live to see the joyful day when about six to seven of my enemies shall be hanged on those trees. With compassion in my heart I shall forgive them before they die, all the wrongs they have inflicted upon me as long as they lived.- Yes, one ~~has to~~ should forgive one's enemies, but not before they have been hanged.

I did not become naturalized for fear that then I would love France less, as one cools off towards one's mistress as soon as one is ~~wedded~~ legally to her ~~legally~~ in the mairies. I shall continue to live with France in a common law marriage.

My spirit feels exiled in France, ~~banned~~ banished into a ~~strange language~~ foreign tongue.

will
God ~~shall~~ forgive the foolish ~~things~~ words which I have spread about him, as I shall forgive my adversaries for the foolish things they have written against me, though they are spiritually as inferior to me as I am to you, o my God! U. C.

II. Religion and Philosophy

The earth is the huge rock to which ~~humanity~~ mankind, the true Prometheus, is chained and being torn to pieces by the vulture of doubt. ~~Humanity~~ Mankind has stolen the light and is now suffering tortures for it.

God did not manifest anything that would indicate an existence after death; Moses also does not mention this. Perhaps it is not even convenient to God that the devout take this existence for granted. - In his paternal kindness he may wish to save it for us as a surprise.

Judaism - Aristocracy: One God has created the world and rules it; all men are his children, but the Jews are his favorites and their land is his chosen dominium. He is a monarch, the Jews are the aristocracy, and Palestine is the exarchate of God.

Christianity - Democracy: One God who has created all and rules all, but who loves all ~~people~~ men alike and protects all realms alike. He is no longer a national God but a universal one.

The worldly savior will arrive by railway, the decent German Michel (?) will prepare the way for him, and roses will be scattered on his path.

In Germany it is the theologians who are doing away with the good Lord - on n'est jamais trahi que par les siens.

In Germany Christianity is being abolished in theory and in fact: development of industry and prosperity.

In their fight against religion the philosophers destroyed paganism, but a new one, Christianity, arose. This too shall be dealt with soon, but it will certainly be followed by another, and the philosophers shall have a new task which will again be futile: the world is a big stable which cannot be cleaned as easily as that of Augias, since, while it is being swept, the oxen stay inside and continue piling up new manure.

In Dark Ages the people were best led by religion, as in a pitch-dark night a blind man is our best guide; he knows ways and by-paths better than a seeing one. But once day has come, it is foolish to keep using the aged blind as guides.

The grandeur of the world is always adequate to the grandeur of the spirit that beholds it. The good one finds his paradise here, the bad one already partakes of his hell on earth.

Christianity appears as a comfort: those who enjoyed too much happiness in this life shall get indigestion from it in the next; those who had too little to eat shall subsequently find the best banquet prepared for them; the earthly cudgel marks shall be stroked by angels.

Jewish history is beautiful, but the young Jews harm the old ones who otherwise would be placed high above the Greeks and Romans. I believe, if there were no more Jews in the world and only one single specimen was known to exist somewhere, people would travel hundreds of hours to see him and to shake hands with him - but now they avoid us!

The history of the modern Jews is tragic, and if you write about this tragedy you will be ridiculed: this is the most tragic part of it.

Be tolerant altogether or not at all: walk the good path or the evil one; to remain hesitating at the cross-roads, for that you are too weak - that was beyond the powers of a Hercules, and he had to make his choice in a hurry.

The baptismal certificate is the admission ticket to European culture.

Is the mission of the Jews concluded? I believe it will be once the worldly savior comes: industry, labor, joy.

Saints like the Stylite have become impossible nowadays, since our philanthropy would immediately place them in an insane asylum.

III. Art and Literature

A book takes its time, like a child. All books that have been hatched ~~rapidly~~ hastily with in a few weeks make me slightly suspicious of their author. An honest woman does not deliver her child before ~~her~~ the ninth month.

When the poet conceives his poems he feels as though, according to ~~the~~ Pythagorean doctrine of metempsychosis, ~~max~~ he had led an earlier existence in the most varied forms - his intuition acts like memory.

In antiquity a philosophy of history was impossible. Only the present time has found the prerequisites for it: Herder, Bossuet, etc. - I believe the philosophers will have to wait for a thousand more years before they can demonstrate the organism of history; until then, I believe, only the following can be postulated. As main factors I would consider human nature and environmental conditions (quality of soil, climate, traditional legislation, war, unanticipated and incalculable needs); these two factors, in their conflict or in their alliance, form the basis of history, but their signature is always found in the human spirit, and the idea by which they are represented becomes a third factor which in turn influences the other two. This is primarily the case in our days, but it ~~holds true also~~ also applies

to the Middle Ages. What Shakespeare shows us of history is only the interaction between human nature and external conditions; the idea, the third element, never appears in his tragedies; hence, the lucidity of his form, and the effect of something eternal, immutable in his development of themes and characters, since the human element remains identical at all times. This is also the case with Homer. The works of both poets are immortal. I do not believe that they would have turned out equally well if they had to portray a period dominated by an idea, such as at the beginning of rising Christianity, at the time of the Reformation, or at the time of the Revolution.

To the Greeks, life and poetry were identical. That is why they did not have such great poets as we do, since to us life is often the opposite extreme of poetry. Shakespeare's big toe contained more poetry than all the Greek poets, with the exception of Aristophanes. The Greek were great artists, not poets; their sensibility was artistic rather than poetic; In plastic art they achieved such outstanding results for the very reason that there they only had to copy reality, which in itself was poetry and which offered them the best models.

The work of art

The invisible thought is ~~ax~~ harmoniously expressed through the visible work; this also applies to the art of living which represents the harmony between our actions and our convictions.

The work of art is <u>beautiful</u> when the divine element is kindly inclined toward the human - Diana kissing Endymion; it is <u>sublime</u> when the human element forcefully rises toward the divine - Prometheus defies Jupiter, Agamemnon sacrifices his child. The myth of Christ is beautiful and sublime at the same time.

In art, form is everything, the material does not count. Staub asks the same price for making a tail-coat to measure, regardless of whether he has been supplied with the material or not. He claims that he expects to be paid for the style only, the material he throws in ~~for~~ free of charge.

With regard to the problem of innate ideas, the following solution may be correct: There are people who absorb everything from without, the so-called talents, like Lessing, reminiscent of apes, who are motivated by superficial imitation; there is nothing in their minds which has not penetrated through their senses. But there are also men who all se works emanate from the soul ~~produce everything from within~~, such as Raphael, Mozart, Shakespeare, whose labor pains, however, are much more acute and prolonged than those of the so-called talents. The ones fabricate without life, without inwardness: mechanization - the others produce an organically developed whole.

Genius carries in his mind a portrait of nature, and reminded ~~with~~ the help by ~~of~~ nature he brings forth its portrait; the talent

reproduces
~~re-creates~~ nature and ~~produces~~ analytically what genius ~~pro-~~
through
~~duces in~~ synthesis. However, there also characters ~~suspended~~
between the two.

Photo Graphy

Daguerreotypy ~~gives~~ evidence against the erroneous idea
of art ~~being~~ an imitation of nature; nature itself has offered
the proof of how little it understands about art, how miserably it fails once it begins to deal with art.

They praise the playwright who ~~kx~~ has the gift of drawing tears. He shares this gift with the most miserable onion, with whom he likewise shares his ~~fame~~. popularity

Goethe's refusal to abandon himself to enthusiasm is as repugnant as it is childish. Such restraint is more or less suicide; it resembles the ~~fax~~ flame which refuses to burn for fear of being consumed. The generous flame, the soul of Schiller, was ~~xhixx was~~ ablaze with sacrifice. Every flame sacrifices itself. The more beautifully it burns the closer it comes to annihilation, to extinction. I do not envy the such
calm little night-candles who eke out a meager existence.

With Schiller thought celebrates its orgies: sober concepts, wreathed with vine-leaves, wield the thyrsus, dancing like bacchantes: boozed reflections.

DRUNKEN

SONNETS HAVE BECOME SO FASHIONABLE

The ~~rage for sonnets~~ mania has become so contagious in Germany

that one should introduce a sonnet-tax.

We were seeking material India and discovered America; now we are seeking spiritual India - what shall we discover?

As everyone sees a particular object in the world of the senses in his own way, everyone thus also sees in a particular book something different from any one else. Consequently, the translator also has to be an intellectually (spiritually) gifted person, for he must see the best and the most significant in the book in order to render it. The word For word meaning, the material (physical) sense can be translated by anyone who has read a grammar and who owns a dictionary. The spirit, however, cannot be translated by everyone.

At the time of the Romantics the flower was loved only for its fragrance, - in our time it is loved for the budding fruit. Hence, the trend towards the practical, towards prose, towards the plain, home-baked product.

The most perfect blossoms of the German spirit are philosophy and lyric poetry. This time of blossoming is over; it needed an idyllic calm; Germany is now being carried away by movement; thought is no longer disinterested ; its abstract world has been invaded by crude fact; the steam engines of our railways have led to a shaky concussion of our minds in which no song can rise; the charcoal fumes scare

the warblers away, and the gaslight's stench spoils the fragrant moon-lit night.

Our lyric poetry is a product of spiritualism, though the material is sensualistic: the longing of the isolated spirit for a fusion with the physical world, "to mingle with nature" (English in the original). With the victory of sensualism this lyric poetry has to come to an end, giving way to a longing for the spirit: sentimentality which is dimming out, ever more thinly diluted, nihilistic prudishness, wind-bag vapors, an intermediate station between being and becoming, partisan poetry (Tendenz-poesie)!

In the world of poetry the tiers état is not useful but harmful.

Democracy precipitates the end of litterature: freedom and equality of style. Everyone is permitted to write as he pleases, i.e. as badly as he wants to, and yet no-one else should be superior to him in style or be permitted to write better.

As to Democratic rage against the praise of love in poetry. - Why praise the rose, aristocrat? praise the democratic potato which ~~nourishes~~ nourishes the people!

The works of certain favorite writers of the day are warrant posters of nature, but not descriptions.

It is not the poor Hungarian Niembsch or the business clerk

from Lippe-Detmold who produced that beautiful poem, but the universal spirit. Only he deserves praise, and it is ridiculous when those others pride themselves on their products, almost like Père Rachel on his daughter's success: an old Jew standing in the parterre of the Théatre Français and imagining that he himself is Iphigenia or Andromache, that it is his recital which moves every heart; and when they applaud he bows with blushing cheeks.

Historians who all want to make history themselves, resemble those comedians in Germany who had the mania to write plays for themselves. Haller remarked that the worse the play, the better the acting; did they write so badly to present themselves as good actors? or did they act badly to appear as good writers? The same question could be asked about our historians.

Gutzkow

Nature was very modest when it created him, the most immodest of all creatures.

He attempted to imitate Heine, but since he lacked all poetic spirit, he did not get beyond an imitation of Boerne. His presentation and language have something of the police spy. He is constantly lying in ambush to spy on the daily foibles of the public, to exploit them in his private interest. Since he respects and flatters those foibles he is entitled to a lack of talent, knowledge and character, and he knows it. He does not give the publice his own impulsions, but on the contrary he receives those from the public; he puts on the livery of the

current idea, he is its servant, its chancery clerk who ko-tows and demands his tip.

The German language is actually rich, but in German conversation we use only a tenth of our riches; thus we are factually poor in language.

The French language is actually poor, but the French have a gift for exploiting its total content in their conversation, and therefore they are in fact rich in language.

Only in literature the Germans show their whole wealth of language, and the French, dazed by this, think that we are real miracles of perfection at home. They also have no idea of how little currency of thought we possess at home. With the French it is just the opposite: more ideas in society circles than in books, and the most brilliant minds do not write at all or only accidentally.

The older French writers had a definite point of view (perspective): light and shadow are always right according to the laws of that perspective. The later writers jump from one perspective to the other, and their convasses show a disgusting confusion of light and shadow: here a remark which belongs to pantheistic philosophy, there a feeling which derives from materialism, - doubt and faith crossing each other - a harlequin's jacket.

French literature is now ruled by plagiarism. One mind has its hand in the pocket of the other, and this puts them in a certain relation to each

other. With this gift of plagiarism, where the one steals the thoughts of the other even before it has been completed (concluded) the mind becomes a common property. In The République des Lettres is a community of collective thought.

Modern French literature resembles the restaurants of the Palais Royal: If you had been eavesdropping in the kitchen and seen the ingredients of the dishes as well as their preparation you would lose your appetite; the dirty cook puts white gloves on when he is ready to serve his hashed up mush on a shiny platter.

Buffon says, the style is the man. Villemain is a living refutation of this axiom: his style is handsome, well-formed and neat.

Blaze de Bury observes the small (minor) writers through a magnifying glass, the great ones through a diminishing glass.

French art is a reproduction of reality. But since the French have lived through and seen so much during the last fifty years, their reproductions of what they lived and saw have made their works of art more significant than those of German artists who have arrived at their intuitive ideas only through dream projections.

Only in architecture, where nature cannot be reproduced, do the French remain behind.

In music they set the tone of their nationality: intellect (reason) and sentimentality, esprit and elegance;-

in drama: passion. Ecclecticism in music was introduced by Meyerbeer.

Meyerbeer is the musical maître de plaisir of aristocracy.

Lessing says: "If Raphael's hands had been cut off, he would still have been a painter." In like manner we could say: If Mr. X.'s head were cut off, he would still be a painter; he would continue painting without a head and without anyone noticing that he had no head.

Dante is the public prosecutor of poetry.

IV. State and Society

Society is always a republic: the individuals strive upwards, and the collective masses push them back.

One has to know all of Germany, a part ~~of it~~ is dangerous. It is the story of the tree whose leaves and fruits are reciprocal antidotes.

Germany was agitated by Luther - but Francis Drake appeased it once more: he gave us the potato.

There is no German people: Aristocracy, bureaxracy, peasantry are more heterogenous than they were in France before the revolution.

Servants who have no master are not yet free men for that; the servility is in their soul.

The German resembles the slave who obeys his ~~m~~ master without chains, without a whip, just ~~upon his~~ mere word, or even a glance. The servitude is within himself, within his soul; worse than material slavery is the spiritual~~/~~ kind. The Germans have to be freed from within,- from without nothing helps.

The ~~G~~germans are now ~~working~~ at ~~a~~ development ~~of their~~ nationality, but they started too late. When they ~~shall~~ have finished with it, ~~there will be no more~~ nationality ~~system~~ ~~in the world~~, and they will have to abandon ~~their~~ nationality without having ~~derived~~ ~~any~~ profit from it ~~that was given to~~ as the French or British ~~did~~.

I always ~~saw~~ the construction of the ~~dome~~ as a gigantic toy; I thought:a giant child, like the German people, also needs a colossal toy such as the Cologne cathedral - but now I ~~am~~ think~~ing~~ differently. I do not believe any ~~longer~~ that that the German people is a ~~G~~iant child; at any rate, it is no longer a child, it is a big boy who has many original resources but who will never come to any good unless he seriously applies himself to the present and dares to face the future. We have no more time for play or ~~for building~~ upon the dreams of the past.

Political Weather-vanes

They conjure up storms and rely upon their ~~flexibility~~ (mobility), forgetting that their flexibility will not help them once the gale has overthrown the tower on which they stand.

The communists profess a shoulder-shrugging antipathy against patriotism, fame and war.

After the fat cows come the lean ones, after the lean ones no meat at all.

An association of ideas in the sense of association in industry, for instance, the alliance of philosophical concepts with those of political economy, would produce surprising new results.

The old tale of the three brothers becomes reality. The one runs a hundred miles in a few hours, the other sees as far as a hundred miles, the third shoots as far, the fourth drums out armies: Railway, telescope, cannons, powder or press.

Vision

The Place Louis XVI. - A body, the head next to it; the physician, making experiments, attempting to put the two together again, shakes his head: "Impossible!" and leaves with a sigh. Courtiers try to fasten the dead head, but it always falls off.

When a king has lost his head there is no more help for him.

The closer people stood to Napoleon the more they admired him. With other heroes the reverse is the rule.

They revile him, but still they show a certain respect: while they throw mud at him with their right hand, they hold their hat in their left.

Le style c'est l'homme - c'est aussi la femme! Madame de Staël's untruthfulness: a whole ratelier (manger) of untruthful thoughts and flowers of speech resembling evil vapors.- She praises Wellington, ce héros de cuir avec un coeur et un cerveau de papier-maché!

Madame de Stäel was Swiss. The Swiss have feelings as lofty as their mountains, but their ideas of society ~~xx~~ are as narrow as their valleys.

Her relationship to Napoleon: she wanted to ~~give~~ render unto Caesar what was Caesar's due, but when he declined her offer she blamed him and give God twice his due.

She had no wit: she ~~committed the folly to call~~ Napoleon a Robespierre on horseback. Robespierre was nothing but an active Rousseau, as Madame de Stael was a passive Rousseau, and it would be much more ~~justified~~ to call her a Robespierre in woman's dress.

Everywhere she speaks of religion and morals; nowhere does she say, however, what she means by that.

She speaks of our honesty and our virtue and our intellectual education; she has not seen our penetentiaries, our brothels and our barracks; she has not seen our book-dealers, our Clauren, our lieutenants.

One does not know why our princes reach such an old age: They are afraid to die, they fear to meet Napoleon once more in another world.

The people of Paris have ~~freed~~ liberated the world and not even accepted a ~~tip~~ (gratuity) for it.

Lafayette

All the world is ~~xxxx~~ surprised that ~~xxxx~~ once there was an honest man; - his post remains vacant.

Not because of the excellence of their doctrine ~~but~~ because of its vulgarity, and because the big masses are unable to grasp a superior doctrine, I ~~believe~~ that the Republicans, at first in France, will gradually get the upper hand and solidify their regime for some time. I say, for some time, for those plebeian Republics, such as our radicals ~~xx~~ dream of, cannot last long... While we predict with certainty their short duration, we comfort ourselves with the progress Republicanism is making. It is perhaps a necessary form of transition, and we shall gladly forgive it for its peevish chrysalis condition ~~xxxx~~ in the hope that the butterfly, which ~~one~~ some day will ~~break forth~~ emerge from it, will unfold its wings the more colorfully ~~to~~ and play with all flowers of life in the sweet sunlight! - We should actually treat you ~~in the manner of~~ as grumbling fathers whose pedantic stuffiness, though it may seem a nuisance to their enterprising sons, is ~~xxxx~~ yet helpful to their future establishment. For reasons of piety, if not of policy, we should therefore use a certain restraint in our comments on those gloomy creatures. We shall even honor you and go as far as supporting you; only do not request too much, and do not turn as Brutusses against us if your much too plain soups should not happen to please our palate and if we sometimes crave for the cuisine of the ~~Tarquiniari~~ Tarquinists!

How strange! we rock and comfort ourselves with this

hypothesis of a short duration of the Republican regime in the same manner as those aged followers of the old regime who, in their despair of the present, see their salvation only in the victory of the Republicans; in order to further Henry V.'s accession to the crown they strike up the Marseillaise (~~in defiance of~~ defying death) ~~of death~~...

Où allez-vous, monsieur l'abbé?
Vous allez vous casser le nez!

The French are more self-assured in company (in their social relations) for the very reason that they are ~~positive~~ (concrete) and dreamless. The dreaming German ~~wx~~ may greet you with a gloomy grimace in the morning because he dreamed that you had insulted him or that his grandfather had been kicked in the pants by your grandfather.

Among the minor prophets living here there are but a few Germans. Most of them come to France to prove that they are (NOT) prophets even ~~outside of their own country~~ WHERE THEY ARE IN FAVOR?

The young girl said: "The gentleman must be very rich, since he is very ugly. The public judges in the same manner: "The man must be very learned, since he is very boring." Hence the success of many Germans in Paris.

It seems to be the mission of the Germans in Paris to keep me from missing home. FOSTERING HOMESICKNESS FOR MY NATIVE LAND?

Czar Nicolas is so to speak a hereditary dictator. He shows complete indifference ~~against~~ toward the traditional, the (inveter-

ate, the historical.

V. Women, Love, Marriage

In any explanation of love we have to assume a physical ~~phenomenon.~~ or an historical ~~factor~~. Is ~~x~~ it sympathy, ~~as~~ like the dumb magnet attracting the raw (crude) iron? Or is ~~it~~ there ~~xxxxx~~ a prehistorical background ~~remnant~~ of which we retain a dark awareness ~~and which~~ expressing itself in inexplicable attraction and ~~rejection~~ repulsion?

In our youth love is more tempestuous, but not as strong, as omnipotent as AFTERWARD. ~~in it is later.~~ Also it is not as lasting in our youth, for then the body is in love too, it craves for physical revelations in love, and it lends to the soul the impetuousness of its blood, the abundance of its sinewy power. Later, when these have diminished, when the blood trickles more slowly through the veins, when the body is no longer in love, the soul, the immortal soul, loves all by itself; and since eternity is at ~~xx~~ its disposal, since it is not as frail as the body, it takes its time and begins to love less tempestuously, but more lastingly, with more abysmal depth, with more superhuman power.

That Xanthippe's husband became such a great philosopher is a remarkable fact. ~~Amid~~ To be ~~xx~~ still able to think amidst all this bickering! But WRITING ~~to be able to write, that~~ became impossible: Socrates has not left a single book to posterity.

Anyone who gets married is like the Doge who is wed to the Adriatic Sea: he does not know what he will find in what he

marries: treasures, monsters, unknown tempests.

The German marriage is no genuine marriage. The husband does not have a wife, but a servant, and he continues to live ~~his isolated~~ bachelor's life in his mind, even in the circle of his family. But ~~with this~~ I do not mean to say that he is the master; on the contrary, he is at times nothing but the servant of ~~his~~ maid-servant, and even at home he does not deny his servility.

VI. Assorted Ideas

Sages think up new thoughts and fools spread them.

Next to the thinker there is a prosaic person who quietly goes after his business; next to each manger, in which a savior, a world-redeeming idea sees the light of day, there stands also an ox who calmly feeds.

There are lofty spirits, unimpressed by material splendor, to whom the throne ~~is~~ means nothing but a chair covered with red velvet. There are lowly spirits to whom every ideal seems insignificant and to whom the pillory is nothing but an iron collar. They do not shy away from ~~the tie of~~ iron if that is the only means for them to assemble an audience; the audience is ~~impressed~~ awed by the audacity which they have acquired through the routine of disgracing themselves.

Time exercises a modifying influence upon our convictions by compelling us constantly to observe the opposite. The "garde

municipal,who supervises the Can-can, in the end ~~comes~~ happens ~~to~~ finds it not so indecent ~~at all~~ any more and ~~mi~~ ~~be~~ perhaps ~~ght~~ even wishes to join the dance. The Protestant, after a long polemic with Catholicism, does not consider it nearly as gruesome as before, and he might even ~~not~~ be ~~dis~~inclined to ~~listen~~ hear ~~to~~ a mass.

We have no understanding of ruins until we have become ruins ourselves.

There are people who believe they know all about the bird, since they have seen the egg whence it came forth.

He who prepares a poison has to wear gloves of glass.

~~I~~ I read the boring book, fell asleep over it, dreamed that I continued reading it, woke ~~fr~~ up from boredom, ~~and that~~ occurred three times.

When vice becomes magnificent, its effect is less shocking. The English lady, who usually felt a solemn dread of naked statues, was much less upset at the sight of a gigantic Hercules: "With such dimensions (proportions) the thing seems no longer ~~that~~ quite so indecent."

The apes ~~look down upon~~ scorn man as a degenerate member of their race, just as the Dutch define the German language as deteriorated Dutch.

** is one of those angels whom Jacob saw in his dream and who needed a ladder to descend from heaven to earth: ~~their~~ wings are not strong enough.

Whether she was virtuous is beyond my knowledge, but she was always ugly, and ugliness in a woman is already half the price of virtue.

The diamond would have reason to be proud if a poet compared ~~him~~ it to a human heart.

After the report of a noble deed, the exclamation: Greater than all the pyramids, than Himalaya, than all the forests and oceans, is the human heart: it is more sublime than the sun and the moon and all the stars, more brilliant and more blossoming, - it is infinite in its love, as infinite as the godhead, it is the godhead itself.

Pictures and Brush-strokes

A blind charlatan in the market-place sells eye-drops which prevent blindness. He himself did not believe in them and became blind. Tragic portrayal of blindness.

Impressions on my return to Germany:

First, the white hair: White always evokes the ideas of a fairy-tale world, of the ghostly, the visionary: white shadows, powder, shrouds.

The obesity: fat ghosts, much scarier than skinny ones.

The graveyard with my beloved graves.

In answer to the first "Who goes there?" I reply: All good spirits praise God.

The Englishman who always takes his Miss (Engl. in original)

to the beach and makes her look at naked men in order to immunize her against ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ sensuality.

A sweet-pickled, squashed face with timidly petty eyes (Ein suesslich zerquetschtes, eingemachtes Gesicht mit aengstlich kleinlichen Augen).

A smiling gait.

He was sparkling with dullness.

A face like a fetus in alcohol.

A lady who already started not to be young any more.

She wrote anonymous letters signed "A fair soul".

He praised himself so highly that the price of incense candles began to rise.

He made the greatest progress in ignorance.

BARBERO (?

Nicely ~~groomed~~ and curled ideas.

Bibbia

Less hardened than human hearts whom I ~~implored~~ in vain, the rocks burst open and the soothing well ~~purls~~ forth.

Pourko

HEINRICH HEINE

BUCH DER LIEDER

Sie liebten sich beide, doch keiner
Wollt es dem andern gestehn;
Sie sahen sich an so feindlich
Und wollten vor Liebe vergehn.

Sie trennten sich endlich und sahn sich
Nur noch zuweilen im Traum;
Sie waren laengst gestorben
Und wussten es selber kaum.

They loved one another, but neither
Would be the first to confess;
Like foes they outstared each other
And wished that the other would guess.

They finally parted and even
Their meetings in dreams became rare;
They were no longer living,
And yet they believed they were.

Lola

REFLECTIONS

I. Personal Matters

My mother tells me that during her pregnancy she saw an apple hanging in a strange garden, but that she did not want to break it off ~~so that~~ lest her child ~~would~~ not become a thief. Throughout my life I have kept a secret craving for beautiful apples, but this was combined with a reppect of other people's property and a loathing of larceny. (horror of stealing)

I have the most peaceful disposition. My wishes are: a modest cabin, (hut) a thatched roof, but a good bed, good food, milk and butter, very fresh, flowers ~~in front of the~~ at my window, ~~some~~ a few ~~beautiful~~ trees ~~in front of the~~ at my door, and if the good Lord wishes to complete my happiness he will let me live to see the joyful day when about six to seven of my enemies shall be hanged on those trees. With compassion in my heart I shall forgive them, before they die, for all the wrongs they have inflicted upon me as long as they lived.- Yes, one ~~has~~ should to forgive one's enemies, but not before they have been hanged.

I did not become naturalized for fear that then I would love France less, as one cools off towards one's mistress as soon as one is wedded to her legally (legally) in the mairies. I shall continue to live with France in a common law marriage.

My spirit feels exiled (banished) in France, banned into a strange language. foreign tongue.

will
God ~~shall~~ forgive the foolish ~~things~~ words which I have spread about him, as I shall forgive my adversaries for the foolish things they have written against me, though they are spiritually as inferior to me as I am to you, o my God!

II. Religion and Philosophy

The earth is the huge rock to which ~~humanity~~ mankind, the true Prometheus, is chained and being torn to pieces by the vulture of doubt. ~~Humanity~~ Mankind has stolen the light and is now suffering tortures for it.

God did not manifest anything that would indicate an existence after death; Moses also does not mention this. Perhaps it is not even convenient to God that the devout take this existence for granted. - In his paternal kindness he may wish to save it for us as a surprise.

Judaism - Aristocracy: One God has created the world and rules it; all men are his children, but the Jews are his favorites and their land is his chosen dominium. He is a monarch, the Jews are the aristocracy, and Palestine is the exarchate of God.

Christianity - Democracy: One God who has created all and rules all, but who loves all men alike and protects all realms alike. He is no longer a national God but a universal one.

Christianity appears as a comfort: those who enjoyed too much happiness in this life shall get indigestion from it in the next; those who had too little to eat shall subsequently find the best banquet prepared for them; the earthly cudgel marks shall be stroked by angels.

Jewish history is beautiful, but the young Jews harm the old ones who otherwise would be placed high above the Greeks and Romans. I believe, if there were no more Jews in the world and only one single specimen was known to exist somewhere, people would travel hundreds of hours to see him and to shake hands with him - but now they avoid us!

The history of the modern Jews is tragic, and if you write about this tragedy you will be ridiculed: this is the most tragic part of it.

Be tolerant altogether or not at all: walk the good path or the evil one; to remain hesitating at the cross-roads, for that you are too weak - that was beyond the powers of a Hercules, and he had to make his choice in a hurry.

The baptismal certificate is the admission ticket to European culture.

Is the mission of the Jews concluded? I believe it will be once the worldly savior comes: industry, labor, joy.

The worldly savior will arrive by railway, the decent German Michel (?) will ~~prepare the way for him~~ be his pioneer, and roses will be scattered on his path.

In Germany it is the theologians who are doing away with (putting an end to) the good Lord - on n'est jamais trahi que par les siens.

In Germany Christianity is being abolished in theory and in fact: development of industry and prosperity.

In their fight against religion the philosophers destroyed paganism, but a new ~~one~~ religion, Christianity, arose. This too shall be dealt with soon, but it will certainly be followed by another, and the philosophers shall have a new task which ~~will again~~ in turn will be futile: the world is a big stable which cannot be cleaned as easily as that of Augias, since, while it is being swept, the oxen stay inside and continue piling up new manure.

In ~~d~~ark ages the ~~people~~ nations were ~~best~~ served best led by religion, as in a pitch-dark night a blind man ~~is~~ serves as our best guide; he knows ways and by-paths better than a seeing one. But ~~once~~ after day-break ~~has come~~, it is foolish to keep using the aged blind as guides.

The grandeur (glory) of the world is always adequate to the grandeur (glory) of the spirit that beholds it. The good one finds his paradise here, the bad one already partakes of his hell on earth.

Saints like the stylite have become impossible nowadays, since our philanthropy would immediately place them in an insane asylum.

III. Art and Literature

A book takes its time, like a child. All books that have been hatched ~~rapidly~~ with hastily in a few weeks make me slightly suspicious of their author. An honest woman does not deliver her child before ~~her~~ the ninth month.

When the poet conceives his poems he feels as though, according to ~~the~~ Pythagorean doctrine of metempsychosis, ~~has~~ he had led an earlier existence in the most varied forms - his intuition acts like memory.

In antiquity a philosophy of history was impossible. Only the present time has found the prerequisites for it: Herder, Bossuet, etc. - I believe the philosophers will have to wait for thousand more years before they can demonstrate the organism of history; until then, I believe, only the following can be postulated. As main factors I would consider human nature and environmental conditions (quality of soil, climate, traditional legislation, war, unanticipated and incalculable needs); these two factors, in their conflict or in their alliance, form the basis of history, but their signature is always found in the human spirit, and the idea by which they are represented becomes a third factor which in turn influences the other two. This is primarily the case in our days, but it ~~holds true~~ also applies also

to the Middle Ages. What Shakespeare shows us of history is only the interaction between human nature and external conditions; the idea, the third element, never appears in his tragedies; hence, the lucidity of his form, and the effect of something eternal, immutable in his development of themes and characters, since the human element remains identical at all times. This is also the case with Homer. The works of both poets are immortal. I do not believe that they would have turned out equally well if they had to portray a period dominated by an idea, such as at the beginning of rising Christianity, at the time of the Reformation, or at the time of the Revolution.

To the Greeks, life and poetry were identical. That is why they did not have such great poets as we do, since to us life is often the opposite extreme of poetry. Shakespeare's big toe contained more poetry than all the Greek poets, with the exception of Aristophanes. The Greek were great artists, not poets; their sensibility was artistic rather than poetic; In plastic art they achieved such outstanding results for the very reason that there they only had to copy reality, which in itself was poetry and which offered them the best models.

The work of art

The invisible thought is ~~ax~~ harmoniously expressed through the visible work; this also applies to the art of living which represents the harmony between our actions and our convictions.

The work of art is <u>beautiful</u> when the divine element is kindly inclined toward the human - Diana kissing Endymion; it is <u>sublime</u> when the human element forcefully rises toward the divine - Prometheus defies Jupiter, Agamemnon sacrifices his child. The myth of Christ is beautiful and sublime at the same time.

In art, form is everything, the material does not count. Staub asks the same price for making a tail-coat to measure, regardless of whether he has been supplied with the material or not. He claims that he expects to be paid for the style only, the material he throws in ~~for~~ free. of charge.

With regard to the problem of innate ideas, the following solution may be correct: There are people who absorb everything from without, the so-called talents, like Lessing, reminiscent of apes, who are motivated by superficial imitation; there is nothing in their minds which has not penetrated through their senses. But there are also men ~~who produce everything~~ all whose works emanate from ~~aikki~~ the soul within, such as Raphael, Mozart, Shakespeare, whose labor pains, however, are much more acute and prolonged than those of the so-called talents. The ones fabricate without life, without in- ~~xxxxx~~ wardness: mechanization - the others produce an organically developed whole.

Genius carries in his mind a portrait of nature, and ~~with~~ reminded the ~~help~~ by of nature he brings forth its portrait; the talent

reproduces creates creates
~~re-creates~~ nature and ~~produces~~ analytically what genius ~~pro-~~
through are balancing
~~duces in~~ synthesis. However, there also characters ~~suspended~~
between the two.

is an
Daguerreotypy ~~gives~~ evidence against the erroneous idea
that would
~~of~~ art ~~being~~ an imitation of nature; nature itself has offered the proof of how little it understands about art, how miserably it fails once it begins to deal with art.

They praise the playwright who ~~xx~~ has the gift of drawing tears. He shares this gift with the most miserable onion, with whom he likewise shares his fame.

Goethe's refusal to abandon himself to enthusiasm is as repugnant as it is childish. Such restraint is more or less suicide; it resembles the ~~fax~~ flame which refuses to burn for fear of being consumed. The generous flame, the soul of Schiller, was ~~xhixx~~ was ablaze with sacrifice. Every flame sacrifices itself. The more beautifully it burns the closer it comes to annihilation, to extinction. I do not envy the such
calm little night-candles who eke out a meager existence.

With Schiller thought celebrates its orgies - sober concepts, wreathed with vine-leaves, wield the thyrsus, dancing like bacchantes - boozed reflections.

mania
The ~~rage for~~ sonnets has become so contagious in Germany

that one should introduce a sonnet-tax.

We were seeking material India and discovered America; now we are seeking spiritual India - what shall we discover?

As everyone sees a particular object in the world of the senses in his own way, everyone thus also inevitably sees in a particular book something different from any one else. Consequently, the translator also has to be an intellectually (spiritually) gifted person, for he must see the best and the most significant in the book in order to render it. The word by word meaning, the material (physical) sense can be translated by anyone who has read a grammar and who owns a dictionary. The spirit however, cannot be translated by everyone.

At the time of the Romantics the flower was loved only for its fragrance, - in our time it is loved for the budding fruit. Hence, the trend towards the practical, towards prose, towards the plain, home-baked product.

The most perfect blossoms of the German spirit are philosophy and lyric poetry. This time of blossoming is over; it needed an idyllic calm; Germany is now being carried away by movement; thought is no longer disinterested ; its abstract world has been invaded by crude fact; the steam engines of our railways have led to a shaky concussion of our minds in which no song can rise; the charcoal fumes scare

the warblers away, and the gaslight's stench spoils the fragrant moon-lit night.

Our lyric poetry is a product of spiritualism, though the material is sensualistic: the longing of the isolated spirit for a fusion with the physical world, "to mingle with nature" (English in the original). With the victory of sensualism this lyric poetry has to come to an end, giving way to a longing for the spirit: sentimentality which is dimming out, ever more thinly diluted, nihilistic prudishness, wind-bag vapors, an intermediate station between being and becoming, partisan poetry (Tendenz-poesie)!

In the world of poetry the tiers etat is not useful but harmful.

Democracy precipitates the end of litterature: freedom and equality of style. Everyone is permitted to write as he pleases, i.e. as badly as he wants to, and yet no-one else should be superior to him in style or be permitted to write better.

Democratic rage against the praise of love in poetry. - Why praise the rose, aristocrat? praise the democratic potato which ~~xxxxxxx~~ nourishes the people!

The works of certain favorite writers of the day are warrant posters of nature, but not descriptions.

It is not the poor Hungarian Niembsch or the business clerk

from Lippe-Detmold who produced that beautiful poem, but the universal spirit. Only he deserves praise, and it is ridiculous when those others pride themselves on their products, almost like Pere Rachel on his daughter's success: an old Jew standing in the parterre of the Theatre Francais and imagining that he himself is Iphigenia or Andromache, that it is his recital which moves every heart; and when they applaud he bows with blushing cheeks.

Historians who all want to make history themselves resemble those comedians in Germany who had the mania to write plays for themselves. Haller remarked that the worse the play the better the acting - did they write so badly to present themselves as good actors? or did they act badly to appear as good writers? The same question could be asked about our historians.

Gutzkow

Nature was very modest when it created him, the most immodest of all creatures.

He attempted to imitate Heine, but since he lacked all poetic spirit, he did not get beyond an imitation of Boerne. His presentation and language have something of the police spy. He is constantly lying in ambush to spy on the daily foibles of the public, to exploit them in his private interest. Since he respects and flatters those foibles he is entitled to a lack of talent, knowledge and character, and he knows it. He does not give the publice his own impulsions, but on the contr he receives those from the public; he puts on the livery of th

current idea, he is its servant, its chancery clerk who ko-tows and demands his tip.

The German language is actually rich, but in German conversation we use only ~~xxxxx~~ a tenth of our riches; thus we are factually poor in language.

The French language is actually poor, but the French have a gift for exploiting its total content in their conversation, and therefore they are in fact rich in language.

Only in literature the Germans show their whole wealth of language, and the French, dazed by this, think that we are real miracles of perfection at home. They also have no idea of how little currency of thought we possess at home. With the French it is just the opposite: more ideas in society circles than in books, and the most brilliant minds do not write at all or only accidentally.

The older French writers had a definite point of view (perspective): light and shadow are always right according to the laws of that perspective. The later writers jump from one perspective to the other, and their convasses show a disgusting confusion of light and shadow: here a remark which belongs to pantheistic philosophy, there a feeling which derives from materialism, doubt and faith crossing each other - a ~~xxxxxxx~~ harlequin's jacket.

French literature is now ruled by a well-developed (trained plagiarism. ~~Here~~ One mind has its hand in the pocket of the other, and this puts them in ~~xxxx xxxxxx~~ a certain ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ relation to eac

other. With this gift of plagiarism, where the one steals the thought of the other even before it has been completed (conclude the mind becomes a common property. In The république des lettres is a community of collective thought.

Modern French literature resembles the restaurants of the Palais Royal: If you had been eavesdropping in the kitchen and seen the ingredients of the dishes as well as their preparation you would lose your appetite; the dirty cook puts white gloves on when he is ready to serve his hashed up mush on a shiny platter.

Buffon says, the style is the man. Villemain is a living refutation of this axiom: his style is handsome, well-formed and neat.

Blaze de Bury observes the small (minor) writers through a magnifying glass, the great ones through a diminishing glass.

French art is a ~~re-creation~~ reproduction of reality. But since the French have lived through and seen so much during the last fifty years, their reproductions of what they lived and saw have made their works of art more significant than those of German artists who have ~~found~~ arrived at their intuitive ideas only ~~in~~ through dream projections.

Only in architecture, where nature cannot be reproduced, the French remain behind.

In music they set the tone ~~(fashion)~~ of their nationality intellect (reason) and sentimentality, esprit and elegance;-

in drama: passion. Ecclecticism in music was introduced by Meyerbeer.

Meyerbeer is the musical maitre de plaisir of aristocracy.

Lessing says: "If Raphael's hands had been cut off, he would still have been a painter." In like manner we could say: If Mr. X.'s head were cut off, he would still be a painter; he would continue painting without a head and without anyone noticing that he had no head.

Dante is the public prosecutor of poetry.

IV. State and Society

Society is always a republic: the individuals strive upwards, and the collective masses push them back.

One has to know all of Germany, a part of it is dangerous. It is the story of the tree whose leaves and fruits are reciprocal antidotes.

Germany was agitated by Luther - but Francis Drake appeased it once more: he gave us the potato.

There is no German people: Aristocracy, bureacracy, peasantry are more heterogenous than they were in France before the revolution.

Servants who have no master are not yet free men for that; the servility is in their soul.

The German resembles the slave who obeys his ~~m~~ master without chains, without a whip, just upon his mere word, or even a glance. The servitude is within himself, within his soul; worse than material slavery is the spiritual ised kind. The Germans have to be freed from within, from without nothing helps.

The ~~G~~ermans are now working at ~~x~~ the development of their nationality, but they started too late. When they ~~shall~~ will have finished with it, there will be no more nationality system in the world, and they will have to abandon their nationality without having derived ~~any~~ *any* profit from it ~~that was given to~~ as the French or British.

I always ~~saw~~ have regarded the construction of the ~~dome~~ cathedral as a gigantic toy; I thought:a giant child, like the German people, also needs a colossal toy such as the Cologne cathedral - but now I ~~am~~ think~~ing~~ differently. I do not believe any ~~longer~~ *more* that that the German people is a ~~g~~iant child; at any rate, it is no longer a child, it is a big boy who has many original resources but who will never come to any good unless he seriously applies himself to the present and dares to face the future. We have no more time for play or for building upon the dreams of the past.

Political Weather-vanes

They conjure up storms and rely upon their flexibility (mobility), forgetting that their flexibility will not help the once the gale has overthrown the tower on which they stand.

The communists profess a shoulder-shrugging antipathy against patriotism, fame and war.

After the fat cows come the lean ones, after the lean ones no meat at all.

An association of ideas in the sense of association in industry, for instance, the alliance of philosophical concepts with those of ~~xxxixxx xxxixxxxxixxxxx~~ political economy, would produce surprising new results.

The old tale of the three brothers becomes reality. The one runs a hundred miles in a few hours, the other sees as far as a hundred miles, the third shoots as far, the fourth drums out armies: Railway, telescope, cannons, powder or press.

~~I~~ Vision

The Place Louis XVI. - A body, the head next to it; the physician, making experiments, attempting to put the two together again, shakes his head: "Impossible!" and leaves with a sigh. Courtiers try to ~~fix~~ fasten the dead head, but it always falls ~~down.~~ *off*.

When a king has lost his head there *is* no *more* help for him.

The closer people stood to Napoleon the more they admired him. With other heroes the ~~opposite takes place.~~ *reverse is the rule.*

They revile him, but still they show a certain respect: while they throw mud at him with their right hand, they hold their hat in their left.

Le style c'est l'homme - c'est aussi la femme! Madame de Staël's untruthfulness: a whole ratelier (manger) of untruthful thoughts and flowers of speech resembling evil vapors.- She praises Wellington, ce héros de cuir avec un coeur et un cerveau de papier-maché!

Madame de Staël was Swiss. The Swiss have feelings as lofty as their mountains, but their ideas of society ~~xx~~ are as narrow as their valleys.

Her relationship to Napoleon: she wanted to ~~give~~ render unto Caesar what was Caesar's due, but when he declined her offer she blamed him and give God twice his due.

She had no wit: she committed the folly to call Napoleon a Robespierre on horseback. Robespierre was nothing but an active Rousseau, as Madame de Stael was a passive Rousseau, and it would be much more justified to call her a Robespierre in woman's dress.

Everywhere she speaks of religion and morals; nowhere does she say, however, what she means by that.

She speaks of our honesty and our virtue and our intellectual education; she has not seen our penetentiaries, our brothels and our barracks; she has not seen our book-dealers, our Clauren, our lieutenants.

One does not know why our princes reach such an old age: They are afraid to die, they fear to meet Napoleon once more in another world.

The people of Paris have ~~freed~~ liberated the world and not even accepted a ~~tip~~ (gratuity) for it.

Lafayette

All the world is ~~xxpxx~~ surprised that ~~xxxx~~ once there was an honest man, - his post remains vacant.

Not because of the excellence of their doctrine but because of its vulgarity, and because the big masses are unable to grasp a superior doctrine, I believe that the Republicans, at first in France, will gradually get the upper hand and solidfy their regime for some time. I say, for some time, for those plebeian Republics, such as our radicals ~~xx~~ dream of, cannot last long... While we predict with certainty their short duration, we comfort ourselves with the progress Republicanism is making. It is perhaps a necessary form of transition, and we shall gladly forgive it for its peevish chrysalis condition ~~inxx~~ in the hope that the butterfly, which ~~one~~ *some* day will ~~break forth~~ *emerge* from it, will unfold its wings the more colorfully ~~to~~ *and* play with all flowers of life in the sweet sunlight! - We should actually treat you ~~in the manner of~~ *as* grumbling fathers whose pedantic stuffiness, though *it* may seem a nuisance to their enterprising sons, is ~~xxixi~~ yet helpful to their future establishment. For reasons of piety, if not of policy, we should therefore use a certain restraint in our comments on those gloomy creatures. We shall even honor you and go as far as supporting you, only do not request too much, and do not turn as Brutusses against us if our much too plain soups should not happen to please our palate and if we sometimes crave for the cuisine of the ~~Xarquiniens~~ Tarquinists!

How strange! we rock and comfort ourselves with this

hypothesis of a short duration of the Republican regime in the same manner as those aged followers of the old regime who, in their despair of the present, see their salvation only in the victory of the Republicans; in order to further Henry V. accession to the crown they strike up the Marseillaise in defiance of death...

Où allez-vous, monsieur l'abbé?
Vous allez vous casser le nez!

The French are more self-assured in company (in their social relations) for the very reason that they are positive (concrete) and dreamless. The dreaming German ~~xi~~ may greet you with a gloomy grimace in the morning because he dreamed that you had insulted him or that his grandfather had been kicked in the pants by your grandfather.

Among the minor prophets living here there are but a few Germans. Most of themcome to France to prove that they are no prophets even outside of their own country.

The young girl said: "The gentleman must be very rich, since he is very ugly. The public judges in the same manner: "The man must be very learned, since he is very boring." Hence the success of many Germans in Paris.

It seems to be the mission of the Germans in Paris to keep me from missing home.

Czar Nicolas is so to speak a hereditary dictator. He shows complete indifference ~~against~~ toward the traditional, the inveter-

ate, the historical.

V. Women, Love, Marriage

In any explanation of love we have to assume a physical phenomenon or an historical factor. Is it sympathy, ~~as~~ like the dumb magnet attracting the raw (crude) iron? Or is ~~it~~ there ~~kxaxxaxxxaxxxafxan~~ ~~axxixaxxhistxxy~~ a prehistorical ~~remnant~~ background of which we retain a dark awareness ~~and which~~ expressing itself in inexplicable attraction and ~~rejection~~ repulsion?

In our youth love is more tempestuous, but not as strong, as omnipotent as ~~in~~ it is later. Also it is not as lasting in our youth, for then the body is in love too, it craves for physical revelations in love, and it lends to the soul the impetuousness of its blood, the abundance of its sinewy power. Later, when these have diminished, when the blood trickles more slowly through the veins, when the body is no longer in love, the soul, (the immortal soul,) loves all by itself, and since eternity is at ~~in~~ its disposal, since it is not as frail as the body, it takes its time and begins to love less tempestuously, but more lastingly, with more abysmal depth, with more superhuman power.

That Xanthippe's husband became such a great philosopher is a remarkable fact. ~~Amid~~ To be ~~ah~~ still able to think amidst all this bickering! But to be able to write, that became impossible: Socrates has not left a single book to posterity.

Anyone who gets married is like the Doge who is wed to the Adriatic Sea: he does not know what he will find in what he

marries: treasures, monsters, unknown tempests.

The German marriage is no genuine marriage. The husband does not have a wife, but a ~~servant~~ maid-servant, and he continues to live his isolated bachelor's life in his mind, even in the circle of his family. But with this I do not mean to say that he is the master; on the contrary, he is at times nothing but the servant of his maid-servant, and even at home he does not deny his servility.

VI. Assorted Ideas

Sages think up new thoughts and fools spread them.

Next to the thinker there is a prosaic person who quietly goes after his business; next to each manger, in which a savior, a world-redeeming idea sees the light of day, there stands also an ox who calmly feeds.

There are lofty spirits, unimpressed by material splendor, to whom the throne ~~is~~ means nothing but a chair covered with red velvet. There are lowly spirits to whom every ideal seems insignificant and to whom the pillory is nothing but an iron collar. They do not shy away from the ~~tie of~~ iron neck-tie if that is the only means for them to assemble an audience; the audience is ~~impressed~~ awed by the audacity, which they have acquired through the routine of disgracing themselves.

Time exercises a modifying influence upon our convictions by compelling us constantly to observe the opposite extreme. The "gar-

municipal, who supervises the Can-can, in the end ~~comes to~~ finds it not so indecent any more ~~at all~~ and ~~might~~ even wishes to join the dance. The Protestant, after a long polemic with Catholicism, does not consider it nearly as gruesome as before and he might even ~~not~~ be ~~dis~~inclined to hear ~~listen to~~ a mass.

We have no understanding of ruins until we have become ruins ourselves.

There are people who believe they know all about the bird since they have seen the egg whence it came forth.

He who prepares a poison has to wear gloves of glass.

~~Irma~~ I read the boring book, fell asleep over it, dreamed that I continued reading it, woke ~~fro~~ up from boredom, and that occurred three times.

When vice becomes magnificent its effect is less shocking. The English lady, who usually felt a solemn dread of nake statues, was much less upset at the sight of a gigantic Hercules: "With such dimensions (proportions) the thing seems no longer that indecent."

The apes look down upon man as a degenerate member of their race, just as the Dutch define the German language as deteriorated Dutch.

** is one of those angels whom Jacob saw in his dream and who needed a ladder to descend from heaven to earth: their wings are not strong enough.

Whether she was virtuous is beyond my knowledge, but she was always ugly, and ugliness in a woman is already half the price of virtue.

The diamond would have reason to be proud if a poet compared him to a human heart.

After the report of a noble deed, the exclamation: Greater than all t he pyramids, than Himalaya, than all forests and oceans, is the human heart: it is more sublime than sun and moon and all stars, more brilliant and more blossoming, - it is infinite in its love, ш infinite as the godhead, it is the godhead itself.

Pictures ánd Brush-strokes

A blind charlatan in the market-place sells eye-drops which prevent blindness. He himself did not believe in them and became blind. Tragic portrayal of blindness.

Impressions on my return to Germany:

First, the white hair: White always evokes ~~the~~ ideas of a fairy-tale world, of the ghostly, the visionary: white shadows, powder, shrouds.

The obesity: fat ghosts, much scarier than skinny ones.

The graveyard with my beloved graves.

In answer to the first "Who goes there?" I reply: All good spirits praise God.

The Englishman who always takes his Miss (Engl. in original)

to the beach and makes her look at naked men in order to immunize her against ~~sensuality~~ sensuality.

A sweet-pickled, squashed face with timidly petty eyes (Ein suesslich zerquetschtes, eingemachtes Gesicht mit aengstlich kleinlichen Augen).

A smiling gait.

He was sparkling with dullness.

A face like a fetus in alcohol.

A lady who already started not to be young any more.

She wrote anonymous letters signed "A fair soul".

He praised himself so highly that the price of incense candles began to rise.

He made the greatest progress in ignorance.

Nicely groomed and curled ideas.

Less hardened than human hearts whom I implored in vain, the rocks burst open and the soothing well purls forth.

HEINRICH HEINE

LETTERS

TO KARL IMMERMANN

Berlin, December 24, 1822

. . . . My letter would grow too long if I told you in detail how successful your tragedies are here, how they are being praised, criticized and attacked - by poetasters. Those are the natural enemies of good poets, and their nasty brood will not fail to nibble at your lovely laurels. So far it has been your particular good fortune that, in the obscure Munster, your personality ~~was~~ remained hidden to most of them. But wherever the true poet may be, he is exposed to hatred and animosity; the penny-~~people~~ minded cannot forgive him for wanting to be something better than they, and the ultimate he can achieve is nothing but martyrdom. I was deeply moved by the significant words you said about my poems in the "Anzeiger". I admit, you are so far the only one to guess at the source of my dark sorrows (pains). But I hope soon to become known to you altogether. ~~xxxxxx~~ I may have succeeded in my next poetic writing to set down the passepartout for my soul's infirmary. I shall soon have this little book printed, and it will be one of my greatest inner pleasures to share it with you. This book will contain my little maliciously sentimental songs, a ~~xxxxxxx~~ picturesque dramatic poem with a southern background, and a very short tragedy filled with northern gloom. Fools are of the opinion that because of our Westphalian association (they still believed you ~~were~~ are of Westphalian origin) I ~~xx~~ would have to compete with you, and they do not know that the beautiful diamond with its clear

lustre cannot be compared with the black stone which has only bizarre forms and which, under the hammer of time, emits wild and angry sparks. But what do we care about ~~the~~ those fools. From me you shall always hear the confession how unworthy I am of being named in connection with you.

Berlin, January 21, 1823.

Fare well and remember me kindly. If, some of my ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ (utterances) and complaints should give you the impression that I am a petty and pedantic grouch, I shall gladly admit that I am. Maybe it's due to my health condition, but maybe the reason is that I am still half a child. It is a trick of mine that I am trying to preserve my childhood as long as possible, just because everything is reflected in the child: manhood, old age, the godhead, even rascality and propriety. - Lovingly yours,

H. Heine

TO MOSES MOSER

Lueneburg, May... 1823

Dear Moser: Tuesday evening I arrived in Lupteen, after I had travelled all through Monday night and the following day; shaken up and annoyed by the bothersome jabbering of my travelling companions; I gave ~~xx~~ audience to my phantasies, admitted many feelings, and thought of you. The latter occupation was predominant, to such an extent that I became sentimental and consequently annoyed with myself, and I'm sure I would have said many foolish things to you ~~xxxxx~~ had I been able to get hold of you. If, on Tuesday and Monday evening, you were visited by many baroque feelings, you should simply explain this to yourself as a manifestation of sympathetic rapport. If I should shortly be taken un-

awares by some good thoughts stealing upon me, or if an Hegelian idea should suddenly jump into my head, I shall explain this in like manner. - In Lubteen I took a carriage, and on Wednesday afternoon at five I joined my family. You see, I spent the night to Wednesday in Lubteen where I was tormented by the most annoying dreams. I saw a lot of people who laughed at me, even little children laughed at me, and boiling with rage I ran to you, my good Moser, and you opened your friendly arms and comforted me and told me not to worry about anything, for, as you pointed out, I was nothing but an idea, and in order to prove to me that I was nothing but an idea, you hastily seized Hegel's "Logic" and showed me a confused passage in it, and Gans knocked at the window, - but I jumped furiously around the room and cried: "I am not an idea, and I know nothing about an idea, and I never had an idea in all my life." It was a horrible dream, I remember, Gans yelled even louder, and on his shoulder sat little Marcus, shouting in a frightening hoarse voice the corresponding quotations and smiling in such a gruesomely friendly manner that I awoke in a panic...

TO KARL IMMERMANN

Lueneburg, June 10, 1823

.....With pleasure I learned from your letter that you are going to write a review of my "Tragedies", and I must repeat to you that I shall not in the least be offended by the severest criticism you might wish to express. I shall gladly admit the main defect of my poetry through the mention of which you might fear to hurt

me: - it is the great onesidedness which appears in my ~~xxxkxy~~ poems, since all of them are only variations of the same little theme. No-one will notice this more easily than you whose poetry has for its theme the whole big world with its innumerable varieties I expressed this only a short time ago to Herrn von Varnhagen. ~~Xxx~~ This is what you have in common with Shakespeare that you have opened yourself to absorb the entire world, and if there is any fault in your poems it lies in your inability to concentrate / the abundance of your riches. Shakespeare understands that better, and that is why he is Shakespeare. You are also going to learn more and more about this art of concentration, and every ~~one of your~~ new tragedies of yours will be better than the preceding one ...

It was easier for me to practice the art of concentration, just because I had to present only a little piece of the world, only a single theme. I have since, especially ~~during~~ last winter, in a state of illness, absorbed within myself more, and the tragedy which I ~~might~~ may produce in a few years, ~~maxx it~~ will ~~be seen~~ show whether I, who as yet painted only the history of Cupid in Psyche in various arrangements, can paint the Trojan war equally well. - This is the sad secret of my poetic power. My indisposition may also have affected my recent verses with some moribidity. Oh, God! there is so much in my new book which does not stand up to genuine criticism, and I would certainly not be pained (hurt) if others uncovered even that which I myself have not yet discovered. Only one thing can hurt me deeply: that is the attempt to explain the spirit of my poetry through the past history (you know what this word means), the past history of the author. I was deeply and

bitterly offended when I learned yesterday from the letter of an acquaintance how he tried to construct my entire poetic being from raked-up anecdotes, dropping unpleasant remakks about impressions of life, politic al position, religion, etc. If similar things were discussed in public, I would have been altogether enraged, and I am heartily glad that nothing of the kind ever happened. No matter how easily the story of a poet could offer a key to his poem, how easily one might actually prove that often political position, religion, private hatred, prejudice and considerations influenced his poem, this should never be mentioned, especially not as long as the poet is alive. If such influence, ~~that is~~ by exists, as it is traced back those "analytical historians", it only serves, so to speak, to deflower the poem, to tear its mysterious veil; if the so-called influence is only the result of an artificial mental concoction it distorts the poem. And how little does the outer scaffolding of our history often fit together with our real inner history! With me at least it never ~~fitted~~ did.

From this chatty letter you can see, dear Immermann, that I am completely isolated here in Lueneburg. But also in my last letter I must have chatted a lot out of distraction....

TO MOSES MOSER

Lueneburg, September 27, 1823

..... In spite of my ailing head I am continuing my studies of jurisprudence to provide for a future living. As you can imagine, - this is where the question of baptism arises. No one in my family

is against it, except for myself. And this self is of a very stubborn nature. From my way of thinking you may well deduct for yourself that to me baptism is an indifferent act, that I do not even consider it symbolically significant and that, under the circumstances and in the manner in which it would be performed in my case, it also would have no significance for others. For me it might have the significance that I would devote myself more to the defense of the unfortunate members of my race. But still I consider it beneath my dignity, as a stain upon my honor, if would I were baptized in order to accept an official position in Prussia. In dear old Prussia!!! I really don't know how to get out of this miserable spot. Out of sheer anger I might yet become a Catholic and hang myself. But I shall change this annoying subject and postpone the discussion until I can speak to you personally in a few months. This is a sad time to live in: Rascals ~~become~~ turn into the best of men, and the best of men have to ~~become~~ turn into rascals. I understand so well the words of the Psalmist: "Give me my daily bread, o Lord, lest I blaspheme thy name!" - I intend to go to Goettingen after New Year's and to stay there for a year. I have to study my "jus" more diligently than anyone else, since - as I can foresee - I shall not get a position anywhere and I'll have to apply myself to the practice of law. Before I go to Goettingen I hope to visit you in Berlin for a day. You can hardly imagine how much I am looking forward to that! There is so much, ~~such bad~~ so many heavy feelings weighing upon my breast!

September 30.

I would visit you even earlier if I hadn't already run out

of funds. The six weeks in Cuxhaven cost me 30 Louisd'or. (My uncle gave me 10 Louisd'or prior to my departure for the resort.) Here I live with my parents and I have no expenses. It is a nuisance that, as far as I am concerned, the whole man is ~~xx~~ governed by the budget. Lack of money or its abundance ~~xxxxxx~~ My principles are not in the least influenced by ~~thexxixhtsxtxinfluencexupenxmyxprincipiesxxbutxthexrestxsx~~ but ~~xxxx~~ my actions. certainly are. Yes, great Moser, H. Heine is a very small creature. Probably, even little Marcus is greater than I am! This is not a joke, but my most earnest, grim (earnestness). I cannot repeat it to you often enough lest you measure me by the measure of your own great soul. Mine is made of elastic, often expanding into the infinite, and often shrinking to the diminutive. But I still do have a soul. I am positive, I have a soul (original in English), as good as the stars. That should ~~be~~ sufficient ~~for~~ you. Love me for the sake of ~~thx~~ my wayward sort of feeling which expresses itself in foolishness and wisdom, in goodness and evilness. Love me, ~~xxxxxxxyouxjustxhappenxto~~ because it just occurs to you, not, because you find me worthy of your love. I also do not love you for being a storehouse of virtue, for your understanding of Adelungian, Spanish, Syrian, Hegelian, English, Arabic and Calcuttan (?), and for having lent me ~~xxxxx~~ your coat and some money, and for wrecking your brains for my sake and other similar things, - perhaps I love you only for some foolish airs which I learned from you, for some silly ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ phrases which you dropped once and which stuck in my mind, pleasantly fluttering around me when I'm in a good humor or in cash or just plain sentimental. - I once had a Pole ~~for~~ as

a friend for whom I would have drunk myself to death, or rather, for whom I would have let myself be slain ~~km~~, and I would even now, though the guy was not worth a penny and had a venereal disease as well as the most evil principles, but - he had a guttural sound with which he could say the word "What?" in such a wondrous way that this very moment it makes me laugh and cry to think of it. -

I shall no more say: "You did not understand me anyway, and that's all right." I believe you do not like the lack of pathos in friendship. - To please you, I shall sometimes throw ~~thm~~ Cato's mantle (cloak) around my shoulders and yawn: "Delenda est Carthago."

TO MOSES MOSER

Goettingen, June 25, 1824

.....By the way, Byron's death has moved me deeply. He was the only human being to whom I felt related, and we may have resembled each other in many ways. ~~Yam~~ Go ahead and joke about ~~that~~ this as much as you like. I read him rarely during the last few years. It is preferable to associate with people whose character differs from our own. But I always got along comfortably with Byron as with a completely equal comrade in arms. With Shakespeare I cannot get along comfortably, I feel only too acutely that I am not his equal: he is the all-powerful minister (plenipotentiary), and I am a mere privy councillor, and I feel as though he could ~~discharge me~~ make me resign at any moment.

TO J. W. VON GOETHE

Weimar, October 1, 1824

Your Excellency:

May I beg you to grant me the joy (good fortune) to stand before you for a few minutes. I shall not inconvenience you; I only want to kiss your hand and leave again. My name is H. Heine. I am from the Rhineland and have ~~since~~ recently been residing in Goettingen. Before that, I spent several years in Berlin where I associated with a number of your old acquaintances and admirers (the late Wolf, the Varnhagens, etc.) and grew to love you more and more every day. I am also a poet, and three years ago I took the liberty of sending you my "Poems", and a year and a half ago ~~mx~~ my "Tragedies with a Lyrical Intermezzo" (Ratcliff and Almansor). Besides, I am ill, and three weeks ago I undertook a convalescent tour to the Harz mountains. On the Brocken I was seized by an urge (desire) to make a pilgrimage to Weimar and pay homage to Goethe. In the true sense of the word I have come here as a pilgrim, that is on ~~foot~~ and in weathered clothes, hoping to have my request granted, and remaining,

with enthusiasm and devotion

H. Heine.

TO MOSES MOSER

Goettingen, July 1, 1825

..... It is no loss for you that I did not write you about Goethe and how I talked to him in Weimar and how he said many kind and condescending things to me. He is nothing more but a structure which ~~a~~ was once full of magnificent bloom, and that was what interested me in him. He evoked a melancholy feeling in me, and I like him better since I pity him. But basically Goethe and I are two natures which have to repel each other because of their heterogeneity. He is fundamentally an Epicurean for whom enjoyment of life is the ultimate goal; although life for and in the idea has at times been present in his feeling, his intuition and his expression in poetry, he has never deeply grasped ~~it~~ *Life* and lived it even less. In contrast to this, I am fundamentally an idealist, i.e. exalted by the idea to the point of self-sacrifice, and always driven to plunge my whole self into it; but on the other hand I have grasped the joy of living and found pleasure in it, and now a great battle takes place within me between my clear reasoning which approves of the joy of living and rejects all self-sacrificing exaltation as a foolish thing and between my idealistic inclination which often crops up unexpectedly and takes a powerful hold of me, perhaps some day to <u>draw me down</u> ~~xxxxxxxx~~ again into its age-old realm, ~~or~~ perhaps it would be better to say ~~that it will~~ *to* <u>draw me up</u>. For it is still a big question open to debate whether the idealist, who even gives his life for an idea, ~~xxx~~ does not live more ~~and~~ fully and more happily in one moment than Herr von Goethe ~~has~~ *did* during his entire seventy-

six years of self-centered comfortable living. But more about this some other time. Today ~~xxfxxx~~ my head feels weak from unspaakable labors. You'll find this subject also in the "Rabbi".

TO MOSES MOSER

Paris, June 27, 1831

Yesterday your brother brought me your letter of May 25. You wish to interpret my silence as a sign of a poet's vanity; I have to deprive you of this error (misconception). I was never irritated by any judgment of yours concerning the poet; moreover, although I was not indifferent to it, yet I never felt hurt by your criticism or praise of any ~~mfxmy~~ actions which I committed as a human being. In no way do I feel ~~fmix~~ hurt or offended by you, and my silence is not a mute complaint. I only complain about the gods who for such a long time let me persist in my erroneous comprehending idea ~~mf~~ about your manner of ~~mnderskanding~~ my way of living and striving. This you have not understood, and that is what grieved me. You still do not understand it, you never did, and hence our friendship has not ceased to exist, but rather it has never existed. We never expect approval from a friend, but understanding of our actions; he may praise or criticize them, according to his own principles, but he should always understand them, realize their necessity from our particular point of view, even if ~~ms~~ his is an entirely different one.

Fare well - do not forward the enclosed by mail but by special messenger, and be convinced of my respect and love.

H. Heine

TO AUGUST LEWALD

Coudry, pres Le Plessi, chemin de Fontainebleau,

May 3, 1836

Since yesterday ~~after~~noon I've been in the country enjoying the lovely month of May... for a gentle snow fell this morning and my fingers are trembling with cold. My Mathilda is sitting next to me in front of a big fireplace, ~~sewing me~~ working on my new shirts; the fire is in not ~~in~~ hurry to burn, it is certainly not in a passionate mood, and it announces its presence only through a mild smoke. - I spent the last time in Paris very pleasantly, and Mathilda brightens my life with constant inconstancies of her moods. Only very rarely do I think of poisoning or asphixiating myself. We shall probably take our lives in another way, for instance by reading a book which kills with boredom.

Mr. N. told her so much in praise of my writings that she found no peace rest until I went to Renduel to get her the French edition of "Travel Pictures". But she had hardly read a page of it when she turned pale as death, started to tremble all over and asked me for Heavens sakes to lock the book away. For she had come upon an amorous passage in it, and, jealous as she is, she does not even want to acknowledge the fact that I had paid homage to another <u>before</u> her reign. Yes, I had to promise her that henceforth I would not address amorous phrases even to any imaginary figures in my books...

TO MATHILDE HEINE

Hamburg, August 16, 1844

My dear Nonnotte,

They are hammering next to me, my head is not any better, I am as gloomy as a night-watchman, I am at a three-hundred hours' distance from you, in one word: I am not happy. ~~Impatiently I~~ I am waiting for expect a letter from you. I entreat you to write me at least twice a week, for when I am not at ease about you I lose my head, and yet I need this poor head more than ever, since the horizon is darkening and my affairs are becoming more complicated. I shall need two months to settle my affairs. If I do not get regular news from you and if I become wild (violent) as I did last year, ~~the consequences will be~~ this might lead to incalculable losses. Do not forget to write me in exact detail how you are and if you are in good shape. I won't have to remind you to use the utmost caution in whatever you do. You know how ~~much~~ I have to fear the perfidy of ~~of~~ the Germans and sometimes even that of the French.

My old uncle is much worse. I would have many things to say to him, but it seems that he will not have the time to listen to them in this world. Oh, my God, what misfortune! He will not survive this year. I am going to visit him today. My heart is heavy at the mere thought to find him in the same condition as last week.

My mother is admirably well, and she is constantly talking about you with her Dame d'Atour, her factotum, her female Sancho Panso, in short, with Jette. My sister and her children are fine. They are waiting impatiently for news from their aunt.

I would advise you to take lessons in French composition... Pauline can give you embroidery instructions, - do not miss this opportunity. Learn something during my absence. I agree to everything that you may spend ℔ on the development of your abilities The money will be well invested. - Fare well! A thousand good wishes for your friends and a thousand kisses for you!

Henri Heine.

TO MATHILDE HEINE

Hamburg, August 30, 1844

Dearest Love,

Although I have my migraine today - (and you know what that means!) - I want to send you a few lines with the boat that leaves tonight. I just received your second letter together with that of Madame Darte which did me a lot of good. Please give Madame Darte my kindest regards.

Since I received news from you, I am much calmer, and I am concluding my affairs with the usual assurance, I almost said, with the usual ardour. - All here are in good health. Karl and Therese, who returned from their leisure trip, were very sorry that you had left. - I loathe the sea since I heard how much suffering it caused you. - And the separation! What a calamity'. Through being separated we only feel how close we are in loving each other. How happy I shall be to see you soon again!

What you write about Aurecia does not surprise me much. I never doubted that her heart would be as copper-brown as her skin is But I still do not understand how I could have become involved

in those gossips. I acted with sufficient caution to remain outside of those things, to avoid exposing myself to suspicion, and to furnish no weapons to malicious tongues. According to an old proverb, the devil envies all happy marriages and tries to smuggle his eggs of discord into their midst. My dearest, let us be on our guard against those evil tongues! I hope that no-one will be able to disturb my calm by telling me about everything you have been doing during my absence, - and mind you, they will not fail to do that! - Adieu, my love! I am alwaysthinking of you. Best regards to my little melon! - Next year around this time we shall be in Italy. Write to me very often.

poor
Your husband

Henri Heine.

TO VARNHAGEN VON ENSE.

Paris, January 3, 1846

My dearest Varnhagen: This is the first letter I have written in the New Year, and I begin it with the most cheerful wishes. May you be blessed this year with physical and mental well-being! With great distress I hear that you had often succumbed to physical suffering. I would have liked to send you a comforting word once in a while, but Hecuba is a poor comforter. For I have lately been in miserable shape, and writing constantly reminds me of my physical misfortune (handicap). I can hardly see my own characters, having one of my eyes being completely closed and the other one which is in the process of closing, and every letter is agony. Hence, I am most happy at the opportunity of giving you news about myself through a friend, and since this friend is well informed about all my troubles,

in those gossips. I acted with sufficient caution to remain outside of those things, to avoid exposing myself to suspicion, and to furnish no weapons to malicious tongues. According to an old proverb, the devil envies all happy marriages and tries to smuggle his eggs of discord into their midst. My dearest, let us be on our guard against those evil tongues! I hope that no-one will be able to disturb my calm by telling me about everything you have been doing during my absence, - and mind you, they will not fail to do that! - Adieu, my love! I am alwaysthinking of you. Best regards to my little melon! - Next year around this time we shall be in Italy. Write to me very often.

Your poor husband

Henri Heine.

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he will be able to tell you in detail what dirty tricks my kith and kin have played upon me and what could perhaps be done for me in this respect. My friend, Herr Lassalle, the bearer of this letter, is a young man of most extraordinary intellectual gifts; ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ the soundest scholarship, the vastest knowledge, the most perceptive acumen I have ever encountered, as well as a most brilliant gift of expression, (all these are combined in him with an energy of will and an ability (skill) of action which are amazing to me, and if his sympathy for me continues, I can expect some extremely active assistance from him. In any case, this combination of knowledge and ability, of talent and character was a pleasant phenomenon for me, and I am sure that you, ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ who are so versatile in your appreciation, will do him full justice. Herr Lassalle is distinctly a child of a new age which does not care about any form of renunciation (and) humili~~ation~~ with which we used to loaf and drivel about, more or less hypocritically, in our time. - This new generation wants to enjoy things and make itself felt in the visible world. We, the old ones, used to bow humbly before the invisible, hankering for phantom kisses and the scent of blue flowers, renouncing and whining, and yet we were perhaps happier than those hardened (steeled) gladiators who are so proud to meet death in battle. The thousand-year reign of Romanticism is at an end, and I myself was its last legendary king who renounced the crown. Had I not cast if off and donned the smock, they would have actually beheaded me. Four years ago, before I ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ became a self-deserter, I still had an

urge to fool around in the moonlight with my old dream companions, - and so I wrote "Atta Troll", the swan song of a dying age, ~~and to~~ in ~~you it was dedicated~~ dedication to you. For I owed it to you who were my most kindred brother-in-arms, in play and in earnest. Like me, you have helped to bury the old times and offered your mid-wife services to the new; yes, we who delivered ~~it~~ the new are now appalled. We feel like the poor hen that hatched duck's eggs and has to watch with horror as the young brood plunges into the water and swims complacently!

I am obligated by contract with the bookseller to publish "Atta Troll". Within the next few months this is going to be done, with caution, ~~xxxhxmxxhe mexxxfawxmanxhx~~ so that I won't have proceedings thrown at my head and lose the latter.

You see, my dear friend, how vague, how uncertain I feel. However, such weakmatic (sic) mood is mostly due to my sickliness. ~~Once~~ As soon as I get rid of the paralyzing pressure which squeezes my chest as with an iron band, my old energy will ~~also take wings again~~ once more unfold its wings. But I fear that may take a long time. The treacherous action of my family, ~~in~~ whom I had trusted, unarmed, struck me like lightning out of a clear sky and almost proved to be my undoing. ~~Thexe whe~~ Considering the circumstances, everyone will agree that this was an attempt at assassination; sneaking mediocrity, which had waited for twenty years in its bitter envy of genius, ~~had~~ finally reached its ~~xixxxxixxxx~~ hour of victory. After all, this is also an old story which repeats itself for ever.

Yes, I am very sick in body, but my soul has not suffered much. A weary flower, it is bent a little, but by no means withered and its roots are still firmly planted in love and truth.

And now good-bye, dearest Varnhagen. My friend will tell you how much and how constantly I think of you, the more so since I am completely unable to read now, and during those long winter evenings I have only my memories to cheer me.

TO FERDINAND LASSALLE

Paris (I don't know exactly), 1846

My dearest brother-in-arms:

I am writing you today, although my head is in a terrible state and each letter costs me a piece of my life. I do not even mention my eyes; my lips, tongue, etc. are affected much more annoyingly, and the brain does not seem to remain neutral. The cold and the Parisian turmoil do not agree with me, and all my hope is directed southward. This is also what the doctors advise me to do. Therefore I am [illegible] glad to abandon my Berlin plan, and if the Karl Heine matter should be settled meanwhile, I won't even go to Hamburg, but straight to Italy and take care of my health only. - This has to be kept among ourselves. - I am

as unhappy and miserable as I've never been before, and if it were not for my helpless wife, I would quietly take my hat and say adieu to the world.

Paris, February 27, 1846

.... My physical condition is horrible. I kiss, yet I feel nothing with my lips, since they are so severely paralyzed.

Even the gums and part of the tongue are affected, and whatever I eat tastes like earth. Recently I've tried Imperial Russian baths, following the strictest orders. It is not courage that I lack.

I spend much time with your sister, and for hours we chat about you. She is endowed with an extraordinarily rich mind as well as with a delightful resemblance to you. She also gets along very well with my wife. In a few days I'm going to give her a big "diner" to which I shall invite Roger, Balzac, Gautier, Gozlan, etc., - I wish I could see you too! For about 8 days I would like to have you with me again (not for any longer period). Immediately after your departure, in two morning hours, I wrote my ballet *), which may still be performed this year in London. I have also taken an interest again in the stock exchange, but I had very bad luck. I have to do that, otherwise my miserable family situation would become a fixed idea which could drive me crazy. Inspite of my wretched physical condition I'm trying to find some diversion, but not with women who would now complete my ruin. That is why I did not have the courage yet to visit Madonna: she might absentmindedly take me for someone

*) The Doktor Faust

else. Fare well! I am anxious to hear how you are. Knowing your character, I am not free from Philistine fear for you. - With your brother-in-law I talk business, - his is doing very well, and he is truly a genius.

Your friend

Heinrich Heine.

CORRECTION

German papers, in particular the Berlin "Haude- und Spener'sche Zeitung" have circulated a number of news about my state of health as well as about my economic conditions, for which a correction is required. I shall not discuss the question whether my illness was mentioned by its correct name, whether it is a family illness (an illness which one owes to the family), or one of those private illnesses customarily afflicting the German who lives abroad on independent means; whether it is a French "ramollissement de la moelle epiniere" or a German spinal consumption. All I know is that it is a very nasty illness which tortures me day and night, and which by not only my nervous system but also my system of ideas has been considerably shaken. At some moments, especially those when the spinal spasms rumble all too painfully through my spinal chord, I feel a convulsive doubt as to whether man is really a two-legged god, as the late Professor Hegel assured me twenty-five years ago in Berlin. Last year, in the month of May, I had to take to my bed, and I did not rise from it since. Meanwhile, I shall admit it candidly, a great change has taken place in me. I am no more a god-like bi-pede; I am

no longer the "freest German after Goethe", as Runge used to call me in my healthier days. I am no longer the great Heathen No. ~~II~~, ~~which~~ whom they compared to Dionysus wreathed with vine-leaves, while my colleague No. I was ~~given~~ granted the title of a grand-ducal Weimarian Jupiter. I am no longer an exuberant, somewhat voluminous Hellene ~~who used to smile~~ serenely smiling down upon the melancholy Nazarenes. I am now nothing but a poor Jew who is hopelessly ill, an emaciated picture of misery, an unhappy man! That much about my state of health from an authentic source of suffering. As far as my financial conditions are concerned, I must admit that they are not ~~extraordinarily splendid~~ extremely brilliant. However, the correspondents of the above-mentioned daily papers over-estimate my poverty, and their assumptions are particularly erroneous when they express themselves to the effect that my position has ~~become worse~~ been impaired since the pension, which I had received from my late uncle Solomon Heine, was allegedly withdrawn or reduced. I do not wish to enter into the genesis of this error, thus avoiding discussions which are as painful for me as they would be boring for others. But to the error itself I must firmly take exception lest my silence, on the one hand be disquieting to my friends at home, and on the other, lest it ~~further a calumny which would fall~~ encourage aspersions to be cast upon the noblest soul that ~~rested~~ remained concealed in silent pride within a human breast. Despite my aversion for discussions of personal relations I do find it appropriate here to establish the following facts: the pension in question has by no means been withdrawn or reduced after the demise of my uncle Solomon Heine, of praiseworthy memory; it was always correctly paid to the last ~~farthing~~ penny. The relative in charge of

granted me, granted me)
these payments, has, since my illness grew worse, (additional
quarterly allowances which are paid out together with the pension
(thus the of the Latter.)
and almost doubling its amount. Furthermore, the same relative
has banished the gravest concern from my sickbed by making a
generous stipulation in favor of my cherished wife who loses
in me her earthly support. Numerous inquiries and offers for-
warded to me from my native country in affectionate, though fre-
quently incorrectly addressed letters should find an answer in
the above confessions. For the hearts which are bleeding to death
in my Fatherland, - greetings and tears!

Written in Paris (Rue déAmsterdam No. 40), April 15, 1849

Heinrich Heine

TO JULIUS CAMPE

April 30, 1849

Dearest Campe:

.....Enclosed you find a "Correction" which I sent to the "All-
gemeine Zeitung" as well as to the "Haude-und Spener'sche Zeitung".
If those papers, over which I have no control here, should not
have printed said"Correction", I beg you to ~~take care of its be-~~
see to it that it will be
~~ing~~ accepted elsewhere. I cannot afford a paid statement: I am
too poor. However, as you will ~~see~~ read in the "Correction", I had
too decline the glory of extreme neediness in order to avoid be-
ing compromised by awkward friends. You have probably noticed
by what clumsy manifestations I was threatened and why I tried
to reassure my friends in Germany with regard to my financial
position. But to you I can and must confess that it is still
very bad, and I wished your ingenious mind would occupy itself

as intensely with the improvement of my finances as it does with the spreading of my fame which unfortunately has not brought me sufficient profit to let me slumber away on my deathbed without cares. You have no idea what a terrible lot of money my illness consumes every day. And I do not even know how long this still may take! Never before have the gods, or rather the good Lord (as I am now used to saying), punished a human being more severely. Only two comforts are left to me, both sitting at my bedside and petting me: my French housewife and my German muse. I am playing around with a great many verses, and there are some which, when I hum them to myself, succeed among them, like magic airs, in taming my pains. After all, a poet is and always will be a fool!

Meanwhile fare well and keep your affection for your loyal friend

Heinrich Heine.

TO JULIUS CAMPE

Paris June 1, 1850

Dearest Campe:

.....Since I do not know the reasons for your continued delay in answering my most important inquiries, I should not condemn it too severely in advance (beforehand). But this much I know: your delaying has seriously damaged my literary interests and it may produce ruinous results which cannot be accounted for or repaired. At a time when the greatest revolutions happened in the external world and when considerable changes also took place in my inner world, my finished writings should have been speedily dispatched to the

public, not because they would otherwise have been less valuable to the public, but because now I cannot publish them any more out of my own free will without committing a sin against the Holy Ghost, a treason against my own convictions, in any case without being guilty of an ~~equivocal~~ ambiguous action. I have not turned into a pietist, but on the other hand I don't want to fool the good Lord. ~~A~~ I want to be as honest with God as I am with men, and thus ~~xIxhavexresolutelyxtornxout~~ everything that still existed from my former blasphemous period, the loveliest poisonous flowers were resolutely ~~torn out~~ uprooted, and in my physical blindness I may well have ~~had maybe~~ thrown many an innocent neighboring plant~~s~~ into the fire along with the others. When I heard it crackling in the flames, ~~I had~~ I must admit I had a strange feeling. I ~~was~~ did not quite ~~xxxxx~~ know any more whether I was a hero or a madman, and next to me I heard the ironically ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ comforting voice of some Mephistopheles whispering to me: "The good Lord will reward you for all this far better than Campe, and now you don't have to worry about the printing, or, even before the printing, haggle with Campe as though it were a pair of old trousers." Ah~~m~~ dearest Campe, sometimes I wish you would believe in God, ~~andxifxitxwerexon~~ if only for a day. Then your conscience would tell you how ungratefully you are treating me at a time when such horrible and un-heard-of misfortune has befallen me. - Write me your answer soon, before it is too late. If your neglect should be due to some political or commercial ~~considerations~~ hesitation misgivings, do tell me frankly, and I shall leave the necessary instructions in case I should depart this life before my collected edition goes to

press. Do not be afraid of the words "depart this life"; I am not using them in a pietistic sense; I do not mean to say that I wish to exchange this life for a heavenly one, for as close as I have come to God, I still feel rather far from heaven. You must not believe the current rumors according to which I have changed into a pious lamb. The religious revolution which has taken place within me is a purely spiritual one, more an act of my thinking than of blessed sensibilizing (sentimentalizing), and I am firmly convinced that my sick-bed has little share in it. The thoughts that came upon me they were vast, sublime and ~~awe-inspiring~~ gruesome, but they were thoughts, flashes of light, and not the phosphorous vapors arising from the piss of credulity. I am telling you this mainly to keep you from thinking that, in editing the collected works myself, I in any way might be compelled to make deletions. Quod scripsi, scripsi.

TO GEORG WEERTH

Paris, November 5, 1851

My dearest Herr Weerth,

You may have observed yourself that we think more often of those to whom in our negligence we owe a reply than of those whom we immediately write a scant letter of courtesy, thus trying to get rid of them as quickly as possible. So it also happens, that you, dear Weerth, become daily more deeply rooted in my memory while I constantly reproach myself with not having conveyed my thanks to you for your many kind lines, and especially for your last amusing letter. But I was always waiting for a healthy hour,

which never came, and today I finally decided to write anyway, I don't know why, since at this moment I am more than ever ailing and peevish. In the past few weeks my condition has grown much worse, and my mind is no longer frivolous enough to hope for improvement; being prepared for the worst, I am trying at least to pay my letter debts (arrears of correspondence). But even my other debts I am paying off conscientiously, and perhaps no poet ever died in such Philistine respectability as I shall when the Lord will call me unto Himself for Life Eternal, as the pious say. I am glad that you liked my preface;*) unfortunately I lacked the time as well as the right state of mind to express in it just what I wanted to convey, that is, that I am dying as a poet who does not needs ~~neither~~ religion nor philosophy and has no dealings with either. The poet is well versed in the symbolic idiom of religion and in the abstract rational lingo of philosophy, but neither the masters of religion nor those of philosophy will ever understand the poet whose language will always be Greek to them, as Latin is to Massmann. This linguistic ignorance led the masters of both schools to believe that I had become a bigot. They can understand only the rubbish-creatures whom they resemble, to quote Goethe whom I envy for his divine name. Speaking of Goethe, some time ago I re-read Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe" and derived a truly balmy, soothing pleasure from it. Do read those two volumes, in case you do not know them, and if you could perhaps dig up the third part of these "Conversations", which was published later, try to let me have it sometime. I like to relax my mind with this

*) actually the prologue to "Romancero"

kind of reading. I now read mostly travel books, and for two months I did not get away from Senegal and ~~Нидерл~~ Guinea. I suppose the boredom I feel in relation to the whites is responsible for my immersion into this black world, which is really very amusing. I get more pleasure out of those black Negro kings than out of our native fathers of the people, although they too know little about human rights and regard slavery as something natural.

I hope you will like my "Romancero", and especially my "Faust". God knows that I do not attach great importance to these books and that they would not have seen the light of day so soon if Campe had not applied the thumb-screws to me. I came by these publications as the maid comes to be with child, even with two children. Campe can explain to you what I mean by that. I am completely in the dark as to the fate of my books, for Campe, since he has everything he needs, does not keep me informed about them. ~~If~~ Should this letter ~~should~~ reach you in Hamburg, I may learn more about this from you, if you will give me the pleasure of writing to me.

I am so benumbed by opium, which I have taken repeatedly to dull my pains, that I hardly know what I am dictating. Besides, I had with me this morning a stupid devil of a compatriot, who exchanged ideas with me in a long and boring conversation. Through this exchange of ideas I may have kept his stupid ideas in my head, and perhaps I shall need several days to get rid of them completely and to hold on to some sensible thought. The man saw everything in grey on grey, which corresponds to his own color. He said that Germany was standing at the edge of an abyss:

well, in that case it is all the best that Germany does not happen to be a wild horse but a clever long-ears that does not get dizzy and can calmly trot along the edge of the abyss. -

Herr M Reinhardt, who is writing this letter for me, sends his kind regards.

Everything is quiet here, except that recently the prefect of police, a second Herod, planned a monstrous Murder of the Innocents against our harmless countrymen and frightened the poor little ones considerably. They all had to report to the police to prove their existence here, which is a difficult task for many who have neither an existence nor the means of existence. This Herod believed that there might be a political Savior among us, and unfortunately the denunciation originated with a person who is not lacking in education and who is actually a man of letters. - These are infernally disgusting and horrible things. I shudder at the thought that such persons were able to approach me for years, What a terrible thing is exile! Part of its saddest calamities is the fact that it gets us to with bad company which we cannot avoid unless we expose ourselves to a coalition of all blackguards. How pathetically painful, and yet wrathful, are Dante's laments on the same theme in the Divine Comedy!

Fare-well dear friend, and keep your cheerful affection for

Your cordially devoted

Heinrich Heine.

TO JULIUS CAMPE

Paris, August 12, 1852

.....I have to be prepared for everything, for if the tortures

I am suffering do not diminish, I'll have to close shop. My mental agitation (excitement) is a product of illness rather than of genius; thus I have recently, to assuage my pains, versified a number of dröll animal fables, one of which I may soon send to our crown-prince, the young Caesarovitch Campe, my future publisher, so that he can ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ memorize it. Raging with my poor head keeps ~~rolling~~ tossing pain, ~~xxix to and fro~~ during those horrible nights, and then the little bells on the old cap tinkle with merciless merriment.

HEINRICH HEINE

IDEAS AND REFLECTIONS

1. Personal Matters

I have the most peaceful disposition. All I want is: a modest cabin, a thatched roof but a good bed, good food, fresh milk and butter, flowers outside my window, a few beautiful trees at my door. And if the Good Lord wishes to complete my happiness, he will let me live to the joyful day when about six to seven of my enemies shall be hanged on those trees. With compassion in my heart I shall forgive them, before they die, for all the wrongs they have inflicted upon me as long as they lived. - Yes, one should forgive one's enemies, but not before they have been hanged.

*

I did not become naturalized for fear that then I would love France less, as one cools off towards one's mistress after being legally wedded to her in the mairie. I shall continue to live with France in a common law marriage.

*

God will forgive the foolish words I have spread about him, as I shall forgive my adversaries for the foolish things they have written against me, though they were as inferior spiritually to me as I am to you, O my God!

*

II. Religion and Philosophy

The earth is the huge rock to which mankind, the true Prometheus, is chained, being torn to pieces by the vulture of doubt. Mankind has stolen the light and is now suffering tortures for it.

*

Christianity appears as a comfort: those who enjoyed too much happiness in this life shall get indigestion from it in the next; those who had too little to eat shall subsequently find the best banquet prepared for them; all marks of earthly blows shall be stroked away by angels.

*

Jewish history is beautiful, but the young Jews harm the old ones who would otherwise be placed high above the Greeks and the Romans. I believe if there were no more Jews in the world and only one single specimen was known to exist somewhere, people would travel hundreds of hours to see him and to shake hands with him. But now they avoid us!

*

The history of the modern Jew is tragic, and if you write about this tragedy you will be ridiculed. This is the most tragic part of it.

*

Be tolerant altogether or not at all: Walk the good path or the evil one. To remain hesitating at the cross-roads, for that you are too weak. That was beyond the powers of a Hercules, and he had to make his choice in a hurry.

*

The baptismal certificate is the admission ticket to European culture.

*

Is the mission of the Jew concluded? I believe it will be once the secular savior comes: Industry, Labor, Joy. The secular savior will arrive on a railroad train, with the good German workman announcing his coming, and his path will be strewn with roses.

*

In Germany it is the theologians who are doing away with the Good Lord. <u>On n'est jamais trahi que par les siens</u>.

*

In their fight against religion, the philosophers destroyed paganism, but a new religion, Christianity, arose. This too shall be dealt with soon, but it will certainly be followed by another, and the philosophers shall have a new task which will in turn be futile. The world is a huge stable that can not be cleaned as easily as the Augean one, since, while it is being swept, the oxen stay inside and continue piling up new manure.

*

The glory of the world is always adequate to the glory of the spirit that beholds it. The good one finds his paradise here, the bad one already partakes of his hell on earth.

*

Saints like the Stylite have become an impossible phenomenon nowadays, since philanthropy would immediately place them in an insane asylum.

*

III. Art and Literature

A book takes its time, like a child. All books that have been hatched hastily within a few weeks make me slightly suspicious of their author. An honest woman does not deliver her child before the ninth month.

*

When the poet conceives his poems he feels as though, according to the Pythagorean doctrine of psychic transmigration, he had led an earlier existence in the most varied forms. His intuition acts like memory.

*

In art, form is everything, the material does not count. Staub asks the same price for making a tail-coat to measure, regardless of whether he has been supplied with the material or not. He claims that he expects to be paid for the style only, - the material he throws in free of charge.

*

They praise the playwright who has the gift of drawing tears. He shares this gift with the most miserable onion, with whom he likewise shares his popularity.

*

We were seeking material India and discovered America. Now we are seeking spiritual India - what shall we discover?

*

At the time of the Romantics, the flower was loved only for its fragrance, - in our time it is loved for the budding fruit. Hence the trend towards the practical, towards prose, towards the plain, home-baked product.

*

Lessing says: "If Raphael's hands had been cut off, he would still have been a painter." In like manner we could say: If Mr. X's head were cut off, he would still be a painter; he would continue painting without a head and without anyone noticing that he had no head.

*

Dante is the public prosecutor of poetry.

*

IV. State and Society

Society is always a republic: The individuals strive upwards and the collective masses push them back.

*

One has to know all of Germany: To know only a part is dangerous. This is the story of the tree whose leaves and fruits are reciprocal antidotes.

*

Servants who have no master are not necessarily free men. The servility is in their soul.

*

The German resembles the slave who obeys his master without chains, without a whip, just at a mere word, or even a glance. The servitude is within himself, within his soul; worse than material slavery is the 'spiritualised' kind. The Germans have to be freed from within, - from without nothing can help them.

*

The Germans are now developing their own nationality, but they started too late. When they finish with it, nationality will no longer exist, and they also will have to abandon their

nationality without having profited from it as the French or British did.

*

Political weather-vanes

They conjure up storms and rely upon their mobility, forgetting that their mobility will not help them once the gale has overthrown the tower on which they stand.

*

A Vision

The Place Louis XVI: A body, the head next to it. The physician,making experiments, attempting to put the two together again, shakes his head: "Impossible!" and leaves with a sigh. Courtiers try to fasten the dead head, but it always falls off.

When a king has lost his head there is no more help for him.

*

The closer people stood to Napoleon, the more they admired him. With other heroes the reverse is the rule.

*

They revile him, but still they show a certain respect: While they throw mud at him with their right hand, they hold their hat in their left.

*

The people of Paris have liberated the world without even accepting a tip for it.

*

The French are more self-assured in company for the very reason that they are down to earth and dreamless. The dreaming German may greet you with a gloomy grimace in the morning

because he dreamed that you had insulted him or that his grandfather had been kicked in the pants by your grandfather.

*

Among the minor prophets living here there are but a few Germans. Most of them come to France to prove that they are not prophets, even outside their own country.

*

The young girl said: "The gentleman must be very rich, since he is very ugly." The public judges in the same manner: "The man must be very learned, since he is very boring." Hence the success of many Germans in Paris.

*

Czar Nicholas is, so to speak, a hereditary dictator. He is completely indifferent to any established values of tradition or history.

*

V. Women, Love, Marriage

In youth love is more tempestuous, but not as strong, as omnipotent as afterwards. It is also not as lasting in youth, for then the body is in love too, - it craves for physical revelations in love, and it lends to the soul the impetuousness of its blood, the abundance of its sinewy power. Later, when these have diminished, when the blood trickles more slowly through the veins, when the body is no longer in love, the soul alone, the immortal soul, turns to love. And since eternity is at its disposal, since it is not as frail as the body, it takes its time and begins to love less tempestuously but more lastingly, with more abysmal depth, with more superhuman power.

That Xanthippe's husband became such a great philosopher is a remarkable fact. To be still able to think amidst all this bickering! But writing became impossible: Socrates has not left a single book to posterity.

*

Anyone who gets married is like the Doge who is wed to the Adriatic Sea: He does not know what he will find in what he marries: treasures, monsters, unknown tempests.

*

VI. Assorted Ideas

Sages think up new thoughts and fools spread them.

*

There are exalted spirits, unimpressed by material splendor, to whom the throne means nothing but a chair covered with red velvet. There are lowly spirits to whom every ideal seems insignificant and to whom the pillory is nothing but an iron collar. They do not shy away from an iron neck-tie if that is the only means for them to assemble an audience. The audience is awed by their audacity, which they have acquired through the routine of disgracing themselves.

*

Time modifies our convictions by constantly compelling us to observe the opposite extreme. The garde municipal, who supervises the Can-can, in the end finds it not so indecent any more and perhaps even wishes to join the dance. The Protestant, after a long polemic with Catholicism, does not consider it nearly as gruesome as before, and he might even be inclined to hear a mass.

*

We have no understanding of ruins until we have become ruins ourselves.

*

There are people who believe they know all about a bird, since they have seen the egg whence it came forth.

*

When vice becomes magnificent, its effect is less shocking. The English lady,who usually felt a solemn dread of naked statues, was much less upset at the sight of a gigantic Hercules: "With such dimensions I don't find the thing quite so indecent."

*

X is one of those angels whom Jacob saw in his dream and who needed a ladder to descend from heaven to earth: The angelic wings are not strong enough.

*

The diamond might justifiably be proud if a poet compared it to a human heart.

*

VII. Pictures and Brush-strokes

A blind charlatan in the marketplace sells eye drops which prevent blindness. He himself did not believe in them and became blind. Tragic portrayal of blindness.

*

The Englishman who always takes his "Miss" (Engl. in original) to the beach and makes her look at naked men in order to immunize her against sensuality.

*

A sweet-pickled, squashed face with timidly petty eyes.

*

A smiling gait.

*

He was sparkling with dullness.

*

A face like a fetus in alcohol.

*

*

She wrote anonymous letters signed "A fair soul."

*

He praised himself so highly that the price of incense candles began to rise.

*

He made the greatest progress in ignorance.

*

Less hardened than human hearts whom I begged in vain, the rocks burst open and the soothing well poured forth.

*

HEINRICH HEINE

NEW POEMS

DEGENERATION

Is Nature too deteriorating
And imitating human flaws?
It seems, all plants and beasts created
Are lying in the common cause.

I do not trust the lily's chasteness.
It will yield soon, without defense,
To the first butterfly who flutters
Off with its precious innocence.

The modest little violet also
Does hardly live up to its name.
It wears its perfume to allure us,
And secretly it craves for fame.

I doubt that there is any feeling
In nightingales who thrill our ears.
They sob and trill, exaggerating
By sheer routine, so it appears.

From our globe the truth has vanished,
And loyalty there is no more.
The dogs still wag: they're still as smelly,
But not as loyal as before.

HEINRICH HEINE

BUCH DER LIEDER

Ein Juengling liebt ein Maedchen,
Die hat einen andern erwaehlt;
Der andre liebt eine andre
Und hat sich mit dieser vermaehlt.

Das Maedchen heiratet aus Aerger
Den ersten besten Mann,
Der ihr in den Weg gelaufen;
Der Juengling ist uebel dran.

Es ist eine alte Geschichte,
Doch bleibt sie immer neu;
Und wem sie just passieret,
Dem bricht das Herz entzwei.

A youth is in love with a maiden
Who favors another instead;
The other's in love with another,
And her he has chosen to wed.

The maiden resentfully marries
Some man just come across
Who happened to be the first come;
The youth can't get over his loss.

This is an old story, familiar
To all, yet always new;
And if you are its hero,
It breaks your heart in two.

HEINRICH HEINE

NEUE GEDICHTE

Entartung

Hat die Natur sich auch verschlechtert
Und nimmt sie Menschenfehler an?
Mich duenkt, die Pflanzen und die Tiere,
Sie luegen jetzt wie jedermann.

Ich glaub nicht an der Lilie Keuschheit.
Es buhlt mit ihr der bunte Geck,
Der Schmetterling; der kuesst und flattert
Am End mit ihrer Unschuld weg.

Von der Bescheidenheit der Veilchen
Halt ich nicht viel. Die kleine Blum,
Mit den koketten Dueften lockt sie,
Und heimlich duerstet sie nach Ruhm.

Ich zweifle auch, ob sie empfindet,
Die Nachtigall, das, was sie singt;
Sie uebertreibt und schluchzt und trillert
Nur aus Routine, wie mich duenkt.

Die Wahrheit schwindet von der Erde,
Auch mit der Treu ist es vorbei.
Die Hunde wedeln noch und stinken
Wie sonst, doch sind sie nicht mehr treu.

HEINRICH HEINE

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HEINRICH HEINE

NEUE GEDICHTE

Wie schaendlich du gehandelt,
Ich hab es den Menschen verhehlet,
Und bin hinausgefahren aufs Meer
Und hab es den Fischen erzaehlet.

Ich lass dir den guten Namen
Nur auf dem festen Lande;
Aber im ganzen Ozean
Weiss man von deiner Schande.

How shamefully you acted,
I have from all humans concealed it;
I took a boat far out on the sea,
And there to the fish I revealed it.

On solid land I permit you
To keep your honest name;
But in the entire ocean
They know about your shame.

HEINRICH HEINE

BUCH DER LIEDER

LYRISCHES INTERMEZZO

Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen
Mach ich die kleinen Lieder:
Die heben ihr klingend Gefieder
Und flattern nach ihrem Herzen.

Sie fanden den Weg zur Trauten,
Doch kommen sie wieder und klagen,
Und klagen, und wollen nicht sagen,
Was sie im Herzen schauten.

My little songs arise
From my great sufferings:
They flutter with sonorous wings
To take her heart by surprise.

They did find her heart open wide,
And yet they return and lament,
And lamenting they will not consent
To say what they saw inside.

HEINRICH HEINE

From NEW POEMS

Es war ein alter Koenig,
Sein Herz war schwer, sein Haupt war grau;
Der arme alte Koenig,
Er nahm eine junge Frau.

Es war ein schoener Page,
Blond war sein Haupt, leicht war sein Sinn;
Er trug die seidne Schleppe
Der jungen Koenigin.

Kennst du das alte Liedchen?
Es klingt so suess, es klingt so trueb!
Sie mussten beide sterben,
Sie hatten sich viel zu lieb.

There was an aged monarch;
His heart was heavy, his head was grey;
He took, the poor old monarch,
A fair young wife one day.

There was a page so handsome:
Blond were his locks, his senses keen;
Her silken train he carried,
Attending the young queen.

You know this ancient ballad,
So sweet to sing, so sad to hear!
They both were doomed to perish:
Their love proved much too dear.

HEINRICH HEINE

From NEW POEMS

PSYCHE

In der Hand die kleine Lampe,
In der Brust die grosse Glut,
Schleichet Psyche zu dem Lager,
Wo der holde Schlaefer ruht.

Sie erroetet und sie zittert,
Wie sie seine Schonheit sieht -
Der enthuellte Gott der Liebe,
Er erwacht und er entflieht.

Achtzehnhundertjaehr'ge Busse!
Und die Aermste stirbt beinah!
Psyche fastet und kasteit sich,
Weil sie Amorn nackend sah.

In her hand the little oil-lamp,
The great blaze within her breasts,
Psyche steals upon the bedstead
Where the lovely sleeper rests.

And she blushes and she trembles
At the beauty that she sees;
There, the God of Love, uncovered,
Is awakened, and he flees.

Eighteenhundred years of penance
Almost kill the little prude!
Psyche fasts, her flesh she chastens,
Since she saw Love in the nude.

HEINRICH HEINE

ROMANCERO

Das Gluecck ist eine leichte Dirne
Und weilt nicht gern am selben Ort;
Sie streicht das Haar dir von der Stirne
Und kuesst dich rasch und flattert fort.

Frau Ungluecck hat im Gegenteile
Dich liebefest ans Herz gedrueckt;
Sie sagt, sie habe keine Eile,
Setzt sich zu dir ans Bett und strickt.

Miss Fortune, loose girl of the gutters,
Cannot be lured by bed and board;
She strokes your hair and off she flutters;
One last swift kiss is your reward.

Mrs. Misfortune's love is steady:
She hugs you tight and will not quit,
For, as she says, she's always ready
To sit beside your bed and knit.

HEINRICH HEINE

BUCH DER LIEDER

LYRISCHES INTERMEZZO

Ein Juengling liebt ein Maedchen,
Die hat einen andern erwaehlt;
Der andre liebt eine andre
Und hat sich mit dieser vermaehlt.

Das Maedchen heiratet aus Aerger
Den ersten besten Mann,
Der ihr in den Weg gelaufen;
Der Juengling ist uebel dran.

Es ist eine alte Geschichte,
Doch bleibt sie immer neu;
Und wem sie just passieret,
Dem bricht das Herz entzwei.

IN EXILE

I had a homeland once where all was fair,
Where oaks grew tall,
Where violets were gently beckoning.
I dreamed it all.

Its kiss was German, German was its tongue
(I still recall
The sound) that spoke the words: "Ich liebe dich!"
I dreamed it all.

Lola

HEINRICH HEINE

NEUE GEDICHTE

IN DER FREMDE

Ich hatte einst ein schoenes Vaterland.
Der Eichenbaum
Wuchs dort so hoch, die Veilchen nickten sanft.
Es war ein Traum.

Das kuesste mich auf deutsch und sprach auf deutsch
(Man glaubt es kaum
Wie gut es klang) das Wort: "Ich liebe dich!"
Es war ein Traum.

IN EXILE

I had a homeland once where all was fair,
Where oaks grew tall,
Where violets were gently beckoning.
I dreamed it all.

Its kiss was German, German was its tongue
(I still recall
The sound) that spoke the words: "Ich liebe dich!"
I dreamed it all.

TO THE SUPREME JUSTICE WITHIN:

Do be fair and let me free!
I am fully grown.
Transfer your authority
to another throne!

Still you stare confusingly
at my daily deeds.
Won't you stop accusing me
of voracious needs?

Though I beg to disagree,
I must let you do
and accept the penalty
for appointing you.

THIS IS NOT LOVE

This is not Love. Love is a greater thing.
It does not feed on dreams, nor is it blind.
Sustained by our daily offering,
it is the fruit of faith and truth combined.
It does not grope for an archaic mask
to seek its own elusive counterpart
in self-deceit. Love is concrete, a task
proportioned to the measure of the heart.

Yet I, who served Love well and who had grown
to fuller freedom through its mastery,
am now a slave to this, a thing unknown,
forced to efface my own identity.
And Love is impotent to break the spell,
since I denied it for the sake of hell.

One Blessing had I than the rest
So larger to my Eyes
That I stopped gauging - satisfied -
For this enchanted size -

It was the limit of my Dream -
The focus of my Prayer -
A perfect paralyzing Bliss -
Contented as Despair -

I knew no more of Want - or Cold -
Phantasms both become
For this new Value in the Soul -
Supremest Earthly Sum -

The Heaven below the Heaven above -
Obscured with ruddier Blue -
Life's Latitudes leant over - full -
The Judgment perished - too -

Why Bliss so scantily disburse -
Why Paradise defer -
Why Floods be served to Us - in Bowls -
I speculate no more -

Emily Dickinson

Ein Segen wurde mir zuteil,
Der war so uebergross,
Dass ich am Ausmass selbst - entzueckt -
Zu messen ganz vergass -

Es war der Brennpunkt des Gebets -
Des Traumes Grenzbereich -
Vollkommen - laehmend - Seligkeit -
Gefasst - Verzweiflung gleich -

Ich kannte Not nicht mehr - noch Frost -
Sie wurden Spuk und Schein
Vor diesem neuen Seelenwert -
Hoechstzahl im Irdischsein -

Der untere Himmel - kraeftig blau -
Verbarg des oberen Licht -
Das Leben dehnte sich - erfuellt -
Und tot war das Gericht -

Warum wird Glueck so rationiert -
Das Paradies vertagt -
Die Flut in Schuesseln uns serviert -
Dem spuer ich nicht mehr nach -

Lola Gruenthal

HEINRICH HEINE

From NEW POEMS

PSYCHE

In der Hand die kleine Lampe,
In der Brust die grosse Glut,
Schleichet Psyche zu dem Lager,
Wo der holde Schlaefer ruht.

Sie erroetet und sie zittert,
Wie sie seine Schonheit sieht -
Der enthuellte Gott der Liebe,
Er erwacht und er entflieht.

Achtzehnhundertjaehr'ge Busse!
Und die Aermste stirbt beinah!
Psyche fastet und kasteit sich,
Weil sie Amorn nackend sah.

In her hand the little oil-lamp,
The great blaze within her breasts,
Psyche steals upon the bedstead
Where the lovely sleeper rests.

And she blushes and she trembles
At the beauty that she sees;
There, the God of Love, uncovered,
Is awakened, and he flees.

Eighteenhundred years of penance
Almost kill the little prude!
Psyche fasts, her flesh she chastens,
Since she saw Love in the nude.

HEINRICH HEINE

From NEW POEMS

DOKTRIN

Schlage die Trommel und fuerchte dich nicht,
Und kuesse die Marketenderin!
Das ist die ganze Wissenschaft,
Das ist der Bucher tiefster Sinn.

Trommle die Leute aus dem Schlaf,
Trommle Reveille mit Jugendkraft,
Marschiere trommelnd immer voran,
Das ist die ganze Wissenschaft.

Das ist die Hegelsche Philosophie,
Das ist der Bucher tiefster Sinn!
Ich hab sie begriffen, weil ich gescheit
Und weil ich ein guter Tambour bin.

DOCTRINE

Beat on the drum and be without fear,
And kiss the canteen-girl passing by!
This is all the learning you need,
This is the wisdom that books imply.

Drum the good people out of their sleep;
Reveille, drum it with vigorous speed, -
Always keep drumming and marching ahead:
This is all the learning you need.

This is Hegelian philosophy,
This is the wisdom that books imply!
I have grasped it because I'm bright
And because I am a good drummer-boy.

HEINRICH HEINE

From BOOK OF SONGS

HOMECOMING

Death is the cooling breath of night;
Life is the sultriness of day.
Now darkness falls, I'm drowsy;
Day made me weary of light.

Over my bed arises a tree:
In there sings the young nightingale;
Through dreams I hear her singing
Of love unendingly.

HEINRICH HEINE

From ROMANCERO

LAZARUS

WAY OF THE WORLD

Who has much will find that soon
He shall get a great deal more.
Who has little shall have less
Even than he had before.

But if you have nothing, then
Better start to dig your grave -
For the right to live, you lout,
Have none but the ones who have.

HEINRICH HEINE

From BOOK OF SONGS

LYRICAL INTERMEZZO

From my great sufferings
My little songs arise:
They fly to her heart in disguise,
Unfolding their sonorous wings.

They did find her heart open wide,
Yet they have returned to lament,
And lamenting they will not consent
To say what they saw inside.

HEINRICH HEINE

SEA-SICKNESS

Tr. by Vernon Watkins

The grey afternoon clouds
Droop, descending upon the sea
Which rises darkly to meet them,
And between them races the ship.

Sea-sick, I sit, still, at the mast
And make meditations about myself,
Very old, ashen-grey meditations,
Which already Father Lot made
When he had enjoyed too much bounty
And found himself so ill afterwards.
Then, now and again, I think of old stories,
How cross-carrying pilgrims of earlier time
Believing, kissed, on the storm-tossed voyage,
The Virgin's image, rich in comfort,
How knights brought low in this sea-emergency
Pressed the dear glove of their cherished lady
Against their lips and were likewise comforted-
I, however, sit and chew disagreeably
An old herring, the salty comforter
In cat-crises and dog's distemper.

Meanwhile the ship contends
With the wild, upheaving tide;
It lands back now like a rearing war-horse
On the stern, so that the rudder cracks,
Now plunges down again headlong
Into the chasm of moaning water,
Then again, as if carelessly love-weary,
It hovers, thinking to rest
On the black bosom of the giant wave
Which mightily rages on,
And suddenly, a confused sea-cataract,
Crashes into white curls
And covers my self with foam.

This rolling and hovering and pitching
Is unendurable!
Vainly my eye peers out, seeking
The German coast. But ah! only water,
And once again water, stirred up water!

As the traveller in Winter longs at evening
For a hot cup of tea inside him,
So my heart now longs for you,
My German Fatherland.
Though your precious earth may always be covered
With insanity, hussars, bad verses,
And tepidly thin little treatises;
Although your zebras may always
Feed on roses instead of thistles,
Though your aristocratic apes may always
Swagger in grand, idle clothes refinedly,
And think themselves better than all the other
Heavily plodding low-browed cattle;
Though your council of snails may always
Consider itself immortal
Because it crawls on so slowly,
And though it may daily collect its votes
On whether the cheese belongs to the maggots,
And deliberate a long time
On how to perfect Egyptian sheep
So that their wool would grow better
And the shepherd could shear ~~kk~~ them like others
Without distinction -
Though folly and injustice may always
Cover you whole, O Germany;
Nevertheless I long for you,
For you are at least firm land.

HEINRICH HEINE

NEUE GEDICHTE

HELENA

Du hast mich beschworen aus dem Grab
Durch deinen Zauberwillen,
Belebtest mich mit Wollustglut -
Jetzt kannst du die Glut nicht stillen.

Press deinen Mund an meinen Mund,
Der Menschen Odem ist goettlich!
Ich trinke deine Seele aus,
Die Toten sind unersaettlich.

You conjured me up from the depth of the grave:
Your magic power willed it,
Filled me with life and lust aglow -
The glow, you have not stilled it.

Come, press your lips against my lips:
Man's breath is divinely created!
I'll drink your soul till it is drained -
The dead will never be sated.

HEINRICH HEINE

From ROMANCERO

LAZARUS

WELTLAUF

Hat man viel, so wird man bald
Noch viel mehr dazu bekommen.
Wer nur wenig hat, dem wird
Auch das wenige genommen.

Wenn du aber gar nichts hast,
Ach, so lasse dich begraben -
Denn ein Recht zum Leben, Lump,
Haben nur, die etwas haben.

WAY OF THE WORLD

Who has much will find that soon
He shall get a great deal more.
Who has little shall have less
Even than he had before.

But if you have nothing, then
Better start to dig your grave -
For the right to live, you lout,
Have but those alone who have.

HEINRICH HEINE

BUCH DER LIEDER

LYRISCHES INTERMEZZO

Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen
Mach ich die kleinen Lieder:
Die heben ihr klingend Gefieder
Und flattern nach ihrem Herzen.

Sie fanden den Weg zur Trauten,
Doch kommen sie wieder und klagen,
Und klagen, und wollen nicht sagen,
Was sie im Herzen schauten.

My little songs arise
From my great sufferings:
They flutter with sonorous wings
To take her heart by surprise.

They did find her heart open wide,
And yet they return to lament,
And lamenting they will not consent
To say what they saw inside.

HEINRICH HEINE

NEUE GEDICHTE

Wie schaendlich du gehandelt,
Ich hab es den Menschen verhehlet,
Und bin hinausgefahren aufs Meer
Und hab es den Fischen erzaehlet.

Ich lass dir den guten Namen
Nur auf dem festen Lande;
Aber im ganzen Ozean
Weiss man von deiner Schande.

From Cuman Gulf

How shamefully you acted, 40/
I have from all humans concealed it;
I took a boat far out ~~on the~~ sea,
And there to the fish I revealed it.

On solid land I permit you
To keep your honest name;
But in the entire ocean
They know about your shame.

HEINRICH HEINE

LAST POEMS

WO?

Wo wird einst des Wandermueden
Letzte Ruhestaette sein?
Unter Palmen in dem Sueden?
Unter Linden an dem Rhein?

Werd ich wo in einer Wueste
Eingescharrt von fremder Hand?
Oder ruh ich an der Kueste
Eines Meeres in dem Sand?

Immerhin! Mich wird umgeben
Gotteshimmel, dort wie hier,
Und als Totenlampen schweben
Nachts die Sterne ueber mir.

WHERE?

Where shall I, from wandering weary,
For my final rest recline?
Under palms in southern regions?
Under lindens on the Rhine?

Will my grave be dug by strangers
Somewhere in a desert land?
Or shall I be near an ocean,
Resting on a shore of sand?

Anyway! I'll need no cover
But God's sky around me spread,
And as lamps the stars will hover,
Lit up nightly for the dead.

DOCTOR FAUST

A Dance Poem

Act I

A study: large, vaulted, Gothic in style. Dim lighting. Along the walls there are book-cases, astrological and alchemistic paraphernalia (earthly and celestial globe, constellations, retorts and bizarrely shaped glasses), anatomical preparations (human and animal skeletons), and other requisites of necromancy.

A clock strikes midnight. At a table covered with books and scientific instruments w the Doctor Faust is seated in a ~~dwa~~ high armchair, meditating. He is dressed in the old-German scholar's robe of the sixteenth century. After a while he rises and staggers towards a book-case where a large folio volume is attached with a chain. He opens the lock and drags the unchained book (the so-called "Power over Hell") to his table. His attitude and his entire conduct are characterized by a combination of clumsy magesterial mannerisms and defiant ~~dwarfish~~ professional pride. After lighting some candles and drawing several magic circles on the floor with a sword, he opens the big volume. His gestures reveal the secret horrors of the incantation. The room darkens. There is lightning and thunder. The ground opens with a crackle, and out of it rises a flaming-red tiger. Faust does not appear to be in the least frightened by this sight. He scornfully approaches the fiery beast and seems to order it to vanish immediately. Presently, it sinks back into the ground. Faust resumes his incantations.

Again there is terrible thunder and lightning, and ~~from~~ out of the opening floor an enormous snake shoots up, its body writhing in the most threatening coils, its tongue hissing fire and flames. This also meets with the doctor's contempt. He shrugs his shoulders, laughs and mocks the spirit of hell for not being able to appear in a far more dangerous form. Finally, the snake also creeps back into the earth. Faust continues his incantations with increasing fervour. Now the darkness suddenly vanishes, the room is brightened by ~~xxxxxx~~ countless lights, instead of thunder the lovelist dance music is heard, and from the open floor, as fron a flower basket, rises a ballet dancer dressed in the ordinary costume of gauze and tights and fluttering around in the most banal pirouettes.

At first Faust is surprised to find that the conjured devil Mephistopheles could not assume a more terrifying shape than that of a ballet dancer but finally he cannot help being attracted by the girl's smiling, graceful appearance, and he bows to her ceremoniously. Mephistopheles, or rather Mephistophela, as we now have to call this devilry converted into femininity, returns the doctor's bow in parody style and capers around him in the familiar coquettish manner. She holds a magic wand in her hand, and all the objects ~~and everything~~ in the room that she touches with it ~~is~~ are most delightfully transformed without, however, completely losing their original shape. For instance, the dark constellations now ~~become~~ ~~colorful~~ glow in luminous colors; the monsters preserved in glasses come alive in the form of beautiful birds; the stuffed owls carry girandoles in their beaks; the walls begin to sprout the

most precious golden utensils, Venetian mirrors, antique bas-reliefs and works of art. The entire effect is ~~exhaxk~~ chaotic, ghostly, and yet brilliantly beautiful: a monstrous arabesque. The develish beauty seems to propose a pact of friendship to Faust, but he is not yet willing to sign the parchment, to accept the terrible bargain which she offers him. He requests her to introduce him to the other powers of hell, and presently the princes of darkness emerge from the ground. They are monsters with grimacing animal faces, fantastic combinations of oddness and horror, most of them with crowns on their heads and scepters in their paws. Faust is introduced to them by Mephistophela in a presentation which adheres to the strictest court etiquette. Waddling around ceremoniously, the majesties of the underworld begin their clumsy round-dance. But as Mephistophela touches them with her magic wand, their hideous hoods fall off and they are also transformed into a group of graceful ballerinas, fluttering around in gauze and tights and carrying garlands of flowers. Faust appreciates this metamorphosis, but he does not seem to find any of the pretty lady devils quite to his taste. Noticing this, Mephistophela waves her wand again, and in a mirror projected onto the wall there appears the image of a beautiful woman in court dress with a ducal crown on her head. At the sight of her Faust is transported with admiration and delight. He approaches the lovely image with all signs of longing and affection. But the woman in the mirror, who now moves like a live creature, rejects his approaches and haughtily turns up only her nose. Imploringly he kneels down before her, but she repeats

her contemptuous gestures even more insultingly.

The poor doctor now turns to Mephistophela, bessecching her with his eyes. To this she reacts with a cunning shrug of her shoulders, and then she waves her magic wand. A hideous monkey rises up to the hips from the ground, but upon a sign of Mephistophela, who angrily shakes her head, he promptly sinks back into the floor to leap out a moment later as a handsome, slender ballet dancer executing the most conventional steps. The dancer approaches the mirror image, courting it with lewd gestures and with an expression of bland self-assurance, while the lovely woman smiles at him most graciously. She extends her arms towards him with love-sick longing and exhausts herself in demonstrations of affection. Seeing this, Faust is overcome by a rage of despair, but Mephistophela takes pity upon him, and with her magic wand she touches the fortunate dancer who immediately returns into the ground, having changed back into a monkey and leaving his cast-off dancer's costume on the floor. Now Mephistophela again presents the parchment to Faust, and ~~he~~ unhesitating he opens a vein in his arm and signs the contract with his blood, thus renouncing his heavenly salvation for the sake of temporal earthly pleasures. He discards the suber, respectable scholar's gown and dons the wickedly gaudy finery which the vanished dancer left behind. In this slow and awkward change of costume he is assisted by Hell's ~~frvmix~~ frivolous corps de ballet.

Now Mephistophela instructs Faust in the art of dancing, showing him all the tricks and sleights of hand, or rather sleights

of foot, employed in the trade. The most amusing effects and contrasts are created by the scholar's awkwardness and stiffness as he attempts to imitate the elegant ease of the dancers. The develish chorus girls want to assist him further by trying, each in her own way, to illustrate the method with an example: the poor doctor is being hurled from one to the other, and each in turn whirls around with him. They pull him back and forth, but finally the power of love combined with that of the magic wand succeeds in mxing making his disobedient limbs more flexible, and thus the apprentice of choreography turns into an accomplished master. He dances a brilliant pas de deux with Mephistophela and also delights his other art companions by flying around with them and executing the most bizarre figures. After having achieved all this virtuosity, he even dares to appear as a dancer before the image of the lovely woman in the mirror who now rewards his dancing passion with gestures of equally passionate love. Kaxk Faust dances in a trance-like state of spiritual intoxication, becoming more and more absorbed. But Mephistophela tears him away from the image, making it disappear with a movement of the magic wand, and the advanced dancing lesson of the classical school continues.

Act II

A wide square in front of a castle which is visible on the right. Upon a ramp, seated in high chairs of state, the Duke and the Duchess, surrounded by courtiers, knights and ladies. The Duke is a stiff elderly gentleman, the Duchess a voluptuous young woman, a living counterpart of the image presented by the magic mirror in Act I. It is noticeable that she wears a golden slipper on her left foot.

The scene is magnificently decorated for a court festival. A pastoral play is being performed in the stalest roccoco fashion: graceful dullness and galant innocence. These mawkishly affected Arcadian capers are suddenly interrupted and dispersed by the arrival of Faust and Mephistophela who make their triumphal entrance in dance costumes, accompanied by their demonic corps de ballet and announced by jubilant fanfares. Faust and Mephistophela pay their leaping ~~homages~~ respects to the ducal couple, but as Faust and the Duchess ~~xxxxxx~~ see each other face to face they are both startled as though by happy memories: they recognize each other and exchange tender glances. The Duke seems to accept Mephistophela's ~~reverence~~ homage with particularly graciously ~~and~~ benevolence. ~~ently.~~ In an impetuous pas de deux which the latter now dances with Faust, they both keep their eyes on the ducal couple, and soon as the devilish dancers take over, Mephistophela begins to make love to the Duke while Faust offers his tender advances to the Duchess; the exuberant passion of the latter two is parodied as it were, by Mephistophela who counters the Duke's angular and starched mannerisms with a sort of ironical coyness.

After a while the Duke turns to Faust and asks him to prove his black magic by ~~conjuring~~ letting him see the late King David as he was dancing before the Ark of the Covenant. Upon such superior request, Faust takes the magic wand from Mephistophela and waves it in incantation; the ground opens, and ~~out~~ the desired group steps out of it: on a chariot drawn by Levites stands the Ark with King David dancing before it in ~~farcical~~ farcical gaiety, fantastically decked out like a king of cards. The Holy Ark is followed by ~~the~~ lance-bearing royal guards who ~~are~~ skipping from side to side; and swaying ~~their lances in their hands;~~ they are dressed up as Polish Jews in trailing black silk caftans with high fur caps on their bearded wobbly heads. After these grotesque creatures have finished their procession they again disappear in the ground, accompanied by thundering applause.

Once more Faust and Mephistophela leap into a brilliant pas de deux, during which ~~he~~ the one again entices the Duchess, ~~she~~ the other the Duke, with amorous gestures until finally the noble couple can no longer resist and joins the dances of the other two. ~~A~~ In the dramatic quadrille which ensues Faust tries to ensnare the Duchess ~~deeper~~ ever more deeply. He has noticed a devil's mark on her neck, and having thus discovered that she is a sorceress, he gives her a rendez-vous for the next witches' sabbat. She is frightened and tries to deny her origin, but Faust points to her golden slipper as a sign of distinction worn by the Domina, the noblest bride of Satan. Abashed, she accepts the rendez-vous. At the same time, the Duke and Mephistophela again enact their parody; when this is over, the four leading characters

retire in intimate conversation, and the demonic dancers continue the dance.

Upon the request of the Duke for another proof of his sorcery, Faust seizes the magic wand and touches the wildly whirling dancers. They immediately change back into the monsters which we saw in Act I; from the graceful round dance they revert to the clumsiest baroque movements and finally disappear among sparkling flames in the opening ground. Enthusiastic applause follows, and Faust and Mephistophela gratefully bow to their illustrous hosts and the honorable public.

But with each new feat of magic the mad desire grows stronger; Rushing ahead ruthlessly, the four leading figures return to the dance floor, and in the newly formed quadrille their passion ~~turns into shameless lack of restraint~~ becomes ever more unrestrained: Faust falls on his knees before the Duchess who in turn demonstrates her love in equally comprimising pantomime. The old Duke, like a lascivious faun, kneels before Mephistophela who pretends to be thrilled with rapture; - but as he happens to turn around, ~~xxxix~~ and sees his wife and Faust in their amorous postures, he jumps up in a rage, draws his sword and attempts to stab the impudent necromancer. The latter quickly grasps the magic wand and ~~xithxmaxtouchxofxitxmakes~~ touches the Duke whose head promptly sprouts an enormous pair of antlers by the ends of which the Duchess tries to hold him back. There is great consternation among the courtiers who draw their swords, ready to attack Faust and Mephistophela. But Faust again wields his wand; behind the scene there is a sound of martial trumpets,

and we see a host of knights appear in full armor, ~~drawn up~~ arrayed for battle. While the courtiers turn against those in self-defense, Faust and Mephistophela escape through the air on two black horses which have risen out of the ground. As they disappear, the host of armed knights also fades away like a fantasmagoria.

Act III

Nocturnal witches' sabbat on a wide mountain top; trees on both sides, decorated with bizarre lamps which illuminate the scene; in the center, a stone pedestal, like an altar, and upon it stands a big black ram with a black human face, a burning candle between his horns. In the background, a range of mountains scaled on different levels which form a sort of amphi-theater; on its colossal steps the nobility of the underworld is seated, an audience composed of those princes of hell whom we have seen in the previous acts and who now appear even more gigantic. Perched on the trees are musicians with bird-faces, holding bizarre string and wind instruments. The scene is already filled with lively groups of dancers in costumes reminiscent of various distant countries and ages, giving the whole assembly the appearance of a fancy-dress ball, the more so because of the presence of many masked and hooded figures. However baroque, bizarre and fantastic some of these may be, they should not offend the esthetic taste, and the impression of a nightmarish monstrosity should be relieved or compensated by the splendor of a make-believe world and a sense of genuine terror. Now and then a couple steps up to the ram's altar, a man and a woman, each carrying a black torch; they bow to the back of the ram, kneel down before it and render their homage with a kiss. Meanwhile new guests arrive, riding through the air on broomsticks, dungforks, cooking spoons as well as on wolves and cats. The new arrivals find their

paramours already waiting for them. After a joyful reception they join the dancing groups. Her Highness the Duchess also appears riding through the air on an enormous bat; her dress is as revealing as possible, and she wears the golden slipper on her right foot. She seems to be looking for someone impatiently. Finally she discovers the object of her longing, namely Faust who arrives with Mephistophela to join the feast. They are both carried through the air by black horses. He is dressed in the shiny costume of a ~~night~~ knight, and his companion is attired with the chastely fitting Amazone's gown of ~~a~~ a noble German ~~damsel~~ damsel. Faust and the Duchess fall into each other's arms and express their overflowing passion in the most ecstatic dances. Meanwhile Mephistophela has also found her expected beau, a skinny squire wearing a black Spanish cloak and a baret with a blood-red cock's feather on it. While Faust and the Duchess dance through the entire gamut of genuine passion, the pas de deux performed by Mephistophela and her partner, in contrast, is only a wanton exhibition of ~~g~~ courtship, of affected tenderness, of self-ridiculing lasciviousness. Finally, all four proceed with black torches to pay homage to the ram in the ~~same~~ aforementioned manner ~~as described before,~~ and then they join the rest of the mixed crowd in the round dance which rages around the altar. This dance is characterized by the peculiar aspect of the dancers' turning their backs to each other instead of their faces which are directed to the outside.

Faust and the Duchess slip out of the circle and, reaching the climax of their loving frenzy, disappear behind the trees

on the right. The round is completed and new guests step up to the altar to celebrate the Adoration of the Ram; there are crowned heads among them, even high dignitaries of the church in their sacramental robes.

The foreground of the stage is now occupied by a procession of monks and nuns, and their extravagant Polka gambols greatly amuse the demonic spectators on the mountain tops who applaud with extended paws. Faust reappears with the Duchess, but now his features are drawn and haggard; annoyed at the insistence of her voluptuous caresses, he turns away from the woman, giving plain evidence of his feelings of weariness and disgust. In vain, the Duchess falls upon her knees to implore him; he rejects her with an expression of horror. At this moment, three moors appear in golden uniforms embroidered with black rams. They summon the Duchess to the throne of Satan, their lord and master, and since she does not immediately obey, they drag her away by force. In the background, we see the ram descending from his pedestal and, after some absurd courtesies, dancing a minuet with the Duchess. Ceremonious steps are performed in a slow measure. The ram's face bears the melancholy expression of a fallen angel combined with the deep ennui of a snobbish prince; the features of the Duchess reveal hopeless despair. At the end of the dance the ram climbs back upon his pedestal. The ladies who have watched this spectacle approach the Duchess with reverential courtesies and draw her away with them. Faust has remained in the foreground, and during the minuet Mephistophela has returned to his side. With disgust and loathing Faust

points at the Duchess, apparently intimating something horrible about her. He conveys his loathing of all the mummery displayed before him, of all the Gothic trash representing only a crude and base mockery of ~~ascetic~~ ecclesiastic ~~practices~~ asceticism, yet being just as unpleasant as the latter. He expresses an infinite desire for the purely beautiful, for Greek harmony, for the selflessly noble figures of Homer's spring-like world. Mephistophela understands, and touching the ground with her wand she evokes the image of the famous Helen of Troy, but for a moment only. In this the learned Doktor finds his dream of ~~xxxxx~~ an ancient ideal fulfilled, and he does not conceal his enthusiasm. Beckoned by Mephistophela, the magic horses return, and they both take off. At the same moment the Duchess enters again on the stage. Finding her lover gone, she rages in mad despair and falls down in a swoon. In this condition she is lifted up by some weird figures ~~xxx~~ who carry her around as in a triumphal procession with a great deal of clowning and jesting. There is another witches' dance that is suddenly interrupted by the shrill sound of a bell and an organ hymn which gives an atrocious parody of sacred music. Everyone crowds around the altar where the black ram is devoured by flames, crackling as he burns away. After the curtain has fallen, one still hears the horribly burlesque sacrilegeous sounds of the Black Mass.

Act IV

An island in the Archipelago. The sea is visible to the left, glittering in emerald colors and forming a lovely contrast to the turquoise blue of the sky whose sunny brightness shines upon an an ideal landscape. Vegetation and architecture reflect the Grecian beauty of Homer's dreams. Pine trees, laurel bushes with white statues resting in theirshade; large marble vases holding exotic plants; flower garlands twined around the trees; crystalline waterfalls; on the right, a temple of Venus Aphrodite whose shimmering statue is seen through the colonnades. The scene is enlivened by blooming youth, the young men in festive white gowns, the maidens in lightly draped nymph costumes, their heads adorned with roses or myrtles; some of them are amusing themselves in individual groups, others are engaged in a ceremonial round before the temple, offering a service of joy to the goddess. Everything here breathes Greek serenity, ambrosial peace of the gods, classical calm. There is no suggestion of a misty hereafter, of the mystical thrills of lust and anxiety, of the supernatural ecstasy of the spirit emancipated from corporeality. Here all is real three-dimensional blissfulness without retrospective melancholy, without vague and empty longings. The queen of this island is Helena of Troy, the most beautiful woman in poetry. She is seen dancing at the head of her maidservants in front of the Venus temple. The dance and its positions, harmonizing with the scenery, are measured, chaste and ~~xixmm~~ solemn.

This serene world is suddenly invaded by Faust and Mephistophela who come flying down through the air on their black horses.

They appear to have been delivered from a gloomy nightmare, a vicious disease, a wretched madness, and now they can both feast their eyes on this vision of original beauty and genuine loftiness. The queen and her attendants receive them hospitably, offering them food and drink in precious chiselled vessels, and inviting them to stay on this island of bliss. Faust and Mephistophela express their gratitude in joyful dances, and finally they all form a procession moving towards the temple of Venus. There the Doktor and Mephistophela exchange their romantic medieval costumes for Greek gowns of simple splendor; thus transformed they reappear in the foreground with Helena, executing some mythological pas de trois.

On the conclusion of this dance Faust and Helena rest on a throne to the right of the stage, while Mephistophela, with a thyrsus and a tambourine in her hands, leaps about as a bacchante striking the most extravagant postures. Helena's maidens are carried away by the example of such revelry; they tear the roses and myrtles from their heads, entwine their loosened locks with vine-leaves and thus, with streaming hair and whirling thyrsus staffs, they also sway about as bacchantic dancers. The youths now arm themselves with shields and spears and proceed to disperse the maidens possessed by the god. Then they engage in sham fights, enacting one of those martial pantomimes which are so pleasantly described by ancient authors.

This heroic pastorale may be elaborated by the introduction of an antique capriccio. Riding upon swans, A host of amoretti appears and also begins a battle dance with bows and arrows. But

this charming interlude is suddenly interrupted: the startled little cupids hastily mount their swans and flutter away as the Duchess arrives flying through the air on an enormous bat and, like an avenging fury, steps up to the throne where Faust and Helena quietly watched the performance. She seems to attack the one with the most insane reproaches, the other with threats. Mephistophela, who has witnessed the scene with malicious glee, now resumes her bacchanalian dance in which she is accompanied by Helena's maidens, and their joyful chorus forms a mocking contrast to the wrath of the Duchess. The latter, unable to control her rage, wields the magic wand she had been holding, and her movements seem to be accompanied by the most dreadful incantations. At once the sky begins to darken, lighning and thunder follow, the sea rises in a tempest, and a horrible transformation befalls all persons and objects on the island. Everything seems to be struck be destruction and death. The trees stand leafless and withered. The temple is broken down in ruins. The statues lie shattered on the ground. Queen Helena, sitting next to Faust, has turned into an almost fleshless corpse shrouded in white linen. The dancing wenches are also nothing but ghostly skeletons wrapped in white sheets which, hanging down from their heads, reach only to their barren loins (?). In this shape of lamiae they continue in their gay dance poses and rounds as though nothing had happened, and they seem to be totally unaware of the devastating transformation. Faust, however, whose happiness has been destroyed by the vengeance of a jealous witch, is greatly infuriated against her. Leaping down from the throne, ~~with his~~

he draws his and
sword ~~drawn; he~~ thrusts it into the chest of the Duchess.

Mephistophela has ~~again~~ once more brought up the two magic horses; anxiously she urges Faust to mount immediately, and then she rides off with him through the air. Meanwhile the waves are surging higher and higher, gradually flooding men and monuments. Only the dancing lamiae do not seem to notice anything. To the gay sound of tambourines they dance on until the last moment when the waves reach their heads and the whole island appears to be submerged in the water. Above the storm-lashed sea, high up in the air, we see Faust and Mephistophela racing away on their black horses.

Act V

A wide, open square in front of a cathedral whose Gothic portal is visible in the background. On both sides, neatly trimmed linden trees; under them, on the left, carousing and feasting burghers, dressed in the Dutch costume of the sixteenth century. Nearby, one also sees marksmen armed with cross-bows, shooting at a bird attached to the top of a tall pole. The scene is full of kermess merriment: show-booths, musicians, a puppet-play, jumping clowns and cheerful groups. In the center, a piece of lawn reserved for the entertainment of the higher middle classes.

The bird has been shot down, and the victor leads a triumphal march as the champion marksman. A fat brewer's figure, his head adorned with an enormous crown to which numerous little bells are attached, his back and belly covered by large gold-plated shields; thus he struts about with a great deal of tinkling and clanking. Drummers and fifers march in front of him, ~~as well as~~ also the standard bearer, a short-legged manikin brandishing an enormous banner in the drollest contortions; the entire marksmen's guild follows in a solemn array. The whole procession bows respectfully and the standard-bearer lowers his flag in homage to the fat mayor and his equally voluminous wife who are sitting under the linden trees with their young daughter. They salute in return, and their daughter, represented as a ~~of a~~ fair-haired virgin on a Dutch canvass, fills the cup of honor for the champion marksman.

We hear the blare of trumpets, and on a high cart decorated

with foliage and drawn by two black horses, appears the very learned Doktor Faust in a scarlet, gold-braided quack's costume. Leading the horses, Mephistophela walks in front of the cart; she is also dressed in gaudy finery, profusely trimmed with ribbons and feathers. At intervals she blows a fanfare on a large trumpet, at the same time giving a publicity-dance demonstration to attract the people. A large crowd soon gathers around the cart where the travelling miracle doctor hands out all sorts of potions and concoctions for cash payment. Some people bring him large bottles with urine specimens which he examines. Others have their teeth pulled by him. He performs striking miracle cures with crippled invalids who begin to use their restored limbs in joyful dances. Finally, he climbs off the cart, which leaves the stage, and distributes his vials among the crowd. Only a few drops of the liquid are sufficient to cure all ills of the flesh and to fill the body and soul with an irresistible desire to dance. The champion marksman, who has swallowed the entire contents of a vial, feels its magic power working on him. He seizes Mephistophela and hops a pas de deux with her. The potion's leg-moving effect stimulates even the aged mayor and his wife to hobble along in an old-fashioned grand-father's dance.

While old and young are spinning around in the wildest whirl, Faust has approached the mayor's daughter. Enchanted by her pure simplicity, her modest manners and her beauty, he declares his love to her, and, pointing to the church with melancholy, almost shy, gestures, asks for her hand in marriage. He repeats

his proposal to her parents who have returned to their seats, gasping for breath. They are pleased with the offer, and the naive beauty also gives her bashful consent. She and Faust are now decked with flowers, and as bride and groom they dance their decent bourgeois hymens. In this sweet and modest quietude the Doktor has finally found the domestic happiness which satisfies the soul. Forgotten are the doubts and the rapturous ~~xxxxxxxx~~ orgies of suffering known to the arrogant spirit. He is now in a state of grace, beaming like the gilt cock on a church steeple.

The wedding procession is being formed with nuptial pomp. It is already advancing on ~~the~~ its way to church when Mephistophela suddenly steps before the groom and arrests him with scornful gestures, thus disrupting his idyllic feelings; she seems to order him to follow her immediately. Faust refuses with obvious indignation, and the spectators are aghast at the scene. But they are even more terror-stricken when suddenly Mephistophela's exorcism brings about nocturnal darkness accompanied by a terrible thunderstorm. Anxiously they escape to seek shelter in the ~~xxxxx~~ church where a bell now begins to ring and an organ starts pealing. This pious droning strikes a contrasting note to the hellish ~~xxxxxx~~ uproar on the stage. Faust, ~~has tried~~ like the others, has tried to find refuge at the bosom of the church, but he is held back by a huge black hand which reaches out from the ground. With an expression of spiteful triumph Mephistophela removes from her bodice the parchment scroll which the Doktor once signed with his blood. She indicates to him that the time of his contract

has expired and that his body and soul now belong to hell. In vain Faust makes all possible objections, in vain he finally tries to impress her with entreaties and lamentations. The develish wench capers around him with grimaces of utter mockery. The ground opens and out of it step those abominable princes of hell, the crowned and scepter-bearing monsters. In a triumphal round they also jeer at the poor Doktor whom Mephistophela, now changed into a horrible snake, strangles in a violent embrace. The entire group sinks into the earth among crackling flames while the pealing of bells and the ~~sounds of~~ organ music resounding from the cathedral summons the pious Christians to prayer.

AR 25164

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Box: 3 **Folder: 26**

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

EPIGRAMS

SOPHOCLES

Many have striven in vain to give joyfulness joyous expression;
Here it ~~xxxx~~ expresses itself, speaking through tragedy's mouth.

*

THE ANGRY POET

Fear not the poet raging in lofty language; his letter
Often kills, but the dead spirits his spirit revives.

*

THE JESTERS

Go on playing and jesting, friends, you must! And I pity
You, for this is a must only obeyed by despair.

*

GOOD ADVICE

If you have brains and a heart, you better keep one of them hidden;
Both are condemned if you dare both at a time to reveal.

*

ADVOCATUS DIABOLI

Deep in my heart I despise the cohorts of ~~both~~ masters and clerics,
But even more ~~do I do~~ I despise genius consorting with them.

*

DESCRIPTIVE POETRY

Since Apollo became the god of journalists, even
He is partial to each faithful reporter of facts.

*

FALSE POPULARITY

O the humanist who with children feigns to be childish,
Whereas the tree and the child seek ~~what is higher above~~.

*

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

XENIEN

SOPHOKLES

Viele versuchten umsonst, das Freudigste freudig zu sagen,
Hier spricht es endlich mir, hier in der Trauer, sich aus.

DER ZUERNENDE DICHTER

Fuerchtet den Dichter nicht, wenn er edel zuernet; sein Buchstab'
Toetet, aber es macht Geister lebendig der Geist.

DIE SCHERZHAFTEN

Immer spielet und scherzt! ihr <u>muesst</u>, o Freunde! mir geht dies
In die Seele, denn dies muessen Verzweifelte nur.

GUTER RAT

Hast du Verstand und ein Herz, so zeige nur eines von beiden;
Beides verdammen sie dir, zeigest du beides zugleich.

ADVOCATUS DIABOLI

Tief im Herzen veracht' ich die Rotte der Herren und Pfaffen,
Aber noch mehr das Genie, macht es gemein sich damit.

DIE BESCHREIBENDE POESIE

Wisst, Apoll ist der Gott der Zeitungsschreiber geworden,
Und sein Mann ist, wer ihm treulich das Faktum erzaehlt.

FALSCHE POPULARITAET

O den Menschenkenner! Er stellt sich kindisch mit Kindern,
Aber der Baum und das Kind suchet, was ueber ihm ist.

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

HYPERION'S SONG

You walk above in the light
On gentle grounds, o souls of the blessed!
Heavenly brilliant breezes
Move you with ease,
As the touch of the artist on
Strings that are sacred.

Fatelessly, like the slumbering
Infant, breathe the divine;
Chastely sealed,
In humility budding,
Blooms their spirit
Ever alive,
And the eyes of the blessed
Gaze with serene and
Infinite clearness.

To us though is given
No rest wherever we go:
The suffering mortals
Are vanishing, falling
Blindly from hour to
Hour, like the water
From precipice hurtled
To precipice, down through
Long drawn out years to uncertain ends.

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

MENSCHENBEIFALL

Ist nicht heilig mein Herz, schoeneren Lebens voll,
Seit ich liebe? Warum aechtetet ihr mich mehr,
Da ich stolzer und wilder,
Wortereicher und leerer war?

Ach! der Menge gefaellt, was auf den Marktplatz taugt,
Und es ehret der Knecht nur den Gewaltsamen;
An das Goettliche glauben
Die allein, die es selber sind.

APPLAUSE OF MEN

Is not holy my heart, filled with a fairer life,
Since I learned how to love? Why did you praise me more
When I was prouder and wilder,
More loquacious and emptier?

What the multitude likes is for the marketplace,
And the serf can respect none but the man of force;
Only those who are godlike
Know the meaning of godliness.

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

SONNENUNTERGANG

Wo bist du? trunken daemmert die Seele mir
Von aller deiner Wonne; denn eben ist's,
Dass ich gelauscht, wie, goldner Toene
Voll, der entzueckende Sonnenjuengling

Sein Abendlied auf himmlischer Leier spielt;
Es toenten rings die Waelder und Huegel nach,
Doch fern ist er zu frommen Voelkern,
Die ihn noch ehren, hinweggegangen.

SUNSET

Where are you? Drunk and drowsy, my soul is
filled
With all your rapture; for it was only now
That I had listened as, with golden
Tones, the enchanting youth, the sun-god,

On heaven's lyre was playing his evensong;
The woods and hills around were resounding all.
But far away, where humble nations
Worship him still, he is now residing.

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

XENIEN

SOPHOKLES

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FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

HALF OF LIFE

The land with yellow pears and
Wild roses in abundance
Leans down to the lake,
You lovely swans, and
Drunk with your kisses
You dip your heads
In sacred sobering waters.

But woe, where do I find,
When winter comes, the flowers, and where
The sunshine and
The shade of the earth?
The stonewalls stand
Speechless and cold, the windblown
Weathervanes rattle.

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

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Deep in my heart I despise the cohorts of [illegible] masters and clerics,
But even more ~~[illegible]~~ (I despise) genius consorting with them.

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Aber der Baum und das Kind suchet, was ueber ihm ist.

and ,f has been deleted

shall remain.

8/4/97 3

Hölderlin "Empedokles"

Ripe are the fruits, dipped in fire
~~and~~ cooked/
cooked
and tested on earth, and ~~it~~ ripen a
degree
that all shall go into ~~it~~, make-
like
Prophetic, ~~it~~ dreaming upon
upon the hills of heaven. And
minds, like a ~~loaded~~ load of logs 2.
~~on the shoulders~~ remains to
be held. →
→ But the paths are ~~bad~~.
harmful. For unbridled,
~~unless~~
like ~~horses~~, ~~He~~re the captive
element and the ancient
laws of the earth. And always
~~into the~~ boundless into
a longing goes ~~toward~~ into
~~the boundless~~.
held But must
remains to be~~held~~. And the
need ~~for~~ to be true

Neither

But let us ~~not~~ look
forward or backward.
~~If~~ ~~Be swayed Today~~
Like a boat ~~on~~ ~~swayed~~
by the wave
TO waves (Cobra)
~~Let~~ us be swayed
like a boat swayed by the
waves!

Being ~~moved~~ swayed ~~Like~~ by the waves
~~Has~~ ~~Like~~ as the boat
as on a swaying boat.

FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN

HARVEST TIME

Ripe are the fruits, dipped in fire, cooked and
~~And~~ T tested on earth, and there is a decree
That all ~~shall~~ earth go into it, serpent-like,
Prophetic, ~~dreaming upon~~ to dream on
~~The~~ hills of heaven. (And much,) And like a
(Like a) load of logs on the shoulders, much
(Must be) shall remain retained. But the paths
Are ~~crooked~~ evil. For (stumbling) And ~~crooked~~ like horses
Like horses, the captive ~~stumbling~~ stumbling
Elements go and (the) ancient
Laws of the earth. And always
A longing goes toward the boundless. ~~But much~~ Yet there is ~~must be retained~~ much to remain
~~Must be retained~~. And a want of faith.
But we will look neither forward nor back.
Letting ourselves be rocked as
On a boat swayed by the sea.

Must shall remain.
We thought shall not look f. or
yet we shall neither l. f. or
look ~~back~~.

out into
into the boundless goeth a longing.

FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN

HARVEST TIME

Ripe are the fruits, dipped in fire, cooked
And tested on earth, and there is a decree
That all shall go into it, serpent-like,
Prophetic, dreaming upon
The hills of heaven. And much,
Like a load of logs on the shoulders,
Must be retained. But the paths
Are crooked. For stumbling,
Like horses, the captive
Elements go and the ancient
Laws of the earth. And always
A longing goes toward the boundless. But much
Must be retained. And a want of faith.
But neither forward nor backward let
Us look. Being rocked as though
On a swaying boat at sea.

FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN

ERNTEZEIT

Reif sind, in Feuer getaucht, gekochet
Die Fruechte und auf der Erde gepruefet und ein Gesetz ist
Dass alles hineingeht, Schlangen gleich,
Prophetisch, traeumend auf
Den Huegeln des Himmels. Und vieles
Wie auf den Schultern eine
Last von Scheitern ist
Zu behalten. Aber boes sind
Die Pfade. Naemlich unrecht,
Wie Rosse, gehn die gefangenen
Element' und alten
Gesetze der Erd. Und immer
ins Ungebundene gehet eine Sehnsucht, Vieles aber ist
Zu behalten. Und Not die Treue.
Vorwaerts aber und rueckwaerts wollen wir
Nicht sehn. Uns wiegen lassen, wie
Auf schwankem Kahne der See.

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

MENSCHENBEIFALL

Ist nicht heilig mein Herz, schoeneren Lebens voll,
Seit ich liebe? Warum achtetet ihr mich mehr,
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Wortereicher und leerer war?

Ach! der Menge gefaellt, was auf den Marktplatz taugt,
Und es ehret der Knecht nur den Gewaltsamen;
An das Goettliche glauben
Die allein, die es selber sind.

APPLAUSE OF MEN

Is not holy my heart, filled with a fairer life,
Since I learned how to love? Why did you praise me more
When I was prouder and wilder,
More loquacious and emptier?

What the multitude likes is for the marketplace,
And the serf can respect none but the man of force;
Only those who are godlike
Know the meaning of godliness.

I've known love?

FRIEDRICH HOELDERLIN

HARVEST TIME

Ripe are the fruits, dipped in fire,
cooked and tested on earth, and there is a decree that
all shall go into it, snakelike,
prophetic,dreaming upon
the hills of heaven. And much,
like a burden of logs
on the shoulders, still remains
to be borne. But evil are
the paths. For, like horses, the captive
elements and ancient laws
of the earth go wrong. And always
a longing goes out toward the boundless. Though much
still remains
to be borne. And a need to keep faith.
Yet we will look neither forward nor backward.
Letting ourselves be rocked as though
on a swaying boat at sea.

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Date: 7/31/2009 Sys #: 000200406

Box: 3 **Folder: 27**

K. deutsch.
1. Versuch (fast wörtlich nach dem Original

IN DER STRAFKOLONIE

Eine sandige Talmulde in einer isolierten Landschaft ohne besondere Kennzeichen, wüstenähnlich, in ein gelblich-staubgraues Licht getaucht. Im Vordergrund die Abteilung der Strafkolonie, in der die Urteilsvollstreckung staffindet. Ein verwahrloster Raum mit ein paar Korbstühlen links vorne und der Vollstreckungsmaschine auf der rechten Seite. Die Maschine ist ein eindrucksvoller komplizierter Aapparat, der im Verlauf der Szene ausführlich erklärt wird.

PERSONEN

Der Forschungsreisende, etwa 40, wirkt jünger, macht den Eindruck eines aufmerksamen Schülers mit guten Manieren. Erscheint zunächst zurückhaltend, beinah gelangweilt, nimmt aber im Verlauf der Handlung lebhaft an den Vorgängen teil. Er trägt eine Art halbtropischer Kleidung, einfach und bequem, ohne offizielle Anzeichen.

Der Offizier, 20 - 30 Jahre alt, trägt Uniform mit Silberschnüren und Degen. Er ist ausserordentlich diszipliniert in seinem Verhalten, bemüht, den Besucher zu beeindrucken und von seiner Sache zu überzeugen.

Der Soldat nimmt zunächst wenig Anteil an den Vorgängen, wirkt schläfrig und verständnislos. Er trägt eine unauffällige, ungepflegte Uniform, kein offizielles Abzeichen.

Der Verurteilte, sehr verwahrlost, kindisch, scheinbar ahnungslos in Bezug auf seine Strafe. (Kafka zitieren)

Bei der Darstellung der Rollen von Offizier und Soldat ist es wichtig, jede Anspielung auf Vertreter von bekannten neuzeitlichen Terrorsystemen zu vermeiden. Dies gilt sowohl für Kleidung wie Sprache und gestischen Ausdruck.

Zu Anfang der Szene sieht man den Offizier mit raschen aber sicheren Bewegungen bei den letzten Vorbereitungen an der Maschine beschäftigt, die offensichtlich auch bühnenmässig im Vordergrund der Handlung steht. Er untersucht zunächst die unteren Teile, wobei er in die Knie geht, den Kopf auf die Erde legt und mit beiden Armen nach unten greift, wo sich das Fundament befindet. [bei Kafka kriecht er mit dem ganzen Körper [unter den tief in die Erde eingebauten Apparat]. Danach steigt er auf eine Leiter, um die oberen Teile zu untersuchen. Der Reisende geht während dieser Verrichtungen "fast unbeteiligt auf und ab."

Mitte links hockt der Verurteilte, neben ihm der Soldat, beide verbunden durch eine schwere Kette in der Hand des Soldaten. Der Verurteilte ist an Händen und Füssen wie auch am Hals gefesselt mit kleineren Ketten, die sowohl untereinander wie mit der grossen Kette verbunden sind.

/

Zwei bis drei Minuten stummes Spiel.

OFFIZIER: (steigt von der Leiter herunter) Jetzt ist alles fertig!

(ist ungeheuer ermattet, atmet schwer, öffnet seinen Uniformkragen und fächelt Hals und Gesicht mit zwei Damentaschentüchern, die er wieder in den Kragen zurücksteckt)

REISENDER. Diese Uniformen sind doch für die Tropen zu schwer.

OFFIZIER. (wäscht die von Oel und Fett beschmutzten Hände in einem bereitstehenden Wasserkübel)

Gewiss, aber sie bedeuten die Heimat. Wir wollen nicht die Heimat verlieren. Nun sehen sie aber diesen Apparat! Bis jetzt war noch Händearbeit nötig, jetzt aber arbeitet der Apparat ganz allein. Es kommen natürlich Störungen vor. Ich hoffe zwar, es wird heute keine eintreten, immerhin muss man mit ihnen rechnen. Der Apparat soll ja zwölf Stunden ununterbrochen im Gang sein. Wenn aber auch Störungen vorkommen, so sind es doch nur ganz kleine, und sie werden sofort behoben sein.- Wollen Sie sich nicht setzen? (zieht einen Rohrstuhl hervor und bietet ihn dem Reisenden an)

(Der Reisende stellt bei einem flüchtigen Blick fest, dass er am Rand einer Grube sitzt) (check original!)

OFFIZIER. Ich weiss nicht, ob Ihnen der Kommandant den Apparat schon erklärt hat.

(Der Reisende macht eine ungewisse Handbewegung)

OFFIZIER (erklärend) Dieser Apparat ist eine Erfindung unseres früheren Kommandanten. [.....] Aber,ich schwätze und sein Apparat steht hier vor uns. Er besteht, wie Sie sehen, aus drei Teilen.Es haben sich im Laufe der Zeit für jeden dieser Teile gewissermassen vorkstümliche Bezeichnungen herausgebildet. Der untere heisst das Bett, der obere der Zeichner, und hier, der mittlere, schwebende Teil heisst die Egge.

REISENDER (benommen von der Hitze, hat nicht ganz aufmerksam zugehört, schüttelt leicht den Kopf, im sich neu zu konzentrieren) Die Egge?

(Gleichzeitig beobachtet R. das Verhalten von SOLDAT und VERURTEILTEM. S. hat die Kette von V. um beide Handgelenke gewickelt, stützt sich mit einer Hand auf sein Gewehr, lässt den Kopf ins Genick hängen und kümmert sich um nichts.)

(Der VERURTEILTE, anscheinend ohne die Sprache des OFFIZIERS zy verstehen, bemüht sich angestrengt seinen Erklärungen zu folgen, indem er jedes Detail der Maschine, auf das der Of. hinweist, mit offenem Mund und Augen aufzunehmen versucht. Während der unterbrechenden Frage des Reisenden sieht er, ebenso wie der Offizier, den Fragenden an.)

OFFIZIER. Ja, die Egge. Der Name passt. Die Nadeln sind eggenartig angeordnet, auch wird das Ganze wie eine Egge geführt, wenn auch bloss auf einem Platz und viel kunstgemässer. Sie werden es übrigens gleich verstehen. Hier auf das Bett wird der Verurteilte gelegt.- Ich will nämlich den Apparat zuerst beschreiben und dann erst die Prozedur selbst ausführen lassen.Sie werden ihr dann besser folgen können. Auch ist ein Zahnrad im Zeichner zu stark abgeschliffen; es kreischt sehr, wenn es im Gang ist; man kann sich dann kaum verständigen;

Ersatzteile sind hier leider nur schwer zu beschaffen.- Also hier ist das Bett, wie ich sagte. Es ist ganz und gar mit einer Watteschicht bedeckt; den Zweck dessen werden sie noch erfahren. Auf diese Watte wird der Verurteilte bäuchlings gelegt, natürlich nackt; hier sind für die Hände, hier für die Füsse, hier für den Hals Riemen, um ihn festzuschnallen. Hier am Koppfende des Bettes, wo der Mann, wie ich gesagt habe, zuerst mit dem Gesicht aufliegt, ist dieser kleine Filzstumpf, der leicht so reguliert werden kann, dass er dem Mann gerade in den Mund dringt. Er hat den Zweck, am Schreien und am Zerbeissen der Zunge zu hindern. Natürlich muss der Mann den Filz aufnehmen, da ihm sonst durch den Halsriemen das Genick gebrochen wird.

REISENDER. Das ist Watte? (Er beugt sich vor)

OFFIZIER (lächelt) Ja, gewiss, befühlen Sie es selbst. (Nimmt die Hand des Reisenden und führt sie über das Bett hin.) Es ist eine besonders präparierte Watte, darum sieht sie so unkenntlich aus; ich werden auf ihren Zweck noch zu sprechen kommen.

REISENDER beginnt jetzt sich mehr für den Apparat zu interessieren. Starkes Sonnenlicht dringt in den Raum und wird von der Maschine reflektiert. (s. Beschreibung S. 135) R. hält die Hand zum Schutz über die Augen und studiert den Bau.

OFFIZIER unterbricht seine Erklärungen, "um dem Reisenden zur ungestörten Betrachtung Zeit zu lassen."

Der VERURTEILTE "ahmt den Reisenden nach; da er die Hand nicht über die Augen legen kann, blinzelt er mit freien Augen zur Höhe."

REISENDER. (lehnt sich im Sessel zurück und kreuzt die Beine) Nun also liegt der Mann.

OFFIZIER. (schiebt die Mütze ein wenig zurück und fährt sich mit der Hand über das Gesicht) Ja, nun hören Sie! Sowohl das Bett als auch der Zeichner haben ihre eigene elektrische Batterie; das Bett braucht sie für sich selbst, der Zeichner für die Egge. Sobald der Mann festgeschnallt ist, wird das Bett in Bewegung gesetzt. Es zittert in winzigen, sehr schnellen Zuckungen gleichzeitig seitlich wie auch auf und ab.Sie werden ähnliche Apparate in Heilanstalten gesehen haben; nur sind bei unserem Bett alle Be-wegungen genau berechnet; sie müssen nämlich peinlich auf die Bewegungen der Egge abgestimmt sein. Dieser Egge aber ist die eigentliche Ausführung des Urteils überlassen.

REISENDER. Wie lautet denn das Urteil?

OFFIZIER. Sie wissen auch das nicht? (beisst sich erstaunt auf die Lippen) Verzeihen Sie, wenn vielleicht meine ErklArungen ungeordnet sind; ich bitte Sie sehr um Entschuldigung. Die Erklärungen pflegte früher nämlich der Kommandant zu geben; der neue Kommandant aber hat sich dieser Ehrenpflicht entzogen; dass er jedoch einen so hohen Besuch -

(R. sucht die Ehrung mit beiden Händen abzuwehren, aber O. besteht auf dem Ausdruck) einen so hohen Besuch nicht einmal von der Form unseres Urteils in Kenntnis setzt, ist wieder eine Neuerung, die - (unterdrückt einen Fluch, fasst sich dann wieder) Ich wurde nicht davon verständigt, mich trifft nicht die Schuld. Uebrigens bin ich allerdings am besten befähigt, unsere Urteilsarten zu erklären, denn ich trage hier (schlägt auf seine

Brusttasche) die betreffenden Handzeichnungen des früheren Kommandanten.

REISENDER. Hat er denn alles in sich vereinigt? War er Soldat, Richter, Konstrukteur, Chemiker, Zeichner?

OFFIZIER. Jawohl (kopfnickend, mit starrem, nachdenklichem Blick. Sieht prüfend seine Hände an, die ihm nicht rein genug erscheinen, geht zum Kübel und wäscht sie noch einmal; zieht danach eine kleine Ledermappe hervor) Unser Urteil klingt nicht streng. Dem Veurteilten wird das Gebot, das er übertreten hat, mit der Egge auf den Leib geschrieben. Diesem Verurteilten zum Beispiel (zeigt auf ihn) wird auf den Leib geschrieben werden: Ehre deinen Vorgesetzten!

VERURTEILTER hat den Kopf gesenkt, scheint angespannt zu lauschen ohne etwas zu verstehen, öffnet und schliesst lautlos seine Lippen)

REISENDER. Kennt er sein Urteil?

OFFIZIER. Nein, hören sie weiter...

REISENDER: Er kennt sein eigenes Urteil nicht?

OFFIZIER. Nein. (stockt einen Augenblick) Es wäre nutzlos, es ihm zu verkünden. Er erfährt es ja auf seinem Leib.

VERURTEILTER richtet einen fragenden Blick auf den REISENDEN als versuchte er dessen Meinung ueber den Vorgang zu erfahren.

REISENDER (beugt sich wieder vor, spricht in eindringlichem Ton zum OFFIZIER): Aber dass er überhaupt verurteilt wurde, das weiss er doch?

OFFIZIER. Auch nicht (lächelt den Reisenden an, als erwarte er von ihm andere sonderbare Eröffnungen)

REISENDER. Nein? Dann weiss also der Mann auch jetzt noch nicht, wie seine Verteidigung aufgenommen wurde?

OFFIZIER. Er hat keine Gelegenheit gehabt, sich zu verteidigen. (spricht beiseite, wie zu sich selbst, als wolle er den Reisenden durch Erwähnung dieser selbstverständlichen Dinge nicht beschämen)

REISENDER (während er vom Stuhl aufsteht)
Er muss doch Gelegenheit gehabt haben, sich zu verteidigen.

OFFIZIER (versucht die Angelegenheit ohne grösseren Zeitverlust aufzuklären, geht auf den Reisenden zu, hängt sich in seinen Arm, zeigt auf den VERURTEILTEN, der sich jetzt stramm aufgestellt hat, während der SOLDAT die Kette anzieht)

OFFIZIER. Die Sache verhält sich folgendermassen. Ich bin hier in der Strafkolonie zum Richter bestellt. Trotz meiner Jugend. Denn ich stand auch dem früheren Kommandanten in allen Strafsachen zur Seite und kenne auch den Apparat am besten. Der Grundsatz, nach dem ich entscheide ist: Die Schuld ist immer zweifellos. Andere Gerichte können diesen Grundsatz nicht befolgen, denn sie sind vielköpfig und haben auch noch höhere Gerichte über sich. Das ist hier nicht der Fall, oder war es wenigstens nicht beim früheren Kommandanten. Der Neue hat allerdings schon Lust gezeigt, in mein Gericht sich einzumischen, es ist mir aber bisher gelungen, ihn abzuwehren, und es wird mir auch weiter gelingen.-

Sie wollen diesen Fall erklärt haben; er ist so einfach wie alle. Ein Hauptmann hat heute morgen die Anzeige erstattet, dass dieser Mann, der ihm als Diener zugeteilt ist und vor seiner Tür

schläft, den Dienst verschlafen hat. Er hat nämlich die Pflicht, bei jedem Stundenschlag aufzustehen und vor der Tür des Hauptmanns zy salutieren. Gewiss keine schwere Pflicht und eine notwendige, denn er soll sowohl zur Bewachung als auch zur Bedienung frisch bleiben. Der Hauptmann wollte in der gestrigen Nacht nachsehen, ob der Diener seine Pflicht erfülle. Er öffnete Schlag zwei Uhr die Tür und fand ihn zusammenhekrümmt schlafen. Er holte die Reitpeitsche und schlug ihm über das Gesicht. Statt nun aufzustehen und um Verzeihung zu bitten, fasste der Mann seinen Herrn bei den Beinen, schüttelte ihn und rief: "Wirf die Peitsche weg oder ich fresse dich."- Das ist der Sachverhalt. Der Hauptmann kam vor einer Stunde zu mir, ich schrieb seine Angaben auf und anschliessend gleich das Urteil. Dann liess ich dem Mann die Ketten anlegen. Das alles war sehr einfach. Hätte ich den Mann zuerst vorgerufen und ausgefragt, so wäre nur Verwirrung entstanden. Er hätte gelogen, hätte, wenn es mir gelungen wäre, die Lügen zu widerlegen, diese durch neue Lügen ersetzt und so fort. Jetzt aber halte ich ihn und lasse ihn nicht mehr.-

Ist nun alles erklärt? Aber die Zeit vergeht und die Exekution sollte schon beginnen, und ich bin mit der Erklärung des Apparates noch nicht fertig.

OFFIZIER (drückt den Reisenden zurück in den Sessel und beginnt die Erklärung)

Wie Sie sehen, entspricht die Egge der Form des Menschen; hier ist die Egge für den Oberkörper, hier sind die Eggen für die Beine. Für den Kopf ist nur dieser kleine Stichel bestimmt. Ist Ihnen das klar? (Er beugt sich freundlich zu dem Reisenden vor, bereit zu den umfassendsten Erklärungen)

Der Reisende schüttelt den Kopf, zuckt unschlüssig die Schultern, ist offensichtlich nicht überzeugt von der Methode des Verfahrens. Gleichzeitig will er sich nicht in Strafmassnahmen einmischen, die für ihn unverständlich sind, aber andererseits vielleicht unvermeidlich in in dieser entlegenen Strafkolonie. (rewrite this paragraph!)

REISENDER. Wird der Kommandant der Exekution beiwohnen?

OFFIZIER. (offensichtlich peinlich berührt durch die Frage, zeigt jetzt in Haltung und Sprache eine auffällige Unruhe und Gereiztheit)

Es ist nicht gewiss. Gerade deshalb müssen wir uns beeilen. Ich werde sogar, so leid es mir tut, meine Erklärungen abkürzen müssen.Aber ich könnte ja morgen, wenn der Apparat wieder gereinigt ist - dass er so sehr beschmutzt wird, ist sein einziger Fehler - die näheren Erklärungen nachtragen. Jetzt also nur das Notwenigste.

Wenn der Mann auf dem Bett liegt und dieses ins Zittern gebracht ist, wird die Egge auf den Körper gesenkt. Sie stellt sich von selbst so ein, dass sie nur knapp mit den Spitzen den Körper berührt. Ist die Einstellung vollzogen, strafft sich sofort dieses Stahlseil zu einer Stange. Und nun beginnt das Spiel. Ein Nichteingeweihter merkt äusserlich keinen Unterschied inden Strafen. Die Egge scheint gleichförmig zu arbeiten. Zitternd sticht sie ihre Spitzen in den Körper ein, der üeberdies vom Bett aus zittert. Um es nun jedem zu ermöglichen, die Ausführung des Urteils zu überprüfen, wurde die Egge aus Glas

gemacht. Es hat einige technische Schwierigkeiten verursacht, die Nadeln darin zu befestigen, es ist aber nach vielen Versuchen gelungen. Wir haben eben keine Mühe gescheut. Und nun kann jeder durch das Glas sehen, wie sich die Inschrift im Körper vollzieht. Wollen Sie nicht näherkommen und sie die Nadeln ansehen?

REISENDER erhebt sich langsam, geht hinüber und beugt sich über die Egge)

OFFIZIER . Sie sehen, zweierlei Nadeln in vielfacher Anordnung. Jede lange hat eine kurze neben sich. Die lange schreibt nämlich, und die kurze spritzt Wasser aus, um das Blut abzuwaschen und die Schrift immer klar zu erhalten. Das Blutwasser wird dann hier in kleine Rinnen geleitet und fliesst endlich in diese Hauptrinne, deren Abflussrohr in die Grube führt. (OFFIZIER zeigt mit dem Finger genau den Weg, den das wasser nehmen muss. Um er möglichst anschaulich zu machen, hält er beide Hände vor das Abflussrohr, als wolle er es damit auffangen.

(Bei diesem Anblick erhebt der REISENDE den Kopf und tastet rückwärts mit der Hand nach seinem Sessel, um wieder Abstand zu gewinnen.

Gleichzeitig sieht man, dass auch der Verurteilte der Aufforderung des Offiziers gefolgt ist, sich die Einrichtung der Egge aus der Nähe anzusehen. Er hat den verschlafenen Soldaten an der Kette ein wenig vorgezerrt und sich auch über das Glas gebeugt, bemüht der Darstellung des Offiziers zu folgen, bewegt er die Augen hin und her auf dem Glas. Der Reisende versucht ihn zurückzutreiben, um ihn vor Strafe zu schützen. Dr OFFIZIER hält den REISENDEN mit eien Hand fest, nimm mit der anderen eine Erd-scholle vom Wall hinter der Grube (?) ~~und wirft~~ und wirft sie nach dem Soldaten.

SOLDAT lässt das Gewehr fallen, stemmt die Füsse in den Boden und reisst den VERURTEILTEN zurück, so gewaltsam, dass er gleich niederfällt, sich hin und her windet und mit den Ketten klirrt.)

OFFIZIER (schreiend) Stell ihn auf!

(Reisender beugt sich über die Egge hinweg. im festzustellen, was mit dem Verurteilten geschieht)

OFFIZIER (schreiend) Behandle ihn sorgfältig! Läuft um den Apparat herum, fasst den Verurteilten unter den Achseln und stellt ihn mit Hilfe des Soldaten auf.)

REISENDER . Nun weiss ich schon alles.

OFFIZIER . Bis auf das Wichtigste. (ergreift den Reisenden am Arm und zeigt in die Höhe) Dort im Zeichner ist das Räderwerk, welches die Bewegung der Egge bestimmt, und dieses Räderwerk wird nach der Zeichnung, auf welche das Urteil lautet, angeordnet. Ich verwende noch die Zeichnungen des früheren Kommandanten. Hier sind sie - (zieht einige Blätter aus der Ledermappe), ich kann sie Ihnen aber leider nicht in die Hand geben. Sie sind das Teuerste was ich habe. Setzen Sie sich, ich zeige sie ihnen aus dieser Entfernung, dann werden Sie alles gut sehen können.

(Er zeigt das erste Blatt, das mit labyrinthartigen, einander vielfach kreuzenden Linien bedeckt ist, sodass man kaum das Papier dahinter erkennen kann.)

OFFIZIER . Lesen Sie!

REISENDER . Ich kann nicht.

6th copy
with Margo's corrections

IN THE PENAL COLONY

CHARACTERS

The VISITING SCHIENTIST (SCHOLAR), between 35 and 40, younger looking, wears comfortable casual clothes suitable for the tropics.

The OFFICER, around 30, in complete military outfit, including officer's cap, sword and scabbard.

The SOLDIER, no distinguishing characteristics, wears a nondescript uniform; his official status is indicated by a rifle.

The CONVICT (CONDEMNED MAN), dressed in rags, unkempt and uncouth, does not use speech.

SCENE

out-of-doors

A small sandy valley basin surrounded by barren slopes, cast in a yellowish grey light. The entire action takes place outside. In the foreground left a secluded area with a few scattered chairs; the right side is occupied by the execution machine which is installed on a somewhat elevated level to permit a clear view of the details described and observed in the course of the action. Aside from the audience in the theater there are no other witnesses to the execution.

OFFICER. It's a very special machine, as you will agree when you see it in action. Please bear with me for another minute or two while I make sure that all the parts are in proper working condition. Why don't you sit down and make yourself as comfortable as you can in this abominable heat.

SCHOLAR [obviously uncomfortable, walks back and forth in the limited space, opens his collar, sighs] Don't worry about me. This is what I'm here for. Though I must admit I don't have much experience with machines.

[Light on Officer checking the machine. At first he examines the lower portion which is deeply embedded in the ground, getting his hands and arms down into it; he then climbs to the top of the ladder to examine the upper parts]

[During the next few moments of silence, while the Scholar continues pacing, the spotlight follows him across the scene to include the Convict and the Soldier who are sitting next to each other on the ground center stage. A number of chains and shackles are fastened around the Prisoner's neck, wrists and ankles, all of them interconnected with the heavy waist chain the end of which is held tight by the Soldier.]

OFFICER. Now it's all set. [He climbs down the ladder,

visibly exhausted; breathing through his mouth, he pulls out two dainty ladies' handkerchiefs from of his collar, inspects them for a moment and stuffs them back in.]
Do you have a question?

SCHOLAR [is still trying to take in the different aspects of his surroundings; after a brief pause to Officer]
Aren't these uniforms much too heavy for the tropics?

OFFICER [who has started to wash his hands in a bucket] Of course, they are, but they represent our homeland, and we certainly don't want to lose our homeland, do we? Now please have a look at this device. [He indicates the machine while drying his hands] Up to this point it had to be serviced by hand, but from now on it's going to function all on its own.

[SCHOLAR nods and tries to follow the Officer's explanations.]

OFFICER. Of course, occasional malfunctions are inevitable; though I hope there won't be any today, but still one has to be prepared. After all, the machine is expected to work without interruption for twelve hours at a time. But even if occasional interruptions do occur, they are only very minor ones that can be dealt with immediately. Why don't you sit down now?
[Pulls out a chair and offers it to the Visitor.]

[The Visitor accepts and, looking down from his chair, he realizes that he is sitting on the edge of a pit, separated from it by the excavated soil that is shaped into a mound; the machine stands on the opposite side] (see sketch)

OFFICER, [noticing the Visitor's puzzled expression and anticipating a question] (Insertion: This is the pit, an important part of the procedure. But it would only be confusing if I started talking about that now.) I don't know if the Commander already discussed the machine with you? [Scholar makes a vague gesture] Never mind, I was going to start at the beginning anyway. [He takes hold of a crank handle and leans against it during the following elaborations]
This entire apparatus is the exclusive invention of our former commander. I had the good fortune to assist him from the very beginning, and I also participated in all future experiments until their successful conclusion. Of course, he alone deserves the full credit for this invention. Have you heard about our former commander? You haven't? Well, I'm not exaggerating when I say that the organization of the entire penal colony is exclusively his achievement. Already at the time he died, we, I mean his friends, knew that under his leadership the colony had become so completely selfsufficient that his successor, no matter how many bright new plans he might be hatching, would be unable to bring about any changes in the old system, certainly not in

the forseeable future. And our prediction has come true; the new commander had to realize this. Too bad that you did not know the former commander! - But I'm just rambling, and his invention stands right here in front of us. As you can see, it consists of three parts. In the course of time people started to adopt something like pet names for the individual parts. The lower part here is called the bed, the upper part is the engraver, and this here, the central suspended part, is called the harrow.

SCHOLAR. [somewhat distracted, as though he had difficulty concentrating, shields his eyes with his hands against the penetrating sunlight that is now invading the scene.]

The harrow?

[He makes an effort to focus his gaze on the Officer who performs his duty in a tight full-dress tunic; Spotlight also closes in on Officer being completely absorbed in his task, making minor adjustments with a screwdriver while he continues with his explanations.]

OFFICER. Yes, the harrow. The name fits perfectly.

[Spotlight again follows the Scientist's gaze as he turns his attention on the two men on the ground. The Soldier seems to be in a similar state of diminished awareness as the Scientist. He has wound the Prisoner's chain around both wrists, leans with one hand on his rifle and has dropped his head back on his neck. The Prisoner, obviously without having any idea of the proceedings makes a tremendous effort to follow the Officer's explanations. With an expression of somnolent doggedness he directs his gaze at whatever the Officer is pointing at. After the Scholar's interruption, both the Prisoner and the Officer look at the Visitor.]

OFFICER. You are wondering about the name I mentioned. Yes, you have heard it correctly. It is designed like a harrow, with its needles arranged like the spikes (teeth?) of a harrow, and it even moves like a harrow, though only in a limited space and much more elegantly. Anyway, you will soon understand what I mean.

This is the bed that the prisoner is placed on.- You see, I want to start by describing the machine and then continue with the procedure itself. This will make it easier for you to follow. I also have to mention that one of the cogs inside the engraver has been ground down to such a point that it screeches badly when it is in use; this makes it almost impossible to communicate. Unfortunately, spare parts are extremely difficult to obtain here. - So this is the bed, as I said. It is fully padded with a layer of cotton; the purpose of this you'll find out later. The convicted man is placed face-down on top of the cotton layer, naked of course. These here are the straps for the hands, these for the feet, this one for the neck to keep it firmly attached.

Here, at the head of the bed, where, as I mentioned before, the machine lies . . .

face-down first, there is this little felt stump which can easily be manipulated to fit exactly into the man's mouth. Its purpose is to prevent any screaming and tongue biting. Of course, the man must accept the felt piece, for otherwise the neck strap would break his neck.

SCHOLAR. This is cotton?

OFFICER [smiling] Yes, Sir. You may touch it yourself. [takes the Scholar's hand and leads it back and forth on the bed] It is a specially prepared type of cotton, that's why you didn't recognize it. I'll come back to it later.

[Scholar now shows more interest in the machine. Shielding his eyes against the sun, he appears to measure it from top to bottom. It is a large structure of unusual design. The bed and the engraver have the same dimensions and look like two dark chests. The engraver, placed about seven feet above the bed, is connected to its corners by four brass rods which reflect the intense sunlight. The harrow appears between the two chestlike constructions suspended by a steel rope.] cable

[The Officer, noticing the Scholar's increased interest, interrupts his explanations to allow the visitor more time for studying the details. The condemned man, unable to place his hands over his eyes, imitates the visitor by trying to crane his neck and squinting in the direction of the machine.]

SCHOLAR. So now you have the man lying there. [He leans back against the chair and crosses his legs]

OFFICER [pushing his cap back slightly and wiping his forehead] That's right. Now let me go on. The bed as well as the engraver both have their own electric battery. The bed needs one for itself, the engraver needs another one for the harrow. As soon as the man has been firmly strapped on to it, the bed is set in motion. It quivers wih tiny rapid vibrations, moving sideways as well as up and down. You may have seen similar contraptions in certain sanatoriums, but there is a difference: in our bed all the movements are precisecly calculated, for they have to coincide exactly with the movements of the harrow. And it is actually the harrow itself that is in charge of executing the sentence.

SCHOLAR. And what exactly is the sentence?

OFFICER. You don't know that either? [bites his lips] Forgive me if my explanations appear to be poorly organized. I have to apologize. The explanations used to be given by the commander himself, but the new commander has chosen to shirk this honorary duty. Still, that such a distinguished visitor - [Visitor tries to dismiss this compliment with both hands, but Officer insists] that such a distinguished visitor has not even

been informed about the manner of our sentencing, this is again a new development which [he seems to be on he verge of uttering a curse but suppresses it]...I was not told about this, so I can't be blamed. As a matter of fact, I am the person most qualified to explain our sentencing methods, since here [pats his breast pocket] I have all the relevant original designs by the former commander himself.

SCHOLAR. Original designs by the commander himself? Did he combine all these functions in his own person? I mean, being a soldier, a judge, an engineer, a chemist, and a graphic designer too?

OFFICER [nodding, with a fixed, pensive expression] He did indeed. [Examines his hands again, finds that they are not clean enough to touch the drawings, goes over to the bucket, washes them once more and dries them thoroughly. Then he takes out a small leather portfolio and addresses the Scholar] Our judgment does not sound severe. The commandment that the condemned man has disobeyed is written on his body by the harrow. This man, for instance, [pointing to the prisoner] will have his body engraved with the words: 'Honor Your Superior!'

SCHOLAR [after a quick glance at the man who remains with his head bent forward, silently moving his lips, as though trying to absorb the Officer's speech, which is obviously beyond his grasp] Does he know his sentence?

OFFICER. He doesn't but...

SCHOLAR [interrupting] He does not know his own sentence?

OFFICER. He does not. [pauses briefly as though expecting the Scholar to add some clarification to his question] It would be pointless to inform him about it. He will find it engraved on his own body.

SCHOLAR [noticing that the man is looking at him, as though asking his opinion regarding the proceedings, leans forward again and adds] But the fact that he has been sentenced, that he must know?

OFFICER. Not that either. [smiles at the Scholar, as though expecting further peculiar comments]

SCHOLAR. No? [wipes his forehead] Then the man does not know even now how his defense was received?

OFFICER [without looking at the Scholar, as though talking to himself to avoid embarrassing his guest with obvious details] He had no opportunity to defend himself.

SCHOLAR [getting up from his chair] But he must have had an opportunity to defend himself!

OFFICER [changing his tactics, moves over to the Scholar, links arms with him and points at the condemned man, trying to impress his guest by taking him into his confidence]

[meanwhile, the condemned man, aware of the fact that the discussion is centering around him, has risen and is standing at attention while the soldier tightens the big chain]

OFFICER. The fact of the matter is as follows: in this penal colony I am the appointed judge. In spite of my youth. For I also assisted the former commander in all criminal matters and and I am more familiar with the machine than anybody else. My ruling principle is this: The evidence of guilt is always beyond doubt. Other courts of justice can not apply this ruling, for they are manyheaded and they have even higher courts above them. This is not the case here, at least it was not under the former commander. The new one, however, has already shown a desire to interfere in my court, but so far I have succeeded in resisting his efforts, and I will succeed in the future. - You asked for an explanation of this case; it is as simple as all the others. This man, who was assigned to a captain as an orderly and slept outside his door, was charged for sleeping while on duty. It is with/ part of his duty to get up at every stroke of the hour and to salute in front of the captain's door. Certainly not a heavy duty and a necessary one at that, for he has to be fresh and alert while on guard as well as during the rest of his duties. Last night the captain wanted to check whether the orderly was performing his duty. At the stroke of two he opened his door and found him curled up asleep. He got his riding whip and struck the man across the face. Instead of getting up and asking his forgiveness, the man took hold of his master's legs, shook him and yelled: 'Drop that whip or I'll break your neck!' - These are the facts of the case. About an hour ago the captain came to see me, I wrote down his statements and immediately added the pronounced sentence. Then I ordered the man to be be put in chains. All that was very simple. If I had first summoned the man in to question him, it would have created unnecessary confusion. He would have lied, and if I had succeeded in refuting those lies, he would have replaced them by others and so forth. But now I've got hold of him and I won't let him go. - Is all this clear now? But it's getting late, the exceution should already have started, of the sentence and I'm not even done yet with the explanation of the machine.

[He urges the Scholar to return to his seat, steps back to the machine again and continues]

As you can see, the form of the harrow corresponds to the human body; this here is the harrow for the upper part, these are the harrows for the legs. For the head there is nothing but this little spike. Do you get the idea?

[He bends forward toward the Scholar with a friendly expression, prepared to elaborate his explanations. The Scholar

is visibly uncomfortable and unwilling to become involved in these bizarre proceedings. His uneasiness is reflected in the following]

SCHOLAR [speaking to himself] I don't understand the legal procedures here and these informations do not sound convincing to me. Still I have to admit that this is a penal colony where unusual measures are required and that therefore it may be necessary to proceed according to military rules in all matters. Perhaps the new commander will be able to establish a new and more humane procedure, but this seems to be too much for the limited understanding of this old boy here.

[The interior monologue, spoken in a moderate matter-of-fact tone,is a recording of the Scholar's voice transmitted to the audience by a microphone without interrupting the action on stage]

SCHOLAR [to the OFFICER] The commander ... I suppose the commander will be present at the execution?

OFFICER. [whose friendly expression has turned into a painfully distorted one] This is not at all certain. That's just why we have to hurry. Much to my regret, I'll even have to shorten my explanations. But anyway, tomorrow, after the machine has been thoroughly cleaned, (getting terribly soiled is its only drawback) I can still fill you in on some additional details. For now I'll stick to the bare essentials. - When the man lies on the bed and the bed begins to vibrate, the harrow is lowered on to the body. It is programmed to adjust itself to a point where its ends barely touch the body. Once this adjustment has been achieved, this steel cable immediately hardens to form a rod. And now the show begins. As an outsider you could not tell the difference between the varying degrees of punishment. The harrow appears to function indiscriminately. With each vibration its points pierce the body which is already vibrating on the bed. In order to enable everyone to verify the execution of the sentence, the harrow is made of glass. Attaching the needles created a number of technical problems, but we finally managed to solve them. We certainly spared no effort. And now everyone can observe through the glass how the inscription is transferred to the body. Don't you want to come closer and have a look at the needles?

[The Scholar gets up slowly, walks across and leans over the harrow]

OFFICER. You can see two types of needles in various arrangements. Each long needle has a short one next to it. The long one does the writing, and the short one squirts out water in order to rinse off the blood and to keep the writing clear. The bloody water is then conducted into these little grooves here and finally flows into the main gutter whose drain pipe leads into the pit.

[Officer indicates with his finger the course that the bloody water has to follow. In order to demonstrate the process

as vividly as possible, he holds out his cupped hands, as though to catch the flow at the opening of the drain pipe. At this point the Scholar raises his head and, with his hands groping behind his back, tries to return to his chair. Light on the center of stage reveals a change in the environment. The prisoner too has accepted the Officer's invitation to observe the mechanism of the harrow. He has pulled the sleepy soldier along on the chain and is now bending over the glass. Moving his eyes back and forth along the surface, he is trying to see what the two gentlemen had observed before him, but since he has no idea of the purpose, he does not succeed.]

[The Scholar, worried about the consequences, tries to drive him back, but the Officer interferes by taking hold of the Scholar with one hand and with the other picking up a clod of soil from the mound and throwing it at the soldier. The soldier looks up abruptly, and seeing what the prisoner has dared to do, immediately jumps into action. He drops his rifle, digs his heels into the ground and pulls the prisoner back so hard that he immediately falls down, then watches him reeling and rattling his chains.]

OFFICER [yelling] Stand him up! [notices that the Scholar has become distracted by the prisoner. Scholar is now leaning across the harrow, having lost all interest in it, just intent on finding out what is happening to the Prisoner]

OFFICER [again yelling] Handle him carefully! [He runs around the machine, grabs the prisoner below his armpits, and with the help of the soldier, finally gets him back on his feet after quite a bit of awkward acrobatics]

SCHOLAR. [after the Officer has returned to him] Now I know everything.

OFFICER. Except for the most important thing. [he takes hold of the Scholar's arm and points upward.] There in the engraver is the gearing that controls the movement of the harrow, and this gearing in turn is prepared to execute the design that expresses the sentence. I am still using the designs of the former commander. Here they are [removes a few sheets from the leather portfolio] but unfortunately I can not let you hold them. They are my most precious possession. Sit down, I'll show them to you from this distance, then you'll be able to see everything quite easily.

[Lifts up the first sheet. It is covered with labyrinthine lines, crossing and recrossing so profusely that there are hardly any white spaces left on the paper.]

OFFICER. Read it.

SCHOLAR. I can't.

OFFICER. But it's very clear.

SCHOLAR. It looks very artistic but I can't decipher it.

OFFICER [laughs and puts the portfolio away again] Yes, it's an unusual calligraphy, not meant for schoolchildren. One has to spend a long time studying it. Eventually you too would be able to read it. Of course, it is not supposed to be a simple script. Anyway, its purpose is not to kill immediately but on the average only in the course of twelve hours; after six hours the climax usually will be reached. So there have to be many, many ornaments to surround the actual writing. The writing itself forms only a small belt around the body; the rest of the body is reserved for decorations. Perhaps now you will be able to appreciate the work of the harrow and of the total design. Just have a look!

[He jumps on the ladder, turns a wheel, calls down]

OFFICER. Watch out! Step aside!

[The entire mechanism is set in motion. It is a spectacular performance, marred only by the screeching wheel. The Officer appears to be surprised by the noise, shakes his fist at the defective part, then makes an apologetic gesture toward the Scholar and climbs down hastily to observe the mechanism from below. Something is still not right, and only he seems to know what it is. When he has located the problem, he climbs up the ladder again, thrusts both hands inside the engraver, then, to save time, slides down one of the poles and, with a tremendous effort, attempts to address his message to the Scholar above the noise]

OFFICER. Do you understand the procedure? The harrow begins to write; when it has completed the first layout of the writing on the man's back, the layer of cotton starts rolling and slowly moves the body on its side in order to create more space for the harrow. Meanwhile the bloodimprinted parts come to rest on the cotton layer, whose special treatment immediately staunches and prepares the area for a deeper penetration of the writing. With every new rotation of the body, the spikes on the edge of the harrow rip the cotton from the wounds, then throw it in the pit, and now the harrow can go on with its work. So its writing keeps penetrating deeper and deeper throughout those twelve hours. During the first six hours the condemned man is alive almost as before, except for the pain. After two hours the gag is removed because the man has no strength left for screaming. Here, this electrically heated bowl near the head contains some warmed rice gruel, permitting the man, if he feels like it, to take in as much as he can reach with his tongue. I can't think of anyone who ever missed this chance, and believe me, I've seen them all. Only around the sixth hour he finds no more pleasure in eating. Then I usually kneel down here to observe the phenomenon. The man rarely swallows the last bit, he only pushes it around in his mouth and

finally spits it out into the pit. Then I have to move over so I won't get splattered. But after that, around the sixth hour, you should see how quiet the man becomes. Even the dullest mind begins to see the light. It starts around the eyes. From there it spreads. A sight that could tempt you to join him under the harrow. There's nothing else happening, only that the man begins to decipher the writing. He purses his lips as though he were listening. As you have seen, it is not easy to decipher the writing with your eyes, but our man deciphers it through his wounds. Of course, it is a lot of work; he needs six hours to complete it. But then the harrow spears him altogether and throws him into the pit where he splashes down on the bloody water and the cotton. This is the end of the procedure, and we, myself and the soldier, bury him on the spot.

[The Scholar, with his hands in his pockets, observes the work of the machine. The convict also watches it but without any sign of comprehension. He is bent over slightly to follow the movement of the swaying needles when the Soldier, at a sign from the Officer, uses a knife to slash the man's shirt and pants from behind, so that they fall to the ground. The Convict tries to pick up the falling pieces to cover his nakedness, but the Soldier lifts him up and shakes the last shreds off him. Now the Officer adjusts the mechanism, and in the momentary silence the convict is placed underneath the harrow. The chains are replaced by the straps. At first the Convict appears to be almost relieved. Now the harrow moves down to a slightly lower level, adjusting itself to the convict's slight figure. When the needle points touch his skin, he shudders. While the Soldier is busy strapping his right hand, the man stretches out his left in the direction of the Scholar. The Officer keeps observing the Scholar from the side, trying to gauge his reaction to the demonstration. The strap intended for the wrist gets torn; probably the Soldier had pulled it too hard. He now shows the torn piece to the Officer to enlist his help. The Officer walks over to him, his face still turned to the Scholar while he explains:]

OFFICER. The machine consists of so many different parts that inevitably something has to tear or break once in a while. But that should not affect one's overall judgment of its value. As to the strap, there's no problem finding a substitute. I'm going to use a chain instead; of course it will somewhat interfere with the delicacy of the vibration in the right arm. [he attaches the chain] The means available for the maintenance of the machine are now severely reduced. Under the former commander I had free access to a cash fund exclusively for this purpose. Originally we had a storage depot in which all sorts of replacement parts were kept. I confess that I may have used it rather extravagantly, I mean before, not now, as the new commander claims; but he turns everything into a pretext to oppose the old institutions. Now he himself is in charge of the machine fund, and when I ask for a new strap, the torn one has to

be submitted as proof; the new one takes ten days to be delivered, and furthermore it is of inferior quality and not of much use. But how am I supposed to work the machine without straps? That's something nobody cares about.

[During his last speech, the Officer makes a great effort to communicate inspite of the noise of machine. He shouts his explanations at the Scholar rather rapidly and monotonously, with the effect that not every word can be understood, especially in the beginning. To compensate, he continues using dramatic gestures to emphasize the importance of his communication.

(An alternate possibility of dealing with the problem would be to control the noise of the machine by letting it screech only intermittently, i.e. when the cog touches a certain spot.)

[The Officer has just managed to insert the felt gag into the Convict's mouth. At this moment, the man, unable to control his nausea, closes his eyes and starts to vomit. With a cry of rage the Officer hastily pulls the convict up by graspingt the stump and trying to turn the man's head toward the pit, but it is too late and the vomit is flowing down the machine. The Officer is beside himself, shouting and shaking the brass rods in a blind rage.]

OFFICER. What a mess! It's all the commander's fault! My machine is getting soiled like a pigsty! [with shaking hands he points to the disaster area] After I've spent hours trying to make the commander understand that no food should be served to the condemned man on the day before the execution. But our new new gentle treatment advocates would not accept that. It's the commander's ladies who stuff the man's throat with sweets before he's taken away. All his life he has fed on stinking fish, and now he's supposed to eat sweets! I would have no objections, but why don't I at least get the new felt gag that I've been requesting for the last three months? How can anyone not be nauseated with this felt plug in his mouth, the same plug that over a hundred men have sucked and chewed on as they were dying?

[The convict has put his head down and looks relaxed while the Soldier is busy cleaning the machine with the man's shirt].

[The Officer moves toward the Scholar, who tries to step back, but the Officer holds on to his hand and takes him aside.]

OFFICER. I want to speak a few words with you in strict confidence. Is that alright with you?

SCHOLAR. Yes, certainly. [He listens with his eyes lowered]

OFFICER. This procedure and this execution that you now have a chance to admire have at present no public support in our colony. I am the only representative of the old commander's

legacy, and I'm also the only one known to promote his ideas. However, it has become impossible for me even to think of any further development of the procedure, since it takes all my energies to conserve what is left. When the old commander was alive, the colony was full of his supporters; though I have some of his persuasive power, I totally lack his authority; this is why his supporters went into hiding; there are still many left but no one admits it. If today, that is on the day of an execution, you go to a tea house and do some eavesdropping, you may hear only ambiguous remarks. All these people are still supporters, but under the present commander with his modern ideas they are totally useless to me. And now I'm asking you: Should one, for the sake of this commander and the women who influence him, allow this work of a lifetime [pointing at the machine] to go to waste? Can one let this happen? Even if one is only a foreigner spending a few days on our island? But there is hardly any time left; preparations are being made to undermine my judicial authority; conferences are taking place at headquarters from which I am excluded; even your visit today seems to me characteristic for the whole state of affairs; someone has cold feet and sends you, a foreigner, in his stead.

[Insert: SCHOLAR. I'm trying to understand your position, but I'm afraid all this is way beyond my grasp. As you just said, I am here as a foreign visitor without any legal authority. The purpose of my visit is only to observe and certainly not to interfere in your internal affairs.

OFFICER [frantically] Please hear me out and let me give you some idea of what things were like in the past!]

How different the former executions used to be. Already on the day before, the entire valley was overflowing with people. They all came just to watch. Early in the morning the commander arrived with his ladies; a flourish of trumpets awoke the entire camp; I announced that everything was ready; the company - no high official was allowed to be absent - took their seats around the machine; this bunch of cane chairs is a pathetic remainder of that time. The machine glistened in its freshly cleaned splendor; I used new replacement parts for almost every execution. Before hundreds of eyes - all spectators stood on tiptoe as far back as those hills - the condemned man was placed under the harrow by the commander himself. What any common soldier may do today was at that time my function as presiding judge, and I considered it an honor. And now the execution began! Not a false note interfered with the work of the machine. Some people even stopped watching and rested in the sand with their eyes closed; they all knew: Justice is being done.

In the silence all you could hear were the sighs of the condemned man, muted by the felt. Today the machine is no longer able to extract an audible sigh from the prisoner; it's all absorbed by the felt; but at that time the engraving needles exuded a caustic solution which we aren't allowed to use any

more. Well, and then there was the sixth hour! It was impossible to grant the requests of all those who wanted to view it from up close. The commander, in his great wisdom, gave the order to let the children have first choice. Because of my profession I was always permitted to remain close by. Often I would squat there, holding two little kids, one in each arm. How we all felt the radiance of that martyred face in front of us spreading on our own, how we all basked in the glow of justice finally attained and already vanishing! What great times these were, my dear comrade!

[The Officer seems to have forgotten who is standing before him; he has put his arm around the Scholar, resting his head on his shoulder. The Scholar, visibly embarrassed, tries to fix his gaze on something beyond the Officer's head.

[Spotlight on center stage (?) where the Soldier has finished cleaning up the machine and is now adding another portion of rice to the bowl. The condemned man, who seems to have completely recovered, immediately makes an effort to reach the food with his tongue. The Soldier repeatedly tries to push him away, but after a while he uses his hands to feed himself, ignoring the prisoner.]

OFFICER [realizing that he has gone too far] I didn't mean to move you with my story; I know it is impossible to bring these times back to life today. Anyway, the machine is still working and speaking for itself. It works and speaks for itself even though it stands alone in this valley. And it all still ends with the body's incredibly gentle gliding flight before it comes to rest in the pit, even though there are no longer hundreds of people swarming around it like flies, as they used to. At that time we had to install a strong railing around the pit, but that was torn down long ago.

[The Scholar, trying to withdraw his face from the Officer, looks around aimlessly. The Officer, who believes his visitor is looking at the desolate valley, takes hold of his hands, turns around him to meet his eyes]

OFFICER. Do you realize the disgrace... the desecration?

[Scholar does not answer. Officer lets go of him for a while, stands with his legs spread, hands on his hips, silently gazing at the ground. Then he smiles reassuringly at the Scholar]

OFFICER. You did not see me yesterday, but I was near you when the commander invited you to participate in today's event. I heard the invitation. I know the commander. I understood immediately what his intention was. Though he has the power to proceed against me, he does not yet dare to, but instead he wants to expose me to your judgment, that of a distinguished foreigner. His calculations are ingenious; this is your second day on the island, you did not know the old commander and his ideas, you are

powers in this penal colony. If his opinion is as determined as you believe, then I'm afraid that will be the end of this procedure without any need for my modest assistance.

[The Officer does not get the message. He shakes his head, looks briefly at the prisoner and the soldier who are both startled and stop eating the rice; then the officer walks up close to the Scholar, and with lowered eyes and lowered voice, attempts a different approach]

OFFICER. You do not know the commander; to him as well as to the rest of us you appear to be - please forgive the expression - a sort of innocent bystander; your influence, believe me, is much greater than you imagine. I can't tell you how happy I was when I heard that you alone were going to be present at the execution. This order from the commander was meant to be a strike against me, but now I'm using it to my own advantage. Undistracted by false insinuations and insolent glances - which would have been inevitable with a large attendance at the execution - you have heard my explanations, seen the machine and are now about to watch the execution. I suppose your verdict is formed already; if there should be minor uncertainties, they will be eliminated by the sight of the execution. And now I am coming to you with my request: Please help me! Help me prevail against the commander!

SCHOLAR. [interrupting] How could I do that? That is completely impossible. I can help you as little as I can harm you.

OFFICER [clenching his fists] You can! You certainly can! I have a plan that is bound to succeed. You think your influence is insufficient. I know that it is not. But even assuming that you are right: is it not all the more necessary to try everything, even if it should prove to be insufficient, in order to preserve this procedure? Now listen to my plan. In order to make it succeed it will be of the utmost importance that today in the presence of others you make a consistent effort to withhold your judgment regarding the procedure. If you are not asked directly, you should definitely not speak at all; your remarks, whenever necessary, should be brief and vague. People should notice that it is difficult for you to speak about this, that you are embittered, that, if you were to speak openly, you would have to swear and curse. Of course, I don't expect you to lie, nothing of the sort. You should only give short answers, like: 'Yes, I have watched the execution,' or 'Yes, I heard all the explanations.' Only that, nothing else. As to the bitterness that people should notice, there will be reason enough, though not what the commander may think. Of course, he will misunderstand it completely and interpret it in his own way. This is what my plan is based on. Tomorrow there will be a major conference at headquarters, attended by all the higher officials, with the commander as president. Of course, the commander knows how to turn such conferences into public spectacles. A gallery was built

presiding

to accommodate a crowd of spectators. I am forced to participate in the conferences, but it makes me sick to think of it. Now you will certainly be invited to attend this meeting; if you act according to my plan today, the invitation will turn into an urgent plea. If, however, for some unfathomable reason you are not invited, you would have to request an invitation; then there can be no doubt that you will receive it.

Thus tomorrow you will be sitting with the ladies in the commander's box. He will frequently look up to make sure you are there. After a number of insignificant, ridiculous agenda items, intended only for the audience - mostly dealing with harbor construction, again and again harbor construction - the issue of the judicial procedure will be addressed. If this is not brought up by the commander, or not soon enough, I will see to it that it is done. I'll get up and report on today's execution. Very briefly, just this report. Such a report is actually not expected there, but I'll do it anyway. The commander will thank me, as usual with a friendly smile, and now he can no longer control himself, he has to seize the opportunity. 'This moment,' he will say more or less, we received the report of today's execution. I only wish to add to this report that this particular execution was attended by the great scholar who, as you know, is honoring our colony by his visit. Our meeting today also gains in significance due to the honor of his presence. Should we not ask this great explorer about his opinion regarding our traditional mode of execution as well as the preliminary procedure?' Of course, there'll be great applause, agreement on all sides. I'll be sure tomake the loudest noise. The commander bows to you and says: 'Then, in the name of all present, I am now asking your opinion.' This is the moment for you to step over to the railing. Place your hands on it so everyone can see them, otherwise the ladies will take hold of your fingers and fondle them.

And now finally you are going to speak. I don't know how I'll bear the suspense of waiting for this moment. When you start speaking you should let go of all restraints. Make a big noise about the truth, lean over the railing, roar, yes indeed, roar your opinion, your unshakable opinion at the commander. But perhaps you don't want to do that, it's not in your nature, perhaps in your country people behave differently under such circumstances; that would be alright too, that also would be completely sufficient; don't get up at all, just say a few words, you may even whisper them so they can barely be heard by the officials below you, that too will be sufficient, you don't even have to mention the lack of public interest in the execution, the shrieking gear, the torn strap, the disgusting felt, - all the rest I'll take care of, and, believe me, if my speech does not drive him out of the hall, it will force him down on his knees so that he has to confess: Old commander, I bow to you. - This is my plan. Will you help me carry it out? Of course, you will, and more than that, you will have to.

[Toward the end of his harangue, the Officer has taken hold

of the Scientist by both arms and, breathing heavily, he looks closely at his face. His vehement shouting of the last sentences has aroused both the soldier and the prisoner; without understanding what it is all about, they have stopped eating and are looking at the Scholar, waiting for his reaction.]

SHOLAR. [calmly but resolutely] No.

[Officer blinks several times but keeps his eyes on Scholar]

SCHOLAR. Would you like an explanation? [Officer nods.] I am opposed to this procedure. Even before you took me into your confidence -I can assure you that I shall never betray it - I was wondering already whether I had the right to intervene against this procedure and whether my intervention would have the slightest chance of success. It was clear to me whom I should turn to first: the commander, of course. You made it even clearer to me without, however, strengthening my resolution - on the contrary, I find your sincere conviction moving even though it does not affect my resolution.

[Officer remains silent, turns to the machine, holds on to one of the brass rods, then, leaning back slightly, looks up to the engraver, as though checking to see if everything is in order.]

[The Soldier and the Convict seem to have become friends. The Convict, though hampered in his movements by the rigid straps, makes signs to the soldier who then bends down towards him. Convict whispers to Soldier. and Soldier nods.]

SCHOLAR [moving over to the Officer] You don't know yet what I intend to do. I'm going to give the commander my opinion of the procedure, but not in an official meeting; I'll talk to him privately. I won't even be here long enough to attend any kind of meeting. I am sailing already tomorrow morning, or at least I'll be going on board.

OFFICER [does not appear to have listened; he speaks softly, as though to himself] So the procedure has not convinced you. Well, then the time has come.[He now appears to be fully present, looks at the Scholar with wide open eyes, as though expecting some form of cooperation]

SCHOLAR. The time for what?

OFFICER [does not answer; talking to the convict] You are free. [Convict stunned, does not react] Well, I said you're free.

[Convict becomes agitated, starts to struggle inside the harrow]

OFFICER [shouting] you're ruining the straps. Don't move!

We're opening them. [gives a sign to the Soldier, then assists him in unbuckling the contraptions.]

[Convict turns his face from Officer, to Soldier, to Scholar, laughing wordlessly to himself]

OFFICER [to Soldier] pull him out! [from now on he shows hardly any interest in the Convict. He returns to the Scholar, again pulls out his small portfolio, looks for a certain page in it, and having retrieved it, shows it to the Scholar.

OFFICER [to Scholar] Read this!

SCHOLAR. I can't. I told you before that I can't read these pages.

OFFICER. Just take a close look at this page [stands next to the Scholar to read with him. Scholar shakes his head. Officer raises his little finger high across the paper, to make it easier for the Scholar to read, without permitting him to hold it. The Scholar tries but still finds it impossible.]

OFFICER [spelling it out] B E J U S T. Be Just! that's what it says. Now you can read it, can't you?

[The Scholar bends so close to the paper that the Officer again moves it further away. Scholar remains silent but it is obvious that he still could not read the inscription.]

OFFICER. [repeats] Be just! it says.

SCHOLAR. Could be. I believe that's what it says.

OFFICER. Good enough. [at least partly satified, he climbs up the ladder holding the page; with great care he positions the sheet inside the engraver and apparently readjusts the entire gear mechanism; it is arduous work which takes quite a while. Some tiny gears seem to be involved; occasionally the Officer's head disappears altogether in the engraver where he is testing some details.]

[The Scholar is craning his neck to observe the Officer at work. Bright sunlight is now flooding the scene. The Scholar's discomfort is becoming increasingly evident in the course of the silent action. The Soldier and the Convict are completely involved with each other. The Soldier uses the point of his bayonet to pull the Convict's shirt and pants out of the pit. He throws the soiled clothes into the sand and motions to the Convict to wash them in the bucket. When the convict has finished and proceeds to put his clothes on again, both Soldier and Convict burst into loud laughter, realizing that the clothes had been split in back. The Convict now tries to entertain the

Soldier by dancing around in circles and displaying his bare backside to the other who is sitting on the ground laughing and slapping his knees. Occasionally, the one or the other points to the gentlemen to indicate that they are not totally unaware of their environment.]

[When the Officer has finished his work on top, he surveys the whole apparatus with a satisfied smile and closes the cover of the engraver that had been open before. He then steps down, looks into the pit, then at the convict, noticing that he has taken out his clothes. He walks over to the bucket to wash his hands, but refrains when he sees the filth inside and attempts to clean his hands in the sand, an unsatisfactory attempt. Then he stands up and unbuttons his tunic. While doing this, he finds the ladies' handkerchiefs that he had stuffed behind his collar.

OFFICER. Here are your handkerchiefs. [throws them to the convict] Presents from the ladies [he adds to the Scholar] Then continues undressing completely and quickly. Still he treats every part of his clothing with loving care. stroking the silver cords on his tunic and shaking a tassel back into its shape. When he has finished this ritual with each individual piece, he throws it abruptly into the pit. The last piece left is his short sword with its belt. He pulls the sword from its sheath and breaks it in two, then gathers the parts together and hurls them down so violently than one can hear a clattering sound from the pit. Now he stands there naked. The Scholar bites his lips but does not interfere]

[The Soldier and the Convict at first do not understand anything and are not even watching. The convict, pleased to get his handkerchiefs back, is engaged in a playful fight with the Soldier who has snatched them from him with a clever trick. The Convict tries to pull them out from behind the Soldier's belt, and they continue trying to trick each other in this manner like children playing teasing games.] [The Officer now demonstrates his complete command of the machine. As he raises his hand to the harrow, it moves up and down several times until it has reached the correct position to receive him. The moment he touches the edge of the bed, it begins to vibrate; when the felt stump approaches his mouth, he is at first reluctant to receive it, but after a moment he accepts it. Everything is ready except the straps which are hanging loosely at the sides. The Officer is prepared to start the procedure without the straps; he has stretched out one foot to kick the crank that controls the engraver. At this moment the Convict notices the loose straps and excitedly signals this to the Soldier. They both run over to complete the preparation by strapping the Officer in. He now has to pull his foot back and to let the two take over. The Scholar remains a passive witness.

[As soon as the straps are attached, the machine begins to work. The bed vibrates, the needles are dancing on the skin, the harrow is moving up and down. Everything is moving quietly. The

Scholar looks over to the Soldier and the Convict. The convict takes a lively interest in the machine. He keeps bending down or stretching his body, constantly pointing at something to show to the Soldier. The Scholar becomes irritated by this performance.

SCHOLAR. Go home, both of you! I'll stay here.

[The Soldier seems to be willing to leave, but the Convict seems to consider this order as a form of punishment. With clasped hands he begs to be permitted to stay, and when the Scholar shakes his head, he even kneels down. The Scholar realizes that he has to use more drastic means and attempts to drive the men out. At this moment a strange noise is heard. (The machine had been silent before, without anyone noticing.) The Scholar looks up, wondering about the cause. Slowly the cover of the engraver begins to lift and then opens completely. The cogs of a wheel become visible and rise, then the whole gear emerges, giving the impression that some immense force is squeezing the engraver so tightly that there is no more room for the wheel; the wheel keeps turning toward the edge of the engraver, falls down, rolls along briefly on the ground, and then lies flat in the sand. Another one repeats the process, and many more follow; cogwheels of all sizes are tumbling out until it seems hardly possible that there could be any more left inside the engraver. After a brief pause, a new and particularly numerous group rises, falls down, tumbles in the sand and comes to rest.

The Convict is so delighted by this process that he tries to get hold of one gear after the other, motioning to the Soldier to help him, but at the last moment withdrawing his hand, afraid of being hurt by the next approaching cog.

The Scholar is greatly alarmed at the sight of the machine which is obviously falling apart. While he had been watching the tumbling cogwheels he had failed to observe the rest of the machine. Now, as he is bending over the harrow, he notices that it is not writing but piercing and that the bed is no longer rotating the body but lifting it up into the needles. He wants to do something, perhaps stop the machine, stretches out his hands. Now the harrow with the impaled body has turned to the side in the position it was supposed to reach only in the twelfth hour. Blood, undiluted by water, is flowing down (gushing down); everything is out of control. The body itself is not released by the long needles but remains suspended above the pit.]

SCHOLAR [yells to Soldier and Convict] Come on, help me! Do something!

[Since they are unwilling to come - the convict actually turns his back to the scene, the Scholar runs over to them and forcefully pushes them toward the officer's head while he takes hold of the feet. After an almost involuntary look at the dead man's face, he says softly, speaking to himself, almost inaudibly:

(Final Solution or Dissolution to be added)

6th Copy

IN THE PENAL COLONY

CHARACTERS

The VISITING SCHIENTIST (SCHOLAR), between 35 and 40, younger looking, wears comfortable casual clothes suitable for the tropics.

The OFFICER, around 30, in complete military outfit, including officer's cap, sword and scabbard.

The SOLDIER, no distinguishing characteristics, wears a nondescript uniform; his official status is indicated by a rifle.

The CONVICT (CONDEMNED MAN), dressed in rags, unkempt and uncouth, does not use speech.

SCENE

A small sandy valley basin surrounded by barren slopes, cast in a yellowish grey light. The entire action takes place outside. In the foreground left a secluded area with a few scattered chairs; the right side is occupied by the execution machine which is installed on a somewhat elevated level to permit a clear view of the details described and observed in the course of the action. Aside from the audience in the theater there are no other witnesses to the execution.

OFFICER. It's a very special machine, as you will agree when you see it in action. Please bear with me for another minute or two while I make sure that all the parts are in proper working condition. Why don't you sit down and make yourself as comfortable as you can in this abominable heat.

SCHOLAR [obviously uncomfortable, walks back and forth in the limited space, opens his collar, sighs] Don't worry about me. This is what I'm here for. Though I must admit I don't have much experience with machines.

[Light on Officer checking the machine. At first he examines the lower portion which is deeply embedded in the ground, getting his hands and arms down into it; he then climbs to the top of the ladder to examine the upper parts]

[During the next few moments of silence, while the Scholar continues pacing, the spotlight follows him across the scene to include the Convict and the Soldier who are sitting next to each other on the ground center stage. A number of chains and shackles are fastened around the Prisoner's neck, wrists and ankles, all of them interconnected with the heavy waist chain the end of which is held tight by the Soldier.]

OFFICER. Now it's all set. [He climbs down the ladder,

visibly exhausted; breathing through his mouth, he pulls out two dainty ladies' handkerchiefs from of his collar, inspects them for a moment and stuffs them back in.]
Do you have a question?

SCHOLAR [is still trying to take in the different aspects of his surroundings; after a brief pause to Officer]
Aren't these uniforms much too heavy for the tropics?

OFFICER [who has started to wash his hands in a bucket] Of course, they are, but they represent our homeland, and we certainly don't want to lose our homeland, do we? Now please have a look at this device. [He indicates the machine while drying his hands] Up to this point it had to be serviced by hand, but from now on it's going to function all on its own.

[SCHOLAR nods and tries to follow the Officer's explanations.]

OFFICER. Of course, occasional malfunctions are inevitable; though I hope there won't be any today, but still one has to be prepared. After all, the machine is expected to work without interruption for twelve hours at a time. But even if occasional interruptions do occur, they are only very minor ones that can be dealt with immediately. Why don't you sit down now?
[Pulls out a chair and offers it to the Visitor.]

[The Visitor accepts and, looking down from his chair, he realizes that he is sitting on the edge of a pit, separated from it by the excavated soil that is shaped into a mound; the machine stands on the opposite side] (see sketch)

OFFICER, [noticing the Visitor's puzzled expression and anticipating a question] (Insertion: This is the pit, an important part of the procedure. But it would only be confusing if I started talking about that now.) I don't know if the Commander already discussed the machine with you? [Scholar makes a vague gesture] Never mind, I was going to start at the beginning anyway. [He takes hold of a crank handle and leans against it during the following elaborations]
This entire apparatus is the exclusive invention of our former commander. I had the good fortune to assist him from the very beginning, and I also participated in all future experiments until their successful conclusion. Of course, he alone deserves the full credit for this invention. Have you heard about our former commander? You haven't? Well, I'm not exaggerating when I say that the organization of the entire penal colony is exclusively his achievement. Already at the time he died, we, I mean his friends, knew that under his leadership the colony had become so completely selfsufficient that his successor, no matter how many bright new plans he might be hatching, would be unable to bring about any changes in the old system, certainly not in

the forseeable future. And our prediction has come true; the new commander had to realize this. Too bad that you did not know the former commander! - But I'm just rambling, and his invention stands right here in front of us. As you can see, it consists of three parts. In the course of time people started to adopt something like pet names for the individual parts. The lower part here is called the bed, the upper part is the engraver, and this here, the central suspended part, is called the harrow.

SCHOLAR. [somewhat distracted, as though he had difficulty concentrating, shields his eyes with his hands against the penetrating sunlight that is now invading the scene.]

The harrow?

[He makes an effort to focus his gaze on the Officer who performs his duty in a tight full-dress tunic; Spotlight also closes in on Officer being completely absorbed in his task, making minor adjustments with a screwdriver while he continues with his explanations.]

OFFICER. Yes, the harrow. The name fits perfectly.

[Spotlight again follows the Scientist's gaze as he turns his attention on the two men on the ground. The Soldier seems to be in a similar state of diminished awareness as the Scientist. He has wound the Prisoner's chain around both wrists, leans with one hand on his rifle and has dropped his head back on his neck. The Prisoner, obviously without having any idea of the proceedings makes a tremendous effort to follow the Officer's explanations. With an expression of somnolent doggedness he directs his gaze at whatever the Officer is pointing at. After the Scholar's interruption, both the Prisoner and the Officer look at the Visitor.]

OFFICER. You are wondering about the name I mentioned. Yes, you have heard it correctly. It is designed like a harrow, with its needles arranged like the spikes (teeth?) of a harrow, and it even moves like a harrow, though only in a limited space and much more elegantly. Anyway, you will soon understand what I mean.

This is the bed that the prisoner is placed on.- You see, I want to start by describing the machine and then continue with the procedure itself. This will make it easier for you to follow. I also have to mention that one of the cogs inside the engraver has been ground down to such a point that it screeches badly when it is in use; this makes it almost impossible to communicate. Unfortunately, spare parts are extremely difficult to obtain here. - So this is the bed, as I said. It is fully padded with a layer of cotton; the purpose of this you'll find out later. The convicted man is placed face-down on top of the cotton layer, naked of course. These here are the straps for the hands, these for the feet, this one for the neck to keep it firmly attached.
Here, at the head of the bed, where, as I mentioned before, the man lies . . . .

face-down first, there is this little felt stump which can easily be manipulated to fit exactly into the man's mouth. Its purpose is to prevent any screaming and tongue biting. Of course, the man must accept the felt piece, for otherwise the neck strap would break his neck.

SCHOLAR. This is cotton?

OFFICER [smiling] Yes, Sir. You may touch it yourself. [takes the Scholar's hand and leads it back and forth on the bed] It is a specially prepared type of cotton, that's why you didn't recognize it. I'll come back to it later.

[Scholar now shows more interest in the machine. Shielding his eyes against the sun, he appears to measure it from top to bottom. It is a large structure of unusual design. The bed and the engraver have the same dimensions and look like two dark chests. The engraver, placed about seven feet above the bed, is connected to its corners by four brass rods which reflect the intense sunlight. The harrow appears between the two chestlike constructions suspended by a steel rope.]

[The Officer, noticing the Scholar's increased interest, interrupts his explanations to allow the visitor more time for studying the details. The condemned man, unable to place his hands over his eyes, imitates the visitor by trying to crane his neck and squinting in the direction of the machine.]

SCHOLAR. So now you have the man lying there. [He leans back against the chair and crosses his legs]

OFFICER [pushing his cap back slightly and wiping his forehead] That's right. Now let me go on. The bed as well as the engraver both have their own electric battery. The bed needs one for itself, the engraver needs another one for the harrow. As soon as the man has been firmly strapped on to it, the bed is set in motion. It quivers wih tiny rapid vibrations, moving sideways as well as up and down. You may have seen similar contraptions in certain sanatoriums, but there is a difference: in our bed all the movements are precisecly calculated, for they have to coincide exactly with the movements of the harrow. And it is actually the harrow itself that is in charge of executing the sentence.

SCHOLAR. And what exactly is the sentence?

OFFICER. You don't know that either? [bites his lips] Forgive me if my explanations appear to be poorly organized. I have to apologize. The explanations used to be given by the commander himself, but the new commander has chosen to shirk this honorary duty. Still, that such a distinguished visitor - [Visitor tries to dismiss this compliment with both hands, but Officer insists] that such a distinguished visitor has not even

been informed about the manner of our sentencing, this is again a new development which [he seems to be on he verge of uttering a curse but suppresses it]...I was not told about this, so I can't be blamed. As a matter of fact, I am the person most qualified to explain our sentencing methods, since here [pats his breast pocket] I have all the relevant original designs by the former commander himself.

SCHOLAR. Original designs by the commander himself? Did he combine all these functions in his own person? I mean, being a soldier, a judge, an engineer, a chemist, and a graphic designer too?

OFFICER [nodding, with a fixed, pensive expression] He did indeed. [Examines his hands again, finds that they are not clean enough to touch the drawings, goes over to the bucket, washes them once more and dries them thoroughly. Then he takes out a small leather portfolio and addresses the Scholar] Our judgment does not sound severe. The commandment that the condemned man has disobeyed is written on his body by the harrow. This man, for instance, [pointing to the prisoner] will have his body engraved with the words: 'Honor Your Superior!'

SCHOLAR [after a quick glance at the man who remains with his head bent forward, silently moving his lips, as though trying to absorb the Officer's speech, which is obviously beyond his grasp] Does he know his sentence?

OFFICER. He doesn't but...

SCHOLAR [interrupting] He does not know his own sentence?

OFFICER. He does not. [pauses briefly as though expecting the Scholar to add some clarification to his question] It would be pointless to inform him about it. He will find it engraved on his own body.

SCHOLAR [noticing that the man is looking at him, as though asking his opinion regarding the proceedings, leans forward again and adds] But the fact that he has been sentenced, that he must know?

OFFICER. Not that either. [smiles at the Scholar, as though expecting further peculiar comments]

SCHOLAR. No? [wipes his forehead] Then the man does not know even now how his defense was received?

OFFICER [without looking at the Scholar, as though talking to himself to avoid embarrassing his guest with obvious details] He had no opportunity to defend himself.

SCHOLAR [getting up from his chair] But he must have had an opportunity to defend himself!

OFFICER [changing his tactics, moves over to the Scholar, links arms with him and points at the condemned man, trying to impress his guest by taking him into his confidence]

[meanwhile, the condemned man, aware of the fact that the discussion is centering around him, has risen and is standing at attention while the soldier tightens the big chain]

OFFICER. The fact of the matter is as follows: in this penal colony I am the appointed judge. In spite of my youth. For I also assisted the former commander in all criminal matters and and I am more familiar with the machine than anybody else. My ruling principle is this: The evidence of guilt is always beyond doubt. Other courts of justice can not apply this ruling, for they are manyheaded and they have even higher courts above them. This is not the case here, at least it was not under the former commander. The new one, however, has already shown a desire to interfere in my court, but so far I have succeeded in resisting his efforts, and I will succeed in the future. - You asked for an explanation of this case; it is as simple as all the others. This man, who was assigned to a captain as an orderly and slept outside his door, was charged for sleeping while on duty. It is part of his duty to get up at every stroke of the hour and to salute in front of the captain's door. Certainly not a heavy duty and a necessary one at that, for he has to be fresh and alert while on guard as well as during the rest of his duties. Last night the captain wanted to check whether the orderly was performing his duty. At the stroke of two he opened his door and found him curled up asleep. He got his riding whip and struck the man across the face. Instead of getting up and asking his forgiveness, the man took hold of his master's legs, shook him and yelled: 'Drop that whip or I'll break your neck!' - These are the facts of the case. About an hour ago the captain came to see me, I wrote down his statements and immediately added the sentence. Then I ordered the man to be be put in chains. All that was very simple. If I had first summoned the man in to question him, it would have created unnecessary confusion. He would have lied, and if I had succeeded in refuting those lies, he would have replaced them by others and so forth. But now I've got hold of him and I won't let him go. - Is all this clear now? But it's getting late, the exceution should already have started, and I'm not even done yet with the explanation of the machine.

[He urges the Scholar to return to his seat, steps back to the machine again and continues]

As you can see, the form of the harrow corresponds to the human body; this here is the harrow for the upper part, these are the harrows for the legs. For the head there is nothing but this little spike. Do you get the idea?

[He bends forward toward the Scholar with a friendly expression, prepared to elaborate his explanations. The Scholar

is visibly uncomfortable and unwilling to become involved in these bizarre proceedings. His uneasiness is reflected in the following]

SCHOLAR [speaking to himself] I don't understand the legal procedures here and these informations do not sound convincing to me. Still I have to admit that this is a penal colony, where unusual measures are required and that therefore it may be necessary to proceed according to military rules in all matters. Perhaps the new commander will be able to establish a new and more humane procedure, but this seems to be too much for the limited understanding of this old boy here.

[The interior monologue, spoken in a moderate matter-of-fact tone, is a recording of the Scholar's voice transmitted to the audience by a microphone without interrupting the action on stage]

SCHOLAR [to the OFFICER] The commander ... I suppose the commander will be present at the execution?

OFFICER. [whose friendly expression has turned into a painfully distorted one] This is not at all certain. That's just why we have to hurry. Much to my regret, I'll even have to shorten my explanations. But anyway, tomorrow, after the machine has been thoroughly cleaned, (getting terribly soiled is its only drawback) I can still fill you in on some additional details. For now I'll stick to the bare essentials. - When the man lies on the bed and the bed begins to vibrate, the harrow is lowered on to the body. It is programmed to adjust itself to a point where its ends barely touch the body. Once this adjustment has been achieved, this steel cable immediately hardens to form a rod. And now the show begins. As an outsider you could not tell the difference between the varying degrees of punishment. The harrow appears to function indiscriminately. With each vibration its points pierce the body which is already vibrating on the bed. In order to enable everyone to verify the execution of the sentence, the harrow is made of glass. Attaching the needles created a number of technical problems, but we finally managed to solve them. We certainly spared no effort. And now everyone can observe through the glass how the inscription is transferred to the body. Don't you want to come closer and have a look at the needles?

[The Scholar gets up slowly, walks across and leans over the harrow]

OFFICER. You can see two types of needles in various arrangements. Each long needle has a short one next to it. The long one does the writing, and the short one squirts out water in order to rinse off the blood and to keep the writing clear. The bloody water is then conducted into these little grooves here and finally flows into the main gutter whose drain pipe leads into the pit.

[Officer indicates with his finger the course that the bloody water has to follow. In order to demonstrate the process

as vividly as possible, he holds out his cupped hands, as though to catch the flow at the opening of the drain pipe. At this point the Scholar raises his head and, with his hands groping behind his back, tries to return to his chair. Light on the center of stage reveals a change in the environment. The prisoner too has accepted the Officer's invitation to observe the mechanism of the harrow. He has pulled the sleepy soldier along on the chain and is now bending over the glass. Moving his eyes back and forth along the surface, he is trying to see what the two gentlemen had observed before him, but since he has no idea of the purpose, he does not succeed.]

[The Scholar, worried about the consequences, tries to drive him back, but the Officer interferes by taking hold of the Scholar with one hand and with the other picking up a clod of soil from the mound and throwing it at the soldier. The soldier looks up abruptly, and seeing what the prisoner has dared to do, immediately jumps into action. He drops his rifle, digs his heels into the ground and pulls the prisoner back so hard that he immediately falls down, then watches him reeling and rattling his chains.]

OFFICER [yelling] Stand him up! [notices that the Scholar has become distracted by the prisoner. Scholar is now leaning across the harrow, having lost all interest in it, just intent on finding out what is happening to the Prisoner]

OFFICER [again yelling] Handle him carefully! [He runs around the machine, grabs the prisoner below his armpits, and with the help of the soldier, finally gets him back on his feet after quite a bit of awkward acrobatics]

SCHOLAR. [after the Officer has returned to him] Now I know everything.

OFFICER. Except for the most important thing. [he takes hold of the Scholar's arm and points upward.] There-in the engraver is the gearing that controls the movement of the harrow, and this gearing in turn is prepared to execute the design that expresses the sentence. I am still using the designs of the former commander. Here they are [removes a few sheets from the leather portfolio] but unfortunately I can not let you hold them. They are my most precious possession. Sit down, I'll show them to you from this distance, then you'll be able to see everything quite easily.

[Lifts up the first sheet. It is covered with labyrinthine lines, crossing and recrossing so profusely that there are hardly any white spaces left on the paper.]

OFFICER. Read it.

SCHOLAR. I can't.

OFFICER. But it's very clear.

SCHOLAR. It looks very artistic but I can't decipher it.

OFFICER [laughs and puts the portfolio away again] Yes, it's an unusual calligraphy, not meant for schoolchildren. One has to spend a long time studying it. Eventually you too would be able to read it. Of course, it is not supposed to be a simple script. Anyway, its purpose is not to kill immediately but ~~on the average~~ only in the course of twelve hours; after six hours the climax usually will be reached. So there have to be many, many ornaments to surround the actual writing. The writing itself forms only a small belt around the body; the rest of the body is reserved for decorations. Perhaps now you will be able to appreciate the work of the harrow and of the total design. Just have a look!

[He jumps on the ladder, turns a wheel, calls down]

OFFICER. Watch out! Step aside!

[The entire mechanism is set in motion. It is a spectacular performance, marred only by the screeching wheel. The Officer appears to be surprised by the noise, shakes his fist at the defective part, then makes an apologetic gesture toward the Scholar and climbs down hastily to observe the mechanism from below. Something is still not right, and only he seems to know what it is. When he has located the problem, he climbs up the ladder again, thrusts both hands inside the engraver, then, to save time, slides down one of the poles and, with a tremendous effort, attempts to address his message to the Scholar above, the noise]

OFFICER. Do you understand the procedure? The harrow begins to write; when it has completed the first ~~layout of the writing~~ on the man's back, the layer of cotton starts rolling and slowly moves the body on its side in order to create more space for the harrow. Meanwhile the bloodimprinted parts come to rest on the cotton layer, ~~whose special treatment~~ immediately staunches and prepares the area for a deeper penetration of the writing. With every new rotation of the body, the spikes on the edge of the harrow rip the cotton from the wounds, then throw it in the pit, and now the harrow can go on with its work. So its writing keeps penetrating deeper and deeper throughout those twelve hours. During the first six hours the condemned man is alive almost as before, except for the pain. After two hours the gag is removed because the man has no strength left for screaming. Here, this electrically heated bowl near the head contains some warmed rice gruel, permitting the man, if he feels like it, to take in as much as he can reach with his tongue. I can't think of anyone who ever missed this chance, and believe me, I've seen them all. Only around the sixth hour he finds no more pleasure in eating. Then I usually kneel down here to observe the phenomenon. The man rarely swallows the last bit, he only pushes it around in his mouth and

finally spits it out into the pit. Then I have to move over so I won't get splattered. But after that, around the sixth hour, you should see how quiet the man becomes. Even the dullest mind begins to see the light. It starts around the eyes. From there it spreads. A sight that could tempt you to join him under the harrow. There's nothing else happening, only that the man begins to decipher the writing. He purses his lips as though he were listening. As you have seen, it is not easy to decipher the writing with your eyes, but our man deciphers it through his wounds. Of course, it is a lot of work; he needs six hours to complete it. But then the harrow spears him altogether and throws him into the pit where he splashes down on the bloody water and the cotton. This is the end of the procedure, and we, myself and the soldier, bury him on the spot.

[The Scholar, with his hands in his pockets, observes the work of the machine. The convict also watches it but without any sign of comprehension. He is bent over slightly to follow the movement of the swaying needles when the Soldier, at a sign from the Officer, uses a knife to slash the man's shirt and pants from behind, so that they fall to the ground. The Convict tries to pick up the falling pieces to cover his nakedness, but the Soldier lifts him up and shakes the last shreds off him. Now the Officer adjusts the mechanism, and in the momentary silence the convict is placed underneath the harrow. The chains are replaced by the straps. At first the Convict appears to be almost relieved. Now the harrow moves down to a slightly lower level, adjusting itself to the convict's slight figure. When the needle points touch his skin, he shudders. While the Soldier is busy strapping his right hand, the man stretches out his left in the direction of the Scholar. The Officer keeps observing the Scholar from the side, trying to gauge his reaction to the demonstration. The strap intended for the wrist gets torn; probably the Soldier had pulled it too hard. He now shows the torn piece to the Officer to enlist his help. The Officer walks over to him, his face still turned to the Scholar while he explains:]

OFFICER. The machine consists of so many different parts that inevitably something has to tear or break once in a while. But that should not affect one's overall judgment of its value. As to the strap, there's no problem finding a substitute. I'm going to use a chain instead; of course it will somewhat interfere with the delicacy of the vibration in the right arm. [he attaches the chain] The means available for the maintenance of the machine are now severely reduced. Under the former commander I had free access to a cash fund exclusively for this purpose. Originally we had a storage depot in which all sorts of replacement parts were kept. I confess that I may have used it rather extravagantly, I mean before, not now, as the new commander claims; but he turns everything into a pretext to oppose the old institutions. Now he himself is in charge of the machine fund, and when I ask for a new strap, the torn one has to

be submitted as proof; the new one takes ten days to be delivered, and furthermore it is of inferior quality and not of much use. But how am I supposed to work the machine without straps? That's something nobody cares about.

[During his last speech, the Officer makes a great effort to communicate inspite of the noise of machine. He shouts his explanations at the Scholar rather rapidly and monotonously, with the effect that not every word can be understood, especially in the beginning. To compensate, he continues using dramatic gestures to emphasize the importance of his communication.

(An alternate possibility of dealing with the problem would be to control the noise of the machine by letting it screech only intermittently, i.e. when the cog touches a certain spot.)

[The Officer has just managed to insert the felt gag into the Convict's mouth. At this moment, the man, unable to control his nausea, closes his eyes and starts to vomit. With a cry of rage the Officer hastily pulls the convict up by grasping the stump and trying to turn the man's head toward the pit, but it is too late and the vomit is flowing down the machine. The Officer is beside himself, shouting and shaking the brass rods in a blind rage.]

OFFICER. What a mess! It's all the commander's fault! My machine is getting soiled like a pigsty! [with shaking hands he points to the disaster area] After I've spent hours trying to make the commander understand that no food should be served to the condemned man on the day before the execution. But our new new gentle treatment advocates would not accept that. It's the commander's ladies who stuff the man's throat with sweets before he's taken away. All his life he has fed on stinking fish, and now he's supposed to eat sweets! I would have no objections, but why don't I at least get the new felt gag that I've been requesting for the last three months? How can anyone not be nauseated with this felt plug in his mouth, the same plug that over a hundred men have sucked and chewed on as they were dying?

[The convict has put his head down and looks relaxed while the Soldier is busy cleaning the machine with the man's shirt].

[The Officer moves toward the Scholar, who tries to step back, but the Officer holds on to his hand and takes him aside.]

OFFICER. I want to speak a few words with you in strict confidence. Is that alright with you?

SCHOLAR. Yes, certainly. [He listens with his eyes lowered]

OFFICER. This procedure and this execution that you now have a chance to admire have at present no public support in our colony. I am the only representative of the old commander's

whole colony was under his spell,

legacy, and I'm also the only one known to promote his ideas. However, it has become impossible for me even to think of any further development of the procedure, since it takes all my energies to conserve what is left. ~~When~~ the old commander was alive, the colony was full of his supporters; though I have some of his persuasive power, I totally lack his authority; this is why his supporters went into hiding; there are still many left but no one admits it. If today, that is on the day of an execution, you go to a tea house and do some eavesdropping, you may hear only ambiguous remarks. All these people are still supporters, but under the present commander with his modern ideas they are totally useless to me. And now I'm asking you: Should one, for the sake of ~~this~~ the present commander and the women who influence him, allow this work of a lifetime [pointing at the machine] to go to waste? Can one let this happen? Even if one is only a foreigner spending a few days on our island? But there is hardly any time left; preparations are being made to undermine my judicial authority; conferences are taking place at headquarters from which I am excluded; even your visit today seems to me characteristic for the whole state of affairs; someone has cold feet and sends you, a foreigner, in his stead.

[Insert: SCHOLAR. I'm trying to understand your position, but I'm afraid all this is way beyond my grasp. As you just said, I am here as a foreign visitor without any legal authority. The purpose of my visit is only to observe and certainly not to interfere in your internal affairs.

OFFICER [frantically] Please hear me out and let me give you some idea of what things were like in the past!]

How different ~~the former executions~~ used to be. Already on the day before, the entire valley was overflowing with people. They all came just to watch. Early in the morning the commander arrived with his ladies; a flourish of trumpets awoke the entire camp; I announced that everything was ready; the company - no high official was allowed to be absent - took their seats around the machine; this bunch of cane chairs is a pathetic remainder of that time. The machine glistened in its freshly cleaned splendor; I used new replacement parts for almost every execution. Before hundreds of eyes - all spectators stood on tiptoe as far back as those hills - the condemned man was placed under the harrow by the commander himself. What any common soldier may do today was at that time my function as presiding judge, and I considered it an honor. And now the execution began! Not a false note interfered with the work of the machine. Some people even stopped watching and rested in the sand with their eyes closed; they all knew: Justice is being done.

In the silence all you could hear were the sighs of the condemned man, muted by the felt. Today the machine is no longer able to extract an audible sigh from the prisoner; it's all absorbed by the felt; but at that time the engraving needles exuded a caustic solution which we aren't allowed to use any

more. Well, and then there was the sixth hour! It was impossible to grant the requests of all those who wanted to view it from up close. The commander, in his great wisdom, gave the order to let the children have first choice. Because of my profession I was always permitted to remain close by. Often I would squat there, holding two little kids, one in each arm. How we all felt the radiance of that martyred face in front of us spreading on our own, how we all basked in the glow of justice finally attained and already vanishing! What great times these were, my dear comrade!

[The Officer seems to have forgotten who is standing before him; he has put his arm around the Scholar, resting his head on his shoulder. The Scholar, visibly embarrassed, tries to fix his gaze on something beyond the Officer's head.

[Spotlight on center stage (?) where the Soldier has finished cleaning up the machine and is now adding another portion of rice to the bowl. The condemned man, who seems to have completely recovered, immediately makes an effort to reach the food with his tongue. The Soldier repeatedly tries to push him away, but after a while he uses his hands to feed himself, ignoring the prisoner.]

OFFICER [realizing that he has gone too far] I didn't mean to move you with my story; I know it is impossible to bring these times back to life today. Anyway, the machine is still working and speaking for itself. It works and speaks for itself even though it stands alone in this valley. And it all still ends with the body's incredibly gentle gliding flight before it comes to rest in the pit, even though there are no longer hundreds of people swarming around it like flies, as they used to. At that time we had to install a strong railing around the pit, but that was torn down long ago.

[The Scholar, trying to withdraw his face from the Officer, looks around aimlessly. The Officer, who believes his visitor is looking at the desolate valley, takes hold of his hands, turns around him to meet his eyes]

OFFICER. Do you realize the disgrace... the desecration?

[Scholar does not answer. Officer lets go of him for a while, stands with his legs spread, hands on his hips, silently gazing at the ground. Then he smiles reassuringly at the Scholar]

OFFICER. You did not see me yesterday, but I was near you when the commander invited you to participate in today's event. I heard the invitation. I know the commander. I understood immediately what his intention was. Though he has the power to proceed against me, he does not yet dare to, but instead he wants to expose me to your judgment, that of a distinguished foreigner. His calculations are ingenious; this is your second day on the island, you did not know the old commander and his ideas, you are

influenced by European values, perhaps you are opposed on principle to the death penalty in general and to this kind of mechanical execution in particular. Furthermore, you observe how this execution takes place without public participation, pathetically, on a somewhat defective machine - wouldn't it be quite possible (this is what the commander thinks) that you do not approve of my method? And if you do not approve of it (I'm still speaking from the commanders point of view), you will not keep silent about it, for you will certainly trust your convictions based on your cosmopolitan background. Of course, you have seen many peculiar customs in different nations, and you may have learned to respect them. Consequently, you are not likely to express your objections against our procedure as forcefully as you might in your own country. But the commander doesn't even depend on that. It won't take more than a casual remark on your part, perhaps just a careless word. It wouldn't even have to express your conviction as long as it seems to reflect his wishes. One thing I'm certain of: he will question you with all his cunning. And his ladies will sit around in a circle and prick up their ears. You will say something like: 'In my country the judicial procedure is different,' or 'In my country the defendant is interrogated before the verdict,' or 'In my country there are other forms of punishment besides capital punishment,' or 'In my country torture existed only in the Middle Ages.' All those remarks would be perfectly correct, as correct as they sound natural to you: innocent remarks that do not discredit my procedure. But how will the commander receive them? I can see him, the good commander, instantly pushing his chair aside and hurrying out to the balcony, I can see his ladies, thronging after him, I can hear his voice - the ladies call it a thunderous voice - and now he begins to speak: 'A great Western scholar, assigned to investigate judicial procedures in all countries, has just said that our procedure based on ancient traditions is inhumane. After this verdict from such a highly accredited scientist, I can, of course, no longer tolerate this procedure. As of today, therefore, I shall give the order...and so forth.' You want to intervene, you did not say what he proclaims, you did not call my procedure inhumane, on the contrary, based on your considered opinion (?) you regard it as perfectly human and humane; you also admire the machinery -but - it's too late. You don't even get out on the balcony which is already crowded with ladies; you want to attract attention; you try to shout; but a lady's hand covers your mouth - and I and the work of the old commander are lost.

SCHOLAR [with an evasive smile] You overestimate my influence; the commander has read my letter of recommendation, he knows I'm not an expert in judicial proceedings. If I were to express an opinion it would be the opinion of a private individual, no more significant than that of anyone else, and certainly far more insignificant than the opinion of the commander who, as I am led to believe, has very far-reaching

powers in this penal colony. If his opinion is as determined as you believe, then I'm afraid that will be the end of this procedure without any need for my modest assistance.

[The Officer does not get the message. He shakes his head, looks briefly at the prisoner and the soldier who are both startled and stop eating the rice; then the officer walks up close to the Scholar, and with lowered eyes and lowered voice, attempts a different approach]

OFFICER. You do not know the commander; to him as well as to the rest of us you appear to be - please forgive the expression - a sort of innocent bystander; your influence, believe me, is much greater than you imagine. I can't tell you how happy I was when I heard that you alone were going to be present at the execution. This order from the commander was meant to be a strike against me, but now I'm using it to my own advantage. Undistracted by false insinuations and insolent glances - which would have been inevitable with a large attendance at the execution - you have heard my explanations, seen the machine and are now about to watch the execution. I suppose your verdict is formed already; if there should be minor uncertainties, they will be eliminated by the sight of the execution. And now I am coming to you with my request: Please help me! Help me prevail against the commander!

SCHOLAR. [interrupting] How could I do that? That is completely impossible. I can help you as little as I can harm you.

OFFICER [clenching his fists] You can! You certainly can! I have a plan that is bound to succeed. You think your influence is insufficient. I know that it is not. But even assuming that you are right: is it not all the more necessary to try everything, even if it should prove to be insufficient, in order to preserve this procedure? Now listen to my plan. In order to make it succeed it will be of the utmost importance that today in the presence of others you make a consistent effort to withhold your judgment regarding the procedure. If you are not asked directly, you should definitely not speak at all; your remarks, whenever necessary, should be brief and vague. People should notice that it is difficult for you to speak about this, that you are embittered, that, if you were to speak openly, you would have to swear and curse. Of course, I don't expect you to lie, nothing of the sort. You should only give short answers, like: 'Yes, I have watched the execution,' or 'Yes, I heard all the explanations.' Only that, nothing else. As to the bitterness that people should notice, there will be reason enough, though not what the commander may think. Of course, he will misunderstand it completely and interpret it in his own way. This is what my plan is based on. Tomorrow there will be a major conference at headquarters, attended by all the higher officials, with the commander as president. Of course, the commander knows how to turn such conferences into public spectacles. A gallery was built

to accommodate a crowd of spectators. I am forced to participate in the conferences, but it makes me sick to think of it. Now you will certainly be invited to attend this meeting; if you act according to my plan today, the invitation will turn into an urgent plea. If, however, for some unfathomable reason you are not invited, you would have to request an invitation; then there can be no doubt that you will receive it.

Thus tomorrow you will be sitting with the ladies in the commander's box. He will frequently look up to make sure you are there. After a number of insignificant, ridiculous agenda items, intended only for the audience - mostly dealing with harbor construction, again and again harbor construction - the issue of the judicial procedure will be addressed. If this is not brought up by the commander, or not soon enough, I will see to it that it is done. I'll get up and report on today's execution. Very briefly, just this report. Such a report is actually not expected there, but I'll do it anyway. The commander will thank me, as usual with a friendly smile, and now he can no longer control himself, he has to seize the opportunity. 'This moment,' he will say more or less, 'we received the report of today's execution. I only wish to add to this report that this particular execution was attended by the great scholar who, as you know, is honoring our colony by his visit. Our meeting today also gains in significance due to the honor of his presence. Should we not ask this great explorer about his opinion regarding our traditional mode of execution as well as the preliminary procedure?' Of course, there'll be great applause, agreement on all sides. I'll be sure to make the loudest noise. The commander bows to you and says: 'Then, in the name of all present, I am now asking your opinion.' This is the moment for you to step over to the railing. Place your hands on it so everyone can see them, otherwise the ladies will take hold of your fingers and fondle them.

And now finally you are going to speak. I don't know how I'll bear the suspense of waiting for this moment. When you start speaking you should let go of all restraints. Make a big noise about the truth, lean over the railing, roar, yes indeed, roar your opinion, your unshakable opinion at the commander. But perhaps you don't want to do that, it's not in your nature, perhaps in your country people behave differently under such circumstances; that would be alright too, that also would be completely sufficient; don't get up at all, just say a few words, you may even whisper them so they can barely be heard by the officials below you, that too will be sufficient, you don't even have to mention the lack of public interest in the execution, the shrieking gear, the torn strap, the disgusting felt, - all the rest I'll take care of, and, believe me, if my speech does not drive him out of the hall, it will force him down on his knees so that he has to confess: Old commander, I bow to you. - This is my plan. Will you help me carry it out? Of course, you will, and more than that, you will have to.

[Toward the end of his harangue, the Officer has taken hold

of the Scientist by both arms and, breathing heavily, he looks closely at his face. His vehement shouting of the last sentences has aroused both the soldier and the prisoner; without understanding what it is all about, they have stopped eating and are looking at the Scholar, waiting for his reaction.]

SHOLAR. [calmly but resolutely] No.

[Officer blinks several times but keeps his eyes on Scholar]

SCHOLAR. Would you like an explanation? [Officer nods.] I am opposed to this procedure. Even before you took me into your confidence -I can assure you that I shall never betray it - I was wondering already whether I had the right to intervene against this procedure and whether my intervention would have the slightest chance of success. It was clear to me whom I should turn to first: the commander, of course. You made it even clearer to me without, however, strengthening my resolution - on the contrary, I find your sincere conviction moving even though it does not affect my resolution.

[Officer remains silent, turns to the machine, holds on to one of the brass rods, then, leaning back slightly, looks up to the engraver, as though checking to see if everything is in order.]

[The Soldier and the Convict seem to have become friends. The Convict, though hampered in his movements by the rigid straps, makes signs to the soldier who then bends down towards him. Convict whispers to Soldier. and Soldier nods.]

SCHOLAR [moving over to the Officer] You don't know yet what I intend to do. I'm going to give the commander my opinion of the procedure, but not in an official meeting; I'll talk to him privately. I won't even be here long enough to attend any kind of meeting. I am sailing already tomorrow morning, or at least I'll be going on board.

OFFICER [does not appear to have listened; he speaks softly, as though to himself] So the procedure has not convinced you. Well, then the time has come.[He now appears to be fully present, looks at the Scholar with wide open eyes, as though expecting some form of cooperation]

SCHOLAR. The time for what?

OFFICER [does not answer; talking to the convict] You are free. [Convict stunned, does not react] Well, I said you're free.

[Convict becomes agitated, starts to struggle inside the harrow]

OFFICER [shouting] you're ruining the straps. Don't move!

We're opening them. [gives a sign to the Soldier, then assists him in unbuckling the contraptions.]

[Convict turns his face from Officer, to Soldier, to Scholar, laughing wordlessly to himself]

OFFICER [to Soldier] pull him out! [from now on he shows hardly any interest in the Convict. He returns to the Scholar, again ~~pulls~~ takes out his small portfolio, looks for a certain page in it, and having retrieved it, shows it to the Scholar.

OFFICER [to Scholar] Read this!

SCHOLAR. I can't. I told you before that I can't read these pages.

OFFICER. Just take a close look at this page [stands next to the Scholar to read with him. Scholar shakes his head. Officer raises his little finger high across the paper, to make it easier for the Scholar to read, without permitting him to hold it. The Scholar tries but still finds it impossible.]

OFFICER [spelling it out] B E J U S T. Be Just! that's what it says. Now you can read it, can't you?

[The Scholar bends so close to the paper that the Officer again moves it further away. Scholar remains silent but it is obvious that he still could not read the inscription.]

OFFICER. [repeats] Be just! it says.

SCHOLAR. Could be. I believe that's what it says.

OFFICER. Good enough. [at least partly satified, he climbs up the ladder holding the page; with great care he positions the sheet inside the engraver and apparently readjusts the entire gear mechanism; it is arduous work which takes quite a while. Some tiny gears seem to be involved; occasionally the Officer's head disappears altogether in the engraver where he is testing some details.]

[The Scholar is craning his neck to observe the Officer at work. Bright sunlight is now flooding the scene. The Scholar's discomfort is becoming increasingly evident in the course of the silent action. The Soldier and the Convict are completely involved with each other. The Soldier uses the point of his bayonet to pull the Convict's shirt and pants out of the pit. He throws the soiled clothes into the sand and motions to the Convict to wash them in the bucket. When the convict has finished and proceeds to put his clothes on again, both Soldier and Convict burst into loud laughter, realizing that the clothes had been split in back. The Convict now tries to entertain the

Soldier by dancing around in circles and displaying his bare backside to the other who is sitting on the ground laughing and slapping his knees. Occasionally, the one or the other points to the gentlemen to indicate that they are not totally unaware of their environment.]

[When the Officer has finished his work on top, he surveys the whole apparatus with a satisfied smile and closes the cover of the engraver that had been open before. He then steps down, looks into the pit, then at the convict, noticing that he has taken out his clothes. He walks over to the bucket to wash his hands, but refrains when he sees the filth inside and attempts to clean his hands in the sand, an unsatisfactory attempt. Then he stands up and unbuttons his tunic. While doing this, he finds the ladies' handkerchiefs that he had stuffed behind his collar.

OFFICER. Here are your handkerchiefs. [throws them to the convict] Presents from the ladies [he adds to the Scholar] Then continues undressing completely and quickly. Still he treats every part of his clothing with loving care. stroking the silver cords on his tunic and shaking a tassel back into its shape. When he has finished this ritual with each individual piece, he throws it abruptly into the pit. The last piece left is his short sword with its belt. He pulls the sword from its sheath and breaks it in two, then gathers the parts together and hurls them down so violently than one can hear a clattering sound from the pit. Now he stands there naked. The Scholar bites his lips but does not interfere]

[The Soldier and the Convict at first do not understand anything and are not even watching. The convict, pleased to get his handkerchiefs back, is engaged in a playful fight with the Soldier who has snatched them from him with a clever trick. The Convict tries to pull them out from behind the Soldier's belt, and they continue trying to trick each other in this manner like children playing teasing games.] [The Officer now demonstrates his complete command of the machine. As he raises his hand to the harrow, it moves up and down several times until it has reached the correct position to receive him. The moment he touches the edge of the bed, it begins to vibrate; when the felt stump approaches his mouth, he is at first reluctant to receive it, but after a moment he accepts it. Everything is ready except the straps which are hanging loosely at the sides. The Officer is prepared to start the procedure without the straps; he has stretched out one foot to kick the crank that controls the engraver. At this moment the Convict notices the loose straps and excitedly signals this to the Soldier. They both run over to complete the preparation by strapping the Officer in. He now has to pull his foot back and to let the two take over. The Scholar remains a passive witness.

[As soon as the straps are attached, the machine begins to work. The bed vibrates, the needles are dancing on the skin, the harrow is moving up and down. Everything is moving quietly. The

Scholar looks over to the Soldier and the Convict. The convict takes a lively interest in the machine. He keeps bending down or stretching his body, constantly pointing at something to show to the Soldier. The Scholar becomes irritated by this performance.

SCHOLAR. Go home, both of you! I'll stay here.

[The Soldier seems to be willing to leave, but the Convict seems to consider this order as a form of punishment. With clasped hands he begs to be permitted to stay, and when the Scholar shakes his head, he even kneels down. The Scholar realizes that he has to use more drastic means and attempts to drive the men out. At this moment a strange noise is heard. (The machine had been silent before, without anyone noticing.) The Scholar looks up, wondering about the cause. Slowly the cover of the engraver begins to lift and then opens completely. The cogs of a wheel become visible and rise, then the whole gear emerges, giving the impression that some immense force is squeezing the engraver so tightly that there is no more room for the wheel; the wheel keeps turning toward the edge of the engraver, falls down, rolls along briefly on the ground, and then lies flat in the sand. Another one repeats the process, and many more follow; cogwheels of all sizes are tumbling out until it seems hardly possible that there could be any more left inside the engraver. After a brief pause, a new and particularly numerous group rises, falls down, tumbles in the sand and comes to rest.

The Convict is so delighted by this process that he tries to get hold of one gear after the other, motioning to the Soldier to help him, but at the last moment withdrawing his hand, afraid of being hurt by the next approaching cog.

The Scholar is greatly alarmed at the sight of the machine which is obviously falling apart. While he had been watching the tumbling cogwheels he had failed to observe the rest of the machine. Now, as he is bending over the harrow, he notices that it is not writing but piercing and that the bed is no longer rotating the body but lifting it up into the needles. He wants to do something, perhaps stop the machine, stretches out his hands. Now the harrow with the impaled body has turned to the side in the position it was supposed to reach only in the twelfth hour. Blood, undiluted by water, is flowing down (gushing down); everything is out of control. The body itself is not released by the long needles but remains suspended above the pit.]

SCHOLAR [yells to Soldier and Convict] Come on, help me! Do something!

[Since they are unwilling to come - the convict actually turns his back to the scene, the Scholar runs over to them and forcefully pushes them toward the officer's head while he takes hold of the feet. After an almost involuntary look at the dead man's face, he says softly, speaking to himself, almost inaudibly:

(Final Solution or Dissolution to be added)

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V I R G I N I A

by

Oskar Kokoschka

(translated by Lola Gruenthal)

Man doth not live by bread alone, so the church tells us, but ~~by~~ words alone ~~he cannot subsist~~ are not very nourishing either. I had to learn this for myself during my own Sturm und Drang period when I painted a whole series of portraits hardly illustrative of that popular saying about "fine feathers making fine birds", paintings which later found their way into the world's great museums. In those days I rarely signed my canvases because I was ashamed of selling my work. At the decisive moment I would always have scruples. I would rather abandon paint box and painting; the purchase of a new paint set, however, became a problem! How was I to remain an independent artist without starving in the process? I would have liked to solve this riddle, and many a wintry day I pressed my nose against the frosted windows of the "Romanisches Cafe", trying to learn from the ~~so-called~~ "big shots" ~~celebrities~~" inside.

I spent my first Christmas Eve in Berlin with an unemployed, half-blind actor friend of mine. (He was organizing lectures on modern painting in the printing office of "Der Sturm", an expressionist art monthly of which I'd been co-founder.) Having no fuel, we sat wrapped in blankets, warming our numbed hands over a tea-pot perched on top of an alcohol burner. The sky was full of stars, and from our fourth floor rear window we could look down into a yard piled high with snow-drifts which the janitor would leave for spring to remove. Our friendship had had a strange beginning. Not only did we both feel lost in the big city where nobody understood my work

and everybody laughed at his acting, - the fact was: we both had seen things which simply didn't exist for others, perhaps because our blood was thinner from all that fasting. We both shared an imaginary daughter whom we had decided to name Virginia.

Artists have always been starvation experts, but no other period had produced such a variety of technical terms for the artistic sublimation of hunger. Expressionism, Futurism, Dadaism, Surrealism, Abstract Art, etc., supported a whole generation of art critics until Mr. Rosenberg, the aesthetic authority of the Third Reich, made short work of the whole lot by exposing everything as fraud and degenerate art.

One, two three, four, five, I counted on the fingers of an empty hand. The complexity of numbers! I could convert them into decimals, raise them to the third power, extract their roots, but for all my book-learning I couldn't find out how to turn numbers into money; and it's only money, not learning, that gives man power over the world. If someone had bothered to predict my future, he would not have given a penny for it at that time when I was co-owner, with Herwarth Walden, of the most avant-garde German art review, in addition to my functions as a poet and graphic artist, reviewer of variety shows, publicity agent and delivery boy, all in one. My possessions consisted of the clothes I wore, an iron bedstead, a wash basin and a towel. My room had been put at my disposal by the board of editors. ~~Fxxxxxxxxxxx~~ On Sundays, I could

eat my fill of Automat Frankfurters for one Mark. Since I was young and strong, bread and tea had to do for the rest of the week. The spending money I had brought from Vienna had already been turned over, on the day of my arrival, to the barber in the Friedrichstrasse Station, an artist in his own field who taught me my first lesson. Since the big shots wore their hair in long curls, I had asked him to shave mine off altogether. But in the meantime, his glib Berlin tongue had somehow talked me into buying a whole assortment of brushes, soaps and lotions. As soon as I had escaped his concern for my welfare, his "bargains" became a burden to me and I deposited the package in the nearest empty doorway.

Already before Christmas, in fact, my friend and I had ~~began~~ started to design a particular fate of her own for Virginia, the daughter of our starvation dreams. Glamorously bedecked with the glitter of our fancy, her childish figure had already become so real to us that our lives, ~~were enriched~~ as though enriched by the presence of a dear and intimate guest, were full of joy and we no longer felt lonely. What if the holidays did drag on and the winter kept getting grimmer and grimmer? The imaginary reality of our Virginia was independent of space and time. Visibly, she grew before our eyes and, as though ~~we were~~ looking back over the years, we began to take turns telling each other incidents from her childhood: how, as a little girl, she had played with a turtle and, like an acrobat on a rolling ball, had been able to stand quite securely on the animal's back, keeping her balance by stretching out

her little hands.

(Now, since it was winter, the turtle was supposed to be sleeping in the cellar.)

Since our child was not quite real, her creators were also somewhat ambiguous by nature. There we were, shivering with cold, wrapped up in our blankets and trying to borrow some warmth from them - we, the imaginary "old ones" for whom the girl had always been the epitome of consideration, obedience and love. However, grown forgetful with age, we had failed to prepare for the day when this radiant little being, suddenly blossoming into a maiden, would be powerless in the grip of a great passion. Virginia had fallen in love with a young man, an event that we, the old ones, could neither understand nor approve of. So we venomously reproached each other for having missed the chance of teaching her the facts of life while there'd still been time. It was our fault that Virginia was straying from the path of virtue! But perhaps we couldn't understand these "modern" times; perhaps, grown selfish, we simply couldn't muster enough feeling in our dried-up hearts to do justice to a younger generation with different views than we'd had in our time! We resented it that a young girl's heart, moved by longing and passion, could be lured from the safety of home into the wide world. Hadn't we neglected our task of helping the sapling grow into a tree strong enough to withstand the storm? Was this fervently beating heart going to wither in seclusion thanks to our upbringing? We had even ~~gone so far as to stoop~~ resorted to the cunning trick of discreetly warning a certain elegant young man to stop annoying

the maiden with his proposals. He still seduced her in the end! Who knows how many sleepless nights she had spent with her secret, what bitter tears had been the price of this life full of mistakes and follies, now that she had no one left to share it. In spite of our mature experience, we old ones were of no use to her. Our memory was failing rapidly... How long was it since she'd run away? Let's see now: the gift table for the absentee that we set up ~~for her~~ every Christmas - yes, this would be the third time that we were lighting the candle on top of her little tree - that tiny pink candle my friend had brought home from a party at ~~the visit to~~ the house of some theatrical people who had happened to remember him. Today she is surely going to come! She must! This very minute! Her conscience must have told her that we had long since forgiven her lapse!

Although we had invented the "Virginia" story for our entertainment, our feelings at that moment couldn't have been more vivid, more agitated, if she had bodily entered the room. My friend had kept insisting that I, being younger and more agile, should go down to the cellar to make sure, before she came, that Virginia's pet turtle was all right. For what would she say? How could we exculpate ourselves in front of her? What drop of bitterness would spoil the joy of our reunion if something should have happened to the little creature in the absence of its mistress! To be sure, there had been no letter to announce her home-coming. But then, she never had written to us, being too proud to admit defeat. And she

was incapable of deceit. Humbly and with broken wings she would stand in the snow outside her home, waiting for the door to be opened.

I didn't want to go down to the cellar. I had a kind of premonition that the turtle... Of course, turtles are said to reach a tremendous age, but just tonight our imaginary gardener had happened to take out his gun to shoot crows in the yard (from barren stubble-fields they flew to Berlin in search of food, the black devils!) - and it was that blockhead's fault that the report of his shot killed the little creature! Indestructible and tough, capable of living for years without food - only man continually thinks of food - these animals have a sensitivity beyond our grasp, and at the merest trifle they perish! I myself had given Virginia the turtle as a birthday present, and, (an educator will always choose the most impressive moment), combining the gift with a little lesson, I had told her that even in ancient China people believed in the immortality of the soul and therefore worshipped the turtle as its symbol. Now, what was the child going to think of my credibility, apart from the fact that I had failed to take proper care of her pet, if the dead animal were to give the lie to my words? We become superstitious with age. Could there be some mysterious relationship, some fate-like thread, linking the destiny of our daughter with this simple mishap which was caused, after all, only by the hyper-sensitivity of her silly old turtle? From newspaper serials, cut out and clipped together in order to be re-read with relish, we were

all too familiar with the story of the girl from a good family who ends up being haggard and spitting blood. There she stands: dishonored, burdened with an illegitimate child, contrite and exhausted, unable to pull the doorbell of her father's house, her strength failing, until she finally collapses in the snow and her spirit returns at night to haunt her unfeeling elders... This is why I felt certain that it was no use looking in the cellar. (By the way, there was no cellar. What could we have stored there?) In a choking voice I confessed to my friend that I had discovered the turtle lying on its back, dead as a door-nail.

With his eyes wide open - without seeing, that is, for he was almost totally blind - he rose and jumped at me in a rage. I could not deny that I was in his power, because he had the advantage of social superiority. If he had achieved nothing else in life, he still was my senior, and the younger is responsible to the older. The tiny room was getting icy cold - as cold as a cellar. The door had opened. In the sudden draft the window burst open and my friend's gun, with the bayonet fixed, fell from its place on the wall. The expert on Futurist poetry grabbed it. There we were: the unemployed actor who had once been chosen for a ~~military~~ career as a Prussian officer and had run away from a military academy to join the theater - and I, locked in hand-to-hand combat. Now the gun was in the offensive in the hands of one, now wrested from him by the other, again aiming at the enemy. A shot went off. It was ~~just~~ very this shot that had startled the crows into

flying past our window in a cloud of snow. Because of the dead turtle we had enraged and insulted each other so bitterly that we parted, unreconciled. The name "Virginia" was never mentioned again.

Man does not live on bread alone, so the church tells us, but words alone are not nutritious either. This I had to learn in Berlin during my period of storm and stress when I painted a series of those portraits which did not correspond to the popular saying: "Fine feathers make fine birds" - paintings which later found their way into the museums of the world. I rarely signed my canvasses, for at that time I was still ashamed to sell my work; on the decisive last day I always had scruples. I would rather give up painting and paint-box; the purchase of a new paint-box, however, became a problem. I would have liked to solve the mystery how to remain an independent artist without starving in the process. On many a winter day I pressed my nose against the frozen glass panes of the "Romanisches Café" in order to learn from the celebrities inside.

My first Christmas Eve in Berlin I spent with a friend, an unemployed half-blind actor; he was then organizing lectures on modern painting in the printing office of the expressionist art paper "Der Sturm" whose co-founder I was. Having no fuel, we both sat wrapped up in blankets, warming our stiff hands over a tea-pot on top of the alcohol burner. Thesky was full of stars, and from the fourth floor of the REAR tenement house one could look down upon a yard where the icy wind had piled up high masses of snow which the janitor left for spring to melt down. Our friendship had had a strange

beginning. Not only did we both feel lost in the big city - nobody understood my work and everybody laughed at his acting - no: we both had seen things which for others simply did not exist. Perhaps our blood was thinner from all our fasting. We both shared an imaginary daughter whom we had decided to call Virginia. Artists have always known how to starve, but at no other time had there been so many technical terms for the artistic sublimation of hunger. Expressionism, Futurism, Cubism, Dadaism, Surrealism, Abstract Art, etc. fed a whole generation of art critics until Mr. Rosenberg, the esthetic authority of the Third Reich, made short work of the whole lot by denouncing everything as phony and degenerate.

One, two, three, four, five, I counted on the fingers of my empty hand. The intricate meaning of numbers! I could convert them into decimals, raise them to the third power, extract their root, and yet I ~~did not know~~ was unable ~~how~~ to use my textbook knowledge for the purpose of turning numbers into money. It is only money, not knowledge, that gives man power over the world. If someone had tried to compute the chances of my life at that time (I was co-owner, with Herwarth Walden, of the most avant-gardist German art review, I was a poet, graphic artist, reviewer of variety shows, publicity manager and delivery boy, all in one) he would not have given a penny for my future. My possessions consisted of the clothes that I

wore on my body, an iron bed, a washing-basin, a towel. My little room had been put at my disposal by the board of editors. On Sundays I could afford to eat my fill of Automat frankfurters for the price of one mark. Since I was young and vigorous, bread and tea were sufficient nourishment for the rest of the week. The spending money I'd brought from Vienna I had already left with the barber upon my arrival at Friedrichstrasse station. This artist in his own field had taught me my first lesson. Since celebrities wore their hair in long curls, I asked him to clip mine as close as possible, but in the meantime his glib Berlin tongue talked me into buying brushes, soaps and lotions. As soon as I was relieved of his concern for my welfare, I deposited the bag full of bargains in the next door-way.

Even before Christmas my friend and I had started to fit the daughter of our starveling dreams with a particular fate of her own. Glamorously clothed in the glitter of our fantasy, her figure, which in our mind's eye was that of a child, had already become so real that our life was enriched as though through the presence of a dear, intimate guest, and we no longer felt lonely. What if the holidays dragged lazily on and the winter kept getting grimmer, the light spirit of our imaginary Virginia assumed a reality outside conditions of space and time. She grew visibly before our eyes, and, as

though a long interval had already passed, we took turns telling each other little incidents from her childhood. How, as a little girl, she had played with a turtle and, like an acrobat on a rolling ball, had been able to stand securely on the creature's back, keeping her balance with her little hands stretched out.

Since it was winter now, the turtle was supposed to sleep in the cellar. Our child was not quite real, and thus her creators also had a somewhat dual character. Toward us, the "imaginary old ones" who had to borrow some warmth from the blankets in which we were wrapped up shivering with cold, the girl had always shown nothing but consideration, obedience and love. But we, grown forgetful, did not take into account that this being who had shared her warmth with us would blossom into a virginal young woman in the throes of a great passion. We old ones with our modest and frugal needs could neither conceive nor approve of such love. Therefore we reproached each other venomously for having missed the opportunity to teach her this and that when there was still time. It was our fault that Virginia was straying from the straight and narrow. Perhaps we did not understand these modern times. Grown selfish, we simply couldn't muster enough feeling in our dried up hearts to do justice to a younger generation with different perspectives than we'd had in our youth. We resented it that

a young girl's heart, moved by longing and passion, let itself be lured away from the safety of home into the wide world. Had we failed in our task of helping the sapling grow into a ~~xkrxnx~~ tree strong enough to brave the storm? Would this young woman's heart that beat so fervently be withered in narrow confines thanks to our upbringing? We had even stooped to the cunning trick of discreetly warning a certain elegant young man to stop annoying the young woman with his proposals. He still seduced her in the end! Who knows how many nights she stayed awake with her secret and with what bitter tears she paid for having to live her life alone, with all its mistakes and follies. We old ones, despite our mature experience, were of no use to her. Our memory grew visibly dimmer. Well, how long was it since she had run away? Let's check it! The gift table that we set up every Christmas for the absentee - well, now it was the third time that we lit the candle on top of the little tree - for my friend had been invited to the house of theater people and had returned with a small pink candle. Today she is going to come, she must, even at this very hour!

She simply had to feel it deep in her conscience that we had forgiven her wrong. Although we both had invented the story only for our entertainment, our feelings couldn't have been more vivid, more agitated, had

Virginia bodily entered the room. My friend kept insisting all the time that I, as the younger and more flexible one, should climb down into the cold cellar to make sure, before Virginia came, that her turtle was all right. For what would Virginia say! How could we redeem ourselves before her! What drop of bitterness would spoil the joy of our reunion if some misfortune should have befallen the little creature in the absence of its mistress. It is true, there had been no letter from her to announce her home-coming. But she never did write us, being too proud to admit her disgrace. Virginia was incapable of dissembling. Humbly and with broken wings, she would stand in the snow outside her parents' house, waiting for the door to be opened.

I did not want to go down into the cellar. I had an evil premonition that the animal might no longer be among the living. Of course, turtles are said to reach a tremendous age, but just tonight our invented and imaginary gardener had to take his gun out into the yard to shoot after raven. From the bare stubble-fields they flew to Berlin to find food, those black beasts. And it was that blockhead's fault that the report of his shot killed the little animal... Indestructible and tough, capable of subsiding for ages without food - only man thinks continually of food - these animals have a sensitivity beyond our grasp. At the merest

trifle they perish! I myself had given the turtle to Virginia as a birthday present, and, since an educator will always choose the most impressive moment, I had combined it with a little lesson., telling her that already in ancient China people believed in the immortality of the soul and therefore worshipped the turtle as its symbol. What was the child to think of my credibility, apart from the fact that I did not take proper care of her darling, if the dead animal were to give the lie to my words? Could there be some mysterious thread of relations - one does become superstitious with age - beginning with this mishap, caused, after all, only by the hypersensitivity of the silly old turtle itself, and ending with the fate of our daughter? From newspaper serials cut out and clipped together in order to be reread with relish, we were familiar of the story of the girl who came from a good background and ended up by spitting blood and being worn with care; there she stood, dishonored, burdened with an illegitimate child, contrite and exhausted, unable to pull the doorbell of her father's house; her strength is failing, and she collapses in the snow, whereupon her spirit returns nocturnally to haunt her harsh parents. This is why I did not even deem it necessary to look into the cellar - by the way, we had no cellar. What could we have stored down there? In a choked voice I confessed to my friend that I had found the turtle lifeless on its back - dead as a doornail.

With his eyes wide open - without seeing, that is, for he was almost totally blind - he rose and jumped at me in a rage. I could not deny his power over me, for he was socially superior: though he had achieved nothing else in life, he was at least my senior. And the younger is responsible to the older. The small room was getting icy cold - like a cellar. The door had opened. In the sudden draft the window burst open, and my friend's gun, with the bayonet fixed, fell from the wall. This was the cue for the declamatory reader of futurist poems, the unemployed actor who had once been chosen for the career of a Prussian officer and had run away from a military academy to join the theater: he grabbed the gun and engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with me. Now the gun was in the offensive in the hands of one, now in the defensive, wrested from the other - again aiming at the enemy. A shot went off: that same shot that had just startled the raven as they flew past the window in a cloud of snow. Because of the dead turtle we had so enraged and insulted each other that we parted unreconciled. The name of Virginia was never mentioned again.

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THE
TWENTY-FOUR SONNETS
of Louïze Labé

Original Version

SONNET II

O beaus yeus bruns, ô regards destournez,
O chaus soupirs, ô larmes espandues,
O noires nuits vainement atendues,
O jours luisans vainement retournez:

O tristes pleins, ô desirs obstinez,
O tems perdu, ô peines despendues,
O mile morts en mile rets tendues,
O pires maus contre moi destinez.

O ris, ô front, cheueus, bras, mains et doits:
O lut pleintif, viole, archet et vois:
Tant de flambeaus pour ardre une femelle!

De toy me plein, que tant de feus portant,
En tant d'endrois d'iceus mon coeur tatant,
N'en est sur toy volé quelque estincelle.

SONNET III

O longs desirs, ô esperances vaines,
Tristes soupirs et larmes coutumieres
A engendrer de moy maintes riuieres,
Dont mes deus yeus sont sources et fontaines:

O cruautez, ô durtez inhumaines,
Piteus regars des celestes lumieres:
Du coeur transi ô passions premieres,
Estimez-vous croitre encore mes peines?

Qu'encor Amour sur moy son arc essaie,
Que nouueaus feux me gette et nouueaus dars;
Qu'il se despite, et pis qu'il pourra face:

Car je suis tant nauree en toutes par$,
Que plus en moy une nouuelle plaie,
Pour m'empirer ne pourroit trouuer place.

SONNET IV

Depuis qu'Amour cruel empoisonna
Premierement de son feu ma poitrine,
Tousiours brulay de sa fureur diuine,
Qui un seul iour mon coeur n'abandonna.

Quelque trauail, dont assez me donna,
Quelque menasse et procheine ruine:
Quelque penser de mort qui tout termine,
De rien mon coeur ardent ne s'estonna.

Tant plus qu'Amour nous vient fort assaillir,
Plus il nous fait nos forces recueillir,
Et tousiours frais en ses combats fait estre:

Mais ce n'est pas qu'en rien nous fauorise,
Cil qui les Dieus et les hommes mesprise:
Mais pour plus fort contre les fors paroitre.

SONNET V

Clere Venus, qui erres par les Cieus,
Entens ma voix qui en pleins chantera,
Tant que ta face au haut du Ciel luira,
Son long trauail et souci ennuieus.

Mon oeil veillant s'atendrira bien mieus,
Et plus de pleurs te voyant getera.
Mieus mon lit mol de larmes baignera,
De ses trauaus voyant temoins tes yeus.

Donq des humains sont les lassez esprits
De dous repos et de sommeil espris.
I'endure mal tant que le Soleil luit:

Et quand ie suis quasi toute cassee,
Et que me fuis mise en mon lit lassee,
Crier me faut mon mal toute la nuit.

SONNET VI

Deus ou trois fois bienheureus le retour
De ce cler Astre, et plus heureus encore
Ce que son oeil de regarder honore.
Que celle la ~~peuroit~~ receuroit on bon iour,

Qu'elle pourroit se vanter d'un bon tour
Qui baiseroit le plus beau don de Flore,
Le mieus sentant que iamais vid Aurore,
Et y feroit sur ses leures seiour!

C'est à moi seule à qui ce bien est du,
Pour tant de pleurs et tant de tems perdu:
Mais le voyant, tant luy feray de feste,

Tant emploiray de mes yeus le pouuoir,
Pour dessus lui plus de credit auoir,
Qu'en peu de tems feray grande conqueste.

SONNET VII

On voit mourir toute chose animee,
Lors que du corps l'ame sutile part:
Ie suis le corps, toy la meilleure part:
Ou es tu donq, ô ame bien aymee?

Ne me laissez pas si long tems pamee,
Pour me sauuer apres viendrois trop tard.
Las, ne mets point ton corps en ce hazart:
Rens lui sa part et moitié estimee.

Mais fais, Ami, que ne soit dangereuse
Cette rencontre et reuuë amoureuse,
L'acompagnant, non de seurité,

Non de rigueur: mais de grace amiable,
Qui doucement me rende ta beauté,
Iadis cruelle, à present favorable.

SONNET VIII

Ie vis, ie meurs: ie me brule et me noye.
I'ay chaut estreme en endurant froidure:
La vie m'est et trop molle et trop dure.
I'ay grans ennuis entremeslez de ioye:

Tout à un coup ie ris et ie larmoye,
Et en plaisir maint grief tourment i'endure:
Mon bien s'en va, et à iamais il dure:
Tout en un coup ie seiche et ie verdoye.

Ainsi Amour inconstamment me meine:
Et quand ie pense avoir plus de douleur,
Sans y penser ie me treuue hors de peine.

Puis quand ie croy ma ioye estre certaine,
Et estre au haut de mon desiré heur,
Il me remet en mon premier malheur.

SONNET IX

Tout aussi tot que ie commence à prendre
Dens le mol lit le repos desiré,
Mon triste esprit hors de moy retiré
S'en va vers toy incontinent se rendre.

Lors m'est auis que dedens mon sein tendre
Ie tiens le bien, ou i'ay tant aspiré,
Et pour lequel i'ay si haut souspiré,
Que de sanglots ay souuent cuidé fendre.

O dous sommeil, ô nuit à moy heureuse!
Plaisant repos, plein de tranquilité,
Continuez toutes les nuiz mon songe:

Et sie iamais ma poure ame amoureuse
Ne doit auoir de bien en verité,
Faites au moins qu'elle en ait en mensonge.

SONNET X

Quand i'aperçoy ton blond chef couronné
D'un laurier verd, faire un Lut si bien pleindre,
Que tu pourrois à te suiure contreindre
Arbres et rocs: quand ie te vois orné,

Et de vertus dix mile enuironné,
Au chef d'honneur plus haut que nul atteindre:
Et des plus hauts les louenges esteindre:
Lors dit mon coeur en soy passionné:

Tant de vertus qui te font estre aymé,
Qui de chacun te font estre estimé,
Ne te pourroient aussi bien faire aymer?

Et aioutant à ta vertu louable
Ce nom encor de m'estre pitoyable,
De mon amour doucement t'enflamer?

SONNET XI

O dous regars, ô yeus pleins de beauté,
Petis iardins, pleins de fleurs amoureuses
Ou sont d'Amour les flesches dangereuses,
Tant à vous voir mon oeil s'est arresté!

O coeur felon, ô rude cruauté,
Tant tu me tiens de façons rigoureuses,
Tant i'ay coulé de larmes langoureuses,
Sentant l'ardeur de mon coeur tourmenté!

Donques, mes yeus, tant de plaisir auez,
Tant de bons tours par ses yeus receuez:
Mais toy, mon coeur, plus les vois s'y complaire,

Plus tu languiz, plus en as de souci,
Or deuinez sie ie suis aise aussi,
Sentant mon oeil estre à mon coeur contraire.

SONNET XII

Lut, compagnon de ma calamité,
De mes soupirs témoin irreprochable,
De mes ennuis controlleur veritable,
Tu as souuent auec moy lamenté:

Et tant le pleur piteus t'a molesté,
Que commencant quelque son delectable,
Tu le rendois tout soudain lamentable,
Feingnant le ton que plein auoit chanté.

Et si tu veux efforcer au contraire,
Tu te destens et si me contreins taire:
Mais me voyant tendrement soupirer,

Donnant faueur a ma tant triste pleinte,
En mes ennuis me plaire suis contreinte,
Et dous mal douce fin esperer.
d'un

SONNET XIII

Oh si i'estois en ce beau sein rauie
De celui là pour lequel vois mourant:
Si auec lui viure le demeurant
De mes cours iours ne m'empeschoit enuie,

Si m'acollant me disoit, chere Amie,
Contentons nous l'un l'autre, s'asseurant
Que ia tempeste, Euripꝫe, ne Courant
Ne nous pourra desiondre en notre vie:

Si de mes bras le tenant acollé,
Comme du Lierre est l'arbre encercelé,
La mort venoit, de mon aise enuieuse:

Lors que souef il me baiseroit,
Et mon esprit sur ses leures fuiroit,
Bien ie mourrois, plus que viuante, heureuse.

SONNET XIV

Tant que mes yeus pourront larmes espandre,
A leur passé auec toy regretter;
Et qu'aus sanglots et soupirs resister
Pourra ma voix, et un peu faire entendre:

Tant que ma main pourra les cordes tendre
Du mignart Lut, pour ces graces chanter:
Tant que l'esprit se voudra contenter
De ne vouloir rien fors que toy comprendre:

Ie ne souhaite encore point mourir.
Mais quand mes yeus ie sentiray tarir,
Ma voix cassee, et ma main impuissante,

Et mon esprit en ce mortel seiour
Ne pouuant plus montrer signe d'amante:
Priray la Mort noircir mon plus cler iour.

SONNET XV

Pour le retour du Soleil honorer,
Le Zephir, l'air serein lui apareille:
Et du sommeil l'eau et la terre esueille,
Qui les gardoit l'une de murmurer,

En dous coulant, l'autre de se parer
De mainte fleur de couleur nompareille.
Ia les oiseaus es arbres font merueille,
Et aus passans font l'ennui moderer:

Les Nymfes ia en mile ieus s'esbatent
Au cler de Lune, et dansans l'herbe abatent:
Veus tu Zephir de ton heur me donner,

Et que par toy toute me renouuelle?
Fay mon Soleil deuers moy retourner,
Et tu verras s'il ne me rend plus belle.

SONNET XVI

Après qu'un tems la gresle et le tonnerre
Ont le haut mont de Caucase batu,
Le beau iour vient, de lueur reuétu.
Quand Phebus ha son cerne fait en terre,

Et l'ocean il regaigne a grand erre
Sa seur se montre avec son chef pointu.
Quand quelque tems le Parthe ha combatu,
Il prent la fuite et son arc il desserre.

Un tems t'ay vù et consolé pleintif,
Et defiant de mon feu peu hatif:
Mais maintenant pue tu m'as embrassée,

Et suis au point auquel tu me voulóis,
Tu as ta flame en quelque eau arrosee,
Et es plus froit qu'estre ie ne soulóis.

SONNET XVII

Ie fuis la vile, et temples et tous lieus,
Esquels prenant plaisir a t'ouir pleindre,
Tu peus, et non sans force, me contreindre
De te donner ce qu'estimois le mieus.

Masques, tournois, ieus me sont ennuieus,
Et rien sans toy de beau ne me puis peindre:
Tant que tachant à ce desir esteindre,
Et un nouuel obget faire à mes yeus,

Et des pensers amoureus me distraire,
Des bois espais sui le plus solitaire:
Mais i'aperçoy, ayant erré maint tour,

Que si ie veus de toy estre deliure,
Il me conuient hors de moymesme viure,
Ou fais encor que loin sois en seicur.

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Il me conuient hors de moymesme viure,
Ou fais encor que loin sois en seiour.

SONNET XVIII

Baise m'encor, rebaise moy et baise:
Donne m'en un de tes plus sauoureus,
Donne m'en un de tes plus amoureus:
Ie t'en rendray quatre plus chaus que braise.

Las, te pleins tu? ca que ce mal i'apaise,
En t'en donnant dix autres doucereus.
Ainsi meslans nos baisers tant heureus
Iouissons nous l'un de l'autre à notre aise.

Lors double vie à chacun en suiura.
Chacun en soy et son ami viura.
Permets m'Amour penser quelque folie:

Tousiours suis mal, viuant discrettement
Et ne me puis donner contentement,
Si hors de moy ne fay quelque saillie.

SONNET XIX

Diane estant en l'espesseur d'un bois,
Apres avoir mainte beste assenee,
Prenoit le frais, de Nynfes couronnee:
I'allois resuant comme fay maintefois,

Sans y penser: quand i'ouy une vois,
Qui m'apela, disant, Nynfe estonnee,
Que ne t'es tu vers Diane tournee?
Et me voyant sans arc et sans carquois,

Qu'as tu trouué, ô compagne, en ta voye,
Qui de ton arc et flesches ait fait proye?
Ie M'animay, respons ie, à un passant,

Et lui getay en vain toutes mes flesches
Et L'arc apres: mais lui les ramassant
Et les tirant me fit cent et cent bresches.

SONNET XXI

Quelle grandeur rend l'homme venerable?
Quelle grosseur? quel poil? quelle couleur?
Qui est des yeus le plus emmieleur?
Qui fait plus tot une playe incurable?

Quel chant est plus à l'homme conuenable?
Qui plus penetre en chantant sa douleur?
Qui un dous lut fait encore meilleur?
Quel naturel est le plus amiable?

Ie ne voudrois le dire assurément,
Ayant Amour forcé mon iugement:
Mais ie ſay bien et de tant ie m'assure,

Que tout le beau que lon pourroit choisir,
Et que tout l'art qui ayde la Nature,
Ne me sauroient acroitre mon desir.

SONNET XXII

Luisant Soleil, que to es bien heureus,
De voir tousiours de t'Amie la face:
Et toy, sa seur, qu'Endimion embrasse,
Tant te repais de miel amoureus.

Mars voit Venus: Mercure auentureus
De Ciel en Ciel, de lieu en lieu se glasse:
Et Iupiter remarque en mainte place
Ses premiers ans plus gays et chaleureus.

Voilà du Ciel la puissante harmonie,
Qui les esprits diuins ensemble lie:
Mais s'ils auoient ce qu'ils ayment lointein,

Leur harmonie et ordre irreuocable
Se tourneroit en erreur variable,
Et comme moy trauailleront en vain.

SONNET XXIII

Las! que me sert, que si parfaitement
Louas iadis et ma tresse doree,
Et de mes yeus la beauté comparee
A deus Soleils, dont Amour finement

Tira les trets causes de ton tourment?
Ou estes vous, pleurs de peu de duree?
Et Mort par qui deuoit estre honoree
Ta ferme amour et iteré serment?

Donques c'estoit le but de ta malice
De m'asseruir sous ombre de seruice?
Pardonne moy Amy, à cette fois,

Estant outree et de despit et d'ire:
Mais ie m'assure, quelque part que tu sois,
Qu'autant que moy tu soufres de martire.

SONNET XXIV

Ne reprenez, Dames, si i'ay aymé:
Si i'ay senti mile torches ardentes,
Mile trauaus, mile douleurs mordentes:
Si en pleurant i'ay mon tems consumé,

Las que mon nom n'en soit par vous blamé.
Si i'ai failli, les peines sont presentes,
N'aigrissez point leurs pointes violentes:
Mais estimes qu'Amour, a point nommé,

Sans votre ardeur d'un Vulcan excuser,
Sans la beauté d'Adonis acuser,
Pourra, s'il veut, plus vous rendre amoureuses:

En ayant moins que moy d'ocasion,
Et plus d'estrange et forte passion.
Et gardez vous d'estre plus malheureuses.

THE ELEVENTH SONNET

O sweetest looks, o eyes with beauty filled,
Small gardens in which loving flowers grow,
And darts of Love whose dangers I should know:
How often has my eye by you been stilled!

Deceitful heart, how cruel you have been,
How rigidly you hold me in your tie,
How many longing tears I had to dry
While you who tortured me remained serene!

Thus you, my eyes, find pleasure in the sight
Of his eyes, holding for you such delight:
But you, my heart, while they enjoy their part,

Must languish more and suffer greater grief.
And how could I be calm and find relief,
If thus my eye is alien to my heart?

THE FIRST SONNET

Ulysses, or whoever else was keen,
Would not suspect, had he been there to see,
Such grace, such honor, so divine a mien
To hold the anguish that it held for me.

Your beauteous eyes, Love, made so deep a sore
Within my breast that it will spill again
The warmth and food instilled by you before,
And none but you can remedy its pain.

O cruel fate that makes me feel the sting
As of a scorpion's point and ask relief
Against its poison from the selfsame thing.

I long to be delivered from this grief,
Yet never to extinguish love's sweet sigh.
There is no hope for me. Thus I shall die.

THE SECOND SONNET

O bold brown eyes, o looks turned in disdain,
O searing sighs, o tears so amply shed,
O somber nights, longed for and lost in bed,
O shining days, returning but in vain.

O sad laments, o obstinate desire,
O wasted time, o pains availing naught,
O thousand deaths in thousand meshes caught,
O ills that all against me did conspire.

O smile, o brow, hair, arms, hands, fingers,- O
Lamenting lute, voice, violin and bow:
So many torches at one woman thrown!

You I must blame for carrying their flame
To make my heart their vulnerable aim,
While not a single spark fell on your own.

THE THIRD SONNET

O long desires, fruitless hopes and sighs,
Unending tears, so used to their sad course
That many streams are springing from my eyes
Which now are both their fountain and their source:

O harshness of inhuman cruelties,
Celestial lights, for me but dimly lit,
Who made my heart from earlier passions freeze -
Do you have still more pains in store for it?

Love may all over try his bow, and he
May plague me with new fires and new darts,
And spite himself, and may his right assert:

I am so torn and bleeding from all parts
That a new wound would find no place in me
Where it could hurt me more than I am hurt.

THE FOURTH SONNET

Since the first time that Love had been so cruel
To poison my whole being with his flame,
His godlike wrath has used my heart as fuel
And made me burn through every day that came.

Whatever labours he had improvised,
Whatever threats and thoughts of final fall,
Or yet of death who puts an end to all, -
My ardent heart would never be surprised.

The more Love throws his might at us the more
He makes us feel our strength and lose our fear
To face his onsets better than before:

Since he who laughs at gods and men alike
Is still inclined to those whom he will strike:
He makes them stronger than the strong appear.

THE FIFTH SONNET

Clear Venus, wandering across the skies,
Do hear my voice that sings to you up there,
Telling you of its long and burdened fare,
While shining high above your face will rise.

My wakeful eye is soothed by your sight
And will a growing stream of tears release
To overflow my bed with greater ease,
Seeing its sorrows witnessed by your light. -

At that time when the weary human mind
Will its deserved sleep and comfort find.
I bear my pain under the shining sun:

And when I am all broken and all done,
And having laid myself to rest in bed,
Then I must cry my pain all night instead.

THE SIXTH SONNET

Two or three times such bliss in the return
Of this clear star, - and still more bliss for all
On whom the blessing of his eye will fall.
She who receives it may be proud to earn

His choicest present on a chosen day:
His kiss, reserved for those who are most fair
Of Flora's children, fragrant in the air,
Will brush her lips where it will briefly stay.

No one deserves this happiness but I
For all the tears and all the time passed by:
But seeing him I shall so please his whim

And so employ the power of my eyes
That, shaking his resistance by surprise,
In a short while I shall have conquered him.

THE SEVENTH SONNET

All living things must die and become hollow
When from its form the subtle soul will flee:
What more then but your body can I be,
Beloved soul, are you too far to follow?

Let me not lie alone and languish longer, -
Later to save me you will be too late.
O, do not leave your body to this fate,
Return its greater part and make it stronger.

But make it so, dear, that there be no danger
In rendering your beloved self to me:
Greet me not in the harness of a stranger

With brazen brows, - but let your beauty be
Combined with kindness, that I need not fear it
That once was cruel, - let me now be near it.

THE EIGHTH SONNET

I live, I die: I burn and I am drowning.
Aglow with heat I suffer icy chill:
Life shows me both its good and iron will,
And Fortune smiles at me while she is frowning.

I laugh and I am crying, all in one;
Each pleasure that I find contains great pain:
What I possess will go - and ever will remain:
I wither and am verdant in the sun.

Thus Love leads me thisand the other way.
And when I think I cannot bear the strain,
I find it left me in a lighter vein.

But when I trust my joy has come to stay
And to have reached the height of happiness,
Then Love returns me to my first distress.

THE NINTH SONNET

As soon as in my soft bed I begin
To find the rest that I desired so,
My senses will retire from within
My self and forthwith towards you they flow.

Then I believe my bosom's tenderness
Contains what I contended for so long,
For which my sobs have been so loud and strong
That I was torn in two by my distress.

O sweetest sleep, o night to me allied!
Appeasing rest, filled with tranquillity,
Preserve for all the nights to come my dream:

And if my love forever be denied
To find fulfilment in reality,
Give me a lie and let it real seem.

THE TENTH SONNET

Beholding your fair head by laurels crowned,
The forceful plaints that you have taught your lute,
Which could move trees and rocks to tear their root
And follow you, enchanted by its sound;

And seeing you by thousand virtues gowned,
Attaining honors where all others fail,
And praise which makes the worthiest grow pale,
Thus speaks my heart so passionately bound:

Those virtues which have all with love inspired,
For which you are by everyone admired,
Could they not also make you love in turn?

And add to all your virtues further fame:
That you were not too proud to light your flame
In my love which would make it softly burn?

THE TWELFTH SONNET

Dear lute, companion of my misery,
You, withness of my sighs, who never failed,
You who have watched my sorrows faithfully
And who have often with me wept and wailed:

You were so pregnant with my wretched tears
That, when I chanced to strike a blissful tone,
You turned it to lament, and in my ears
The chant I'd chosen dwindled to a moan.

And if you find that I am not complying,
Then you deny yourself and silence me;
But when again you see me softly sighing

You lend your tender voice to my sad song,
And I accept it, hoping that ere long
A sweet end may sweet sorrow's comfort be.

THE THIRTEENTH SONNET

O, if I were but ravished at the breast
Of him for whom they see me slowly die:
And if my living with him for the rest
Of my short days envy would not deny;

If closely holding me he told me, dear,
Within our selves let us contentment find,
That nothing ever may our lives unbind,
That neither storm nor current we shall fear:

If then, when in my arms I hold him sound,
Like ivy which around a tree is wound,
Death came to claim me, wanting to deprive

Me of my love: He'd kiss me and, thus free,
My spirit would from mine to his lips flee.
I would die well, still happier than alive.

THE FIFTEENTH SONNET

To celebrate the rising of the Sun
The morning wind serenely sets his sail
And lifts from water and from earth the veil
Of sleep, which kept from murmuring the one

In its soft flow, the other from adorning
With flowers of all kind and hue her breast.
And in the trees the birds all try their best
To help the passers-by forget their mourning.

The nymphs, yet by the moonlight, are at play
And make the grass blades with their dancing sway:
Would you, kind Zephyr, be inclined to see

Me too renewed in your embracing breeze?
Just let my Sun again turn towards me,
And more than ever will my beauty please.

THE SIXTEENTH SONNET

After a time when hail and thundering tide
Have on the Caucasus their shower spread,
Daylight appears, in dazzling splender clad.
When Phoebus, in the last round of his ride,

Turns from the Earth into the Sea below,
His frailer sister enters on the scene.
After a time, the Parthian, no more keen
To fight, will flee and trail his loosened bow.

There was a time when you'd lament and spurn
My fire which you found too slow to burn:
But now that once you have embraced me

And had me where you wanted me to be,
You drowned your flame in sime unnamed stream,
And you are colder now than I could seem.

THE SEVENTEENTH SONNET

I flee the city, temples, every square
Where I could please myself to hear your plaint,
Where you could easily, without restraint,
Force me to give you what I held most fair.

Masks, tournaments and games, all make me sad:
No beauty without you will satisfy
My searching eyes, however hard I try
To offer them new objects in your stead.

And always by my amorous thoughts pursued
I seek the forest's deepest solitude:
But now I find, oft having gone astray,

That I, to lose you and to make me free,
Must leave myself and live outside of me
Where still you fare, however far you stay.

THE EIGHTEENTH SONNET

Kiss me once more, kiss me, kiss me again:
Let me have this to prove your graceful fashion,
Let me have this to prove your faithful passion, -
And four more ardent ones I'll give you then.

Are you complaining? Wait 'til I appease
With ten still sweeter ones your malady.
Exchanging thus our kisses blissfully,
Let us rejoice in one another's ease.

Then each will have two lives in which to dwell:
That of his own and of his friend as well.
Forgive, my Love, the foolish things I say:

I am constrained if always I must hide
The vast abundance that I feel inside,
And find relief in giving it away.

THE NINETEENTH SONNET

Diana, having hunted many a deer,
Was resting in a wood, with nymphs around
Who had with foliage her forehead crowned.
I came, as I do often, dreaming near,

And without thinking, when a voice called: Lo,
You wondering nymph there, wither are you bound?
Why are you turning from Diana's ground?
And seeing that I held no darts nor bow,

She asked me further: What befell you, say,
Who took your arrow and your bow away?
I followed one, I said, into his hold

And threw my arrows all at him in vain,
And last the bow. He took them up again
And aimed at me and hit me hundredfold.

THE TWENTIETH SONNET

I was foretold that I would love one day
The man whose features were described to me:
And nothing more was needed to portray
Him whom I recognized when I did see

Him first: and then, seeing how fatally
Love had befallen him, pity took hold
Of my whole being, and I soon was bold
Enough to love as ardently as he.

Who would not think that blessed be the course
Ordained by Destiny's and Heaven's force?
But when I see the clouds so darkly loom

And with such cruel winds and thunder swell,
Then I believe it was the Lord of Hell
Who from afar decreed for me such doom.

THE TWENTY-FIRST SONNET

Which qualities in man are made to please?
Which should his color be, his hair, his height?
Whose eyes can cast a spell of sweet delight?
Whose love is fatal as a dread disease?

Which song is most becoming to man's lyre?
Who, when he sings, penetrates most his pain?
Who, with a lute, could still more favors gain?
Which nature is it that we most admire?

I am afraid I cannot tell for sure:
My judgment, influenced by Love is poor;
But what I know and will maintain is this:

No thing of beauty, for my choice displayed,
No art, which serves as Nature's handy maid,
Could make my longing stronger than it is.

THE TWENTY-SECOND SONNET

O shining Sun, how happy you must be
Daily to see your friend's adoring face:
And every night your sister may embrace
Endymion with her beams more lovingly.

Mars may see Venus: Mercury may stride
From sky to sky with his adventurous pace;
And Jupiter will always find the place
Where his more youthful, gayer years abide.

Such is the harmony of Heaven's might
In which the spirits of the Gods unite:
But if they could not what they love attain,

Their harmony's irrevocable law
Would turn into a lamentable flaw,
And just like mine, their efforts would be vain.

THE TWENTY-THIRD SONNET

Oh, what availe it that so skillfully
You once have praised my golden tress of hair
And my eyes' beauty, which you would compare
To twin Suns, by Love's cunning subtlety

Designed to harrass and bewilder you.
Where are the tears that were so quickly dried,
And Death in whose name should be sanctified
Your love that solemnly you swore was true?

Was this the aim of your malicious lies
To master me under the servant's guise?
Forgive, my friend, what now I had to say,

Being outraged and full of spite and ire:
But I assure myself, wherever you may stay,
Your torment, just as mine, will never tire.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH SONNET

Fair Ladies, for my love reproach me not:
For having been consumed by thousand blazes,
By thousand labours, thousand painful phases,
For having spent in teare my earthly lot;

For all that do not cover me with shame.
If I have failed, my pains are ever trying, -
Do not increase their piercing points by prying,
But think that Love - you need not call his name,

You need not for your ardour Vulcan's flame
Or yet the beauty of Adonis blame -
Can, if he likes, strike you with greater might:

If you have not encountered him ere long
Your passion may become more strange and strong.
Beware lest he should multiply your plight!

THE

TWENTY-FOUR SONNETS

of Louïze Labé

(1555)

Translated by Lola Boerner

LOUÏZE LABÉ

THE FIRST SONNET

Ulysses, or whoever else was shrewd,
Would not suspect a god of dignity
To hide behind his gracious attitude
Such store of torments all designed for me.

For, Love, your beauty made so deep a sore
Within my breast, which had received its fill
Of warmth and nourishment from you before,
That none but you can remedy this ill.

O cruel fate that makes me feel the sting
As of a scorpion's point and ask relief
From deadly venom of the selfsame thing.

I long to be delivered from this grief,
Yet not to quench my dearest need of you.
Thus, death alone can cure me of the two.

LOUÏZE LABÉ

THE SECOND SONNET

O beautiful brown eyes, o bold disdain,
O searing sighs, o tears so amply shed,
O somber nights, longed for and lost in bed,
O shining days, returning without gain.

O sad laments, o stubborn ecstasy,
O vanished time, o lavished sufferings,
O thousand deaths in thousand nets of strings,
O greater ills conspiring against me.

O smile, o brow, hair, arms, hands, fingers, - O
Lamenting lute, voice, violin and bow:
So many flares to ~~let~~ one ~~woman~~ burn!
make female

You I accuse, who carried all your flame
Into my heart and took such careful aim
That not a spark ~~would~~ singe you in return.
does

LOUIZE LABE

THE THIRD SONNET

O long desires, fruitless hopes and sighs,
Unending tears, accustomed to their course
Of sending many streams out through my eyes
Which have become their fountain and their source.

O harshness of inhuman cruelties,
Celestial lights whose glare I have outstared:
My heart endured its early ecstasies,
Are greater tortures yet for it prepared?

May Love again then try his bow, may he
Assail me with new fires and new darts;
He'll spite himself in his malicious spurt:

For I am now torn in so many parts
That a new wound could find no place in me
Which would not be familiar with its hurt.

LOUIZE LABE

THE THIRD SONNET

O long desires, fruitless hopes and sighs,
Unending tears, accustomed to their course
Of sending many streams out through my eyes
Which have become their fountain and their source.

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Assail me with new fires and new darts;
He'll spite himself in his malicious spurt:

For I am now torn in so many parts
That a new wound could find no place in me
Which would not be familiar with its hurt.

THE FOURTH SONNET

Since the first time that Love had been so cruel
To poison my whole being with his flame,
His godlike wrath has used my heart as fuel
And made me burn through every day that came.

Whatever labours he had improvised,
Whatever threats and thoughts of final fall,
Or yet of death who puts an end to all, -
My ardent heart would never be surprised.

The more Love throws his might at us the more
He makes us feel our strength and lose our fear
To face his onsets better than before:

Since he who laughs at gods and men alike
Is still inclined to those whom he will strike:
He makes them stronger than the strong appear.

THE FIFTH SONNET

Clear Venus, wandering across the skies,
Do hear my voice that sings to you up there,
Telling you of its long and burdened fare,
While shining high above your face will rise.

My wakeful eye is soothéd by your sight
And will a growing stream of tears release
To overflow my bed with greater ease,
Seeing its sorrows witnessed by your light, -

At that time when the weary human mind
Will its deservéd sleep and comfort find.
I bear my pain under the shining sun:

And when I am all broken and all done,
And having laid myself to rest in bed,
Then I must cry my pain all night instead.

THE SIXTH SONNET

Two or three times such bliss in the return
Of this clear star, - and still more bliss for all
On whom the blessing of his eye will fall.
She who receives it may be proud to earn

His choicest present on a chosen day:
His kiss, reserved for those who are most fair
Of Flora's children, fragrant in the air,
Will brush her lips where it will briefly stay.

No one deserves this happiness but I
For all the tears and all the time passed by:
But seeing him I shall so please his whim

And so employ the power of my eyes
That, shaking his resistance by surprise,
In a short while I shall have conquered him.

THE SEVENTH SONNET

All living things must die and become hollow
When from its form the subtle soul will flee:
What more then but your body can I be,
Beloved soul, are you too far to follow?

Let me not lie alone and languish longer, -
Later to save me you will be too late.
Oh, do not leave your body to this fate,
Return its greater part and make it stronger.

But make it so, dear, that there be no danger
In rendering your beloved self to me:
Greet me not in the harness of a stranger

With brazen brows, - but let your beauty be
Combined with kindness, that I need not fear it
That once was cruel, - let me now be near it.

THE EIGHTH SONNET

I live, I die: I burn and I am drowning.
Aglow with heat I suffer icy chill:
Life shows me both its good and iron will,
And Fortune smiles at me while she is frowning.

I laugh and I am crying, all in one;
Each pleasure that I find contains great pain:
What I possess will go - and ever will remain:
I wither and am verdant in the sun.

Thus Love leads ~~me this and the other way.~~ and misleads me on my
And when I think I cannot bear the ~~strain,~~ stress
~~I find it left me in a lighter vein.~~
I ~~felt relieved that~~ I can breathe again
~~There~~ I find the comfort of a sunnier day.
Then
~~But~~ when I trust my joy ~~has come to stay~~ will surely
And to have reached the height of happiness,
Then Love returns me to my first distress.

and when I think the pain will never cease
I think of it no more and find release.
and that
~~when~~ this height I reached I shall possess,
Love takes me down, back to my first distress

LOUIZE LABE

THE NINTH SONNET

As soon as I am ready to begin
In bed the rest that I desired so,
My saddened sense, retiring from within,
Returns to you its boundless overflow.

Then I believe my tender breasts possess
The good to which I had so long aspired,
For which I had so strenuously suspired
That I was torn in two by my distress.

O sweetest sleep, o night to me allied!
Appeasing rest, filled with tranquillity,
Let not a night without my dream go by:

And if my love forever be denied
To find fulfilment in reality,
Give me at least possession in a lie.

THE TENTH SONNET

Beholding your fair head by laurels crowned,
The forceful plaints that you have taught your lute,
Which could move trees and rocks to tear their root
And follow you, enchanted by its sound;

And seeing you by thousand virtues gowned,
Attaining honors where all others fail,
And praise which makes the worthiest grow pale,
Thus speaks my heart so passionately bound:

Those virtues which have all with love inspired,
For which you are by everyone admired,
Could they not also make you love in turn?

And add to all your virtues further fame:
That you were not too proud to light your flame
In my love which would make it softly burn?

THE ELEVENTH SONNET

Oh sweetest looks, oh eyes with beauty filled,
Small gardens in which loving flowers grow,
And darts of Love whose dangers I should know:
How often has my eye by you been stilled!

Deceitful heart, how cruel you have been,
How rigidly you hold me in your tie,
How many longing tears I had to dry
While you who tortured me remained serene!

Thus you, my eyes, find pleasure in the sight
Of his eyes, holding for you such delight:
But you, my heart, while they enjoy their part,

Must languish more and suffer greater grief.
And how could I be calm and find relief,
If thus my eye is alien to my heart?

THE TWELFTH SONNET

Dear lute, companion of my misery,
You, witness of my sighs, who never failed,
You who have watched my sorrows faithfully
And who have often with me wept and wailed:
How often with me you have

You were so pregnant with my wretched tears
That,when I chanced to strike a blissful tone,
You turned it to lament, and in my ears
The chant I'd chosen dwindled to a moan.

And if you find that I am not complying,
Then you deny yourself and silence me:
But when again you see me softly sighing

You lend your tender voice to my sad song,
And I accept it, hoping that ere long
A sweet end may sweet sorrow's comfort be.

THE THIRTEENTH SONNET

Oh, if I were but ravished at the breast
Of him for whom they see me slowly die:
And if my living with him for the rest
Of my short days envy would not deny;

If closely holding me he told me, dear,
Within our selves let us contentment find,
That nothing ever may our lives unbind,
That neither storm nor current we shall fear:

If then, when in my arms I hold him sound,
Like ivy which around a tree is wound,
Death came to claim me, wanting to deprive

Me of my love: He'd kiss me and, thus free,
My spirit would from mine to his lips flee.
I would die well, still happier than alive.

LOUIZE LABE

THE FOURTEENTH SONNET

As long as tears are flowing from my eyes
For you on whom they feasted in the past;
As long as rising above sobs and sighs
My voice can still their bitterness outlast;

While I can trust my hand relentlessly
To strike the darling lute and make it sing;
And while ~~the~~ mind will still contented be
To search for you and for no other thing:

I shall have no desire yet to die.
But once I feel my eyes are getting dry,
My voice is broken, powerless my grip,

And when my mind on its terrestrial stay
Will send no lover's signal to my lip:
Then death may blacken my most shining day.

THE FIFTEENTH SONNET

To celebrate the rising of the Sun
The morning wind serenely sets his sail
And lifts from water and from earth the veil
Of sleep, which kept from murmuring the one

In its soft flow, the other from adorning
With flowers of all kind and hue her breast.
And in the trees the birds all try their best
To help the passers-by forget their morning.

The nymphs, yet by the moonlight, are at play
And make the grass blades with their dancing sway:
Would you, kind Zephyr, be inclined to see

Me too renewed in your embracing breeze?
Just let my Sun again turn towards me,
And more than ever will my beauty please.

THE SIXTEENTH SONNET

After a time when hail and thundering tide
Have on the Caucasus their shower spread,
Daylight appears, in dazzling splendor clad.
When Phoebus, in the last round of his ride,

Turns from the Earth into the Sea below,
His frailer sister enters on the scene.
After a time,the Parthian, no more keen
To fight, will flee and trail his loosened bow.

There was a time when you'd lament and spurn
My fire which you found too slow to burn:
But now that once you have embraced me

And had me where you wanted me to be,
You drowned your flame in some unnamed stream,
And you are colder now than I could seem.

THE SEVENTEENTH SONNET

I flee the city, temples, every square
Where I could please myself to hear your plaint,
Where you could easily, without restraint,
Force me to give you what I held most fair.

Masks, tournaments and games, all make me sad:
No beauty without you will satisfy
My searching eyes, however hard I try
To offer them new objects in your stead.

And always by my amorous thoughts pursued
I seek the forest's deepest solitude:
But now I find, oft having gone astray,
there see

That I, to lose you and to make me free,
find liberty
Must leave myself and live outside of me
Where still you fare, however far you stay.

That I shall never find delivery
from you unless I live outside of me
where you still fare though you are far
away.

THE EIGHTEENTH SONNET

Kiss me once more, kiss me, kiss me again:
Let me have this to prove your graceful fashion,
Let me have this to prove your faithful passion, -
And four more ardent ones I'll give you then.

Are you complaining? Wait 'til I appease
With ten still sweeter ones your malady.
Exchanging thus our kisses blissfully,
Let us rejoice in one another's ease.

Then each will have two lives in which to dwell:
That of his own and of his friend as well.
Forgive, my Love, the foolish things I say:

I am constrained if always I must hide
The vast abundance that I feel inside,
And find relief in giving it away.

THE NINETEENTH SONNET

Diana, having hunted many a deer,
Was resting in a wood, with nymphs around
Who had with foliage her forehead crowned.
I came, as I do often, dreaming near,

And without thinking, when a voice called: Lo,
You wondering nymph there, wither are you bound?
Why are you turning from Diana's ground?
And seeing that I held no darts nor bow,

She asked me further: What befell you, say,
Who took your arrow and your bow away?
I followed one, I said, into his hold

And threw my arrows all at him in vain,
And last the bow. He took them up again
And aimed at me and hit me hundredfold.

LOUIZE LABE

THE TWENTIETH SONNET

I was foretold that I would love for sure
Some day the one who was described to me:
And without any other portraiture
I recognized his features instantly:

Then when I saw that Love had fatally
Befallen him, I pitied his distress
And forced my nature under greatest stress
To love as he did and as ardently.

Who would not think that blessed be the course
Ordained by Destiny's and Heaven's force?
But when I see the clouds so darkly loom

And with such cruel winds and thunder swell,
Then I believe it was the Lord of Hell
Who from afar decreed for me such doom.

THE TWENTY-FIRST SONNET

Which qualities in man are made to please?
Which should his color be, his hair, his height?
Whose eyes can cast a spell of sweet delight?
Whose love is fatal as a dread disease?

Which song is most becoming to man's lyre?
Who, when he sings, penetrates most his pain?
Who, with a lute, could still more favors gain?
Which nature is it that we most admire?

I am afraid I cannot tell for sure:
My judgment, influenced by Love is poor;
But what I know and will maintain is this:

No thing of beauty, for my choice displayed,
No art, which serves as Nature's handy maid,
Could make my longing stronger than it is.

LOUIZE LABE

THE TWENTY-SECOND SONNET

O shining Sun, how great must be your bliss
To see forever your beloved's face:
Her sister, whom Endymion may embrace,
Repays you sweetly with her loving kiss.

Mars may see Venus: Mercury may stride
From sky to sky with his adventurous pace;
And Jupiter will always find the place
Where his more youthful, gayer years abide.

Such is the harmony of Heaven's might
In which the spirits of the Gods unite:
But if they could not what they love attain,

Their harmony's irrevocable law
Would turn into a variable flaw,
And just like mine, their labors would be vain.

LOUIZE LABE

THE TWENTY-SECOND SONNET

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But if they could not what they love attain,

Their harmony's irrevocable law
Would turn into a variable flaw,
And just like mine, their labors would be vain.

THE TWENTY-THIRD SONNET

Oh, what avails it that so skillfully
You once have praised my golden tress of hair
And my eyes' beauty, which you would compare
To twin Suns, by Love's cunning subtlety

Designed to harrass and bewilder you.
Where are the tears that were so quickly dried,
And Death in whose name should be sanctified
Your love that solemnly you swore was true?

Was this the aim of your malicious lies
To master me under the servant's guise?
Forgive, my friend, what now I had to say,

Being outraged and full of spite and ire:
But I assure myself, wherever you may stay,
Your torment, just as mine, will never tire.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH SONNET

Fair Ladies, for my love reproach me not:
For having been consumed by thousand blazes,
By thousand labours, thousand painful phases,
For having spent in tears my earthly lot;

For all that do not cover me with shame.
If I have failed, my pains are ever trying, -
Do not increase their piercing points by prying,
But think that Love - you need not call his name,

You need not for your ardour Vulcan's flame
Or yet the beauty of Adonis blame -
Can, if he likes, strike you with greater might:

If you have not encountered him ere long
Your passion may become more strange and strong.
Beware lest he should multiply your plight!

~~If ever~~ ~~you~~ ~~loved~~ ~~more~~ ~~peacefully~~
~~If~~ ~~never~~ ~~more~~ ~~love~~ ~~you~~ ~~knew~~
~~He~~ ~~more~~ ~~you~~ ~~have~~ ~~enjoyed~~ ~~serenity~~
~~before~~ ~~the~~ ~~stranger~~ ~~will~~ ~~your~~ ~~forceful~~ ~~passion~~ ~~be~~
still stranger will your forceful passion be
compared to mine, he be multiply your
plight.

Le Rameur.

Paul Valéry.

Penché contre un grand fleuve, infiniment mes rames
M'arrachent à regret auy riants environs;
Ame aux pesantes mains, pleine des avirons,
iI faut que le ciel cède au glas des lentes lames.

Le coeur dur, l'oeil distrait des beautés que je bats,
Laissant autour de moi mûrir des cercles d'onde,
Je veux à larges coups rompre l'illustre monde
De feuiles et de feu que je chante tout bas.

Arbres, sur qui je passe, ample et naive moire,
Eau de ramages peinte, et paix de l'accompli,
Déchire-les, ma barque, impose-leur un pli
qui coure du grand calme abolir la mémoire.

Jamais, charmes du jour, jamais vos grâces n'ont
Tant souffert d'un rebelle essayant sa défense:
Mais comme les soleils m'ont tiré de L'enfance,
Je remonte à la source où cesse même un nom.

En vain toute la nymphe enorme et continue
empêche des bras purs mes membres harassés;
Je romprai lentement mille liens glacés
et les barbes d'argent de sa puissance nue.

Ce bruit secret des eaux, ce fleuve étrangement
Place mes jours dorés sous un bandeau de soie;
Rien plus aveuglément n'use l'antique joie
Qu'un bruit de fuite égale et de nul changement.

Sous les ponts annelés, l'eau profonde me porte,
Voûtes pleines de vent, de murmure et de nuit,
Ils courent sur un front qu'ils écrasent d'ennui,
mais dont L'os orgueilleux est plus dur que leur porte.

Leur nuit passe longtemps. L'âme baisse sous eux
ses sensibles soliels et ses promptes paupières,
Quand, par le mouvement qui me revêt de pierres,
Je m'enfonce au mèpris de tant d'azur oiseux.

SONNET I

Non hauria Ulysse o qualunqu'altro mai
Piu accorto fù, da quel diuino aspetto
Pien di gratie, d'honor et di rispetto
Sperato qual i sento affanni e guai.

Pur, Amor, co i begli ochi tu fatt' hai
Tal piaga dentro al mio innocente petto,
Di cibo et di calor gia tuo ricetto,
Che rimedio non v'e si tu nel' dai.

O sorte dura, che mi fa esser quale
Punta d'un Scorpio, et domandar riparo
Contr' el velen' d'all' istesso animale.

Chieggio li sol' ancida questa noia,
Non estingua el desir a me si caro,
Che mancar non potra ch'i non mi muoia.

SONNET II

O beaus yeus bruns, ô regards destournez,
O chaus soupirs, ô larmes espandues,
O noires nuits vainement ~~s~~ at~~t~~endues,
O jours luisans vainement retournez:

O tristes pleins, ô desirs obstinez,
O tems perdu, ô peines despendues,
O mile morts en mile rets tendues,
O pires maus contre moi destinez.

O ris, ô front, cheueus, bras, mains et doits:
O lut pleintif, viole, archet et vois:
Tant de flambeaus pour ardre une femelle!

De toy me plein, que tant de feus portant,
En tant d'endrois d'iceus mon coeur tatant,
N'en est sur toy volé quelque estincelle.

SONNET III

O longs desirs, ô esperances vaines,
Tristes soupirs et larmes coutumieres
A engendrer de moy maintes riuieres,
Dont mes deus yeus sont sources et fontaines:

O cruautez, ô durtez inhumaines,
Piteus regars des celestes lumieres:
Du coeur transi ô passions premieres,
Estimez-vous croitre encore mes peines?

Qu'encor Amour sur moy son arc essaie,
Que nouueaus feux me gette et nouueaus dars;
Qu'il se despite, et pis qu'il pourra face:

Car je suis tant nauree en toutes pars,
Que plus en moy une nouuelle plaie,
Pour m'empirer ne pourroit trouuer place.

SONNET IV

Depuis qu'Amour cruel empoisonna
Premierement de son feu ma poitrine,
Tousiours brulay de sa fureur diuine,
Qui un seul iour mon coeur n'abandonna.

Quelque trauail, dont assez me donna,
Quelque menasse et procheine ruine:
Quelque penser de mort qui tout termine,
De rien mon coeur ardent ne s'estonna.

Tant plus qu'Amour nous vient fort assaillir,
Plus il nous fait nos forces recueillir,
Et tousiours frais en ses combats fait estre:

Mais ce n'est pas qu'en rien nous fauorise,
Cil qui les Dieus et les hommes mesprise:
Mais pour plus fort contre les fors paroitre.

SONNET V

Clere Venus, qui erres par les Cieus,
Entens ma voix qui en pleins chantera,
Tant que ta face au haut du Ciel luira,
Son long trauail et souci ennuieus.

Mon oeil veillant s'atendrira bien mieus,
Et plus de pleurs te voyant getera.
Mieus mon lit mol de larmes baignera,
De ses trauaus voyant temoins tes yeus.

Donq des humains sont les lassez esprits
De dous repos et de sommeil espris.
I'endure mal tant que le Soleil luit:

Et quand ie suis quasi toute cassee,
Et que me fuis mise en mon lit lassee,
Crier me faut mon mal toute la nuit.

SONNET VI

Deus ou trois fois bienheureus le retour
De ce cler Astre, et plus heureus encore
Ce que son oeil de regarder honore.
Que celle la ~~receuroit~~ receuroit on bon iour,

Qu'elle pourroit se vanter d'un bon tour
Qui baiseroit le plus beau don de Flore,
Le mieus sentant que iamais vid Aurore,
Et y feroit sur ses leures seiour!

C'est à moi seule à qui ce bien est du,
Pour tant de pleurs et tant de tems perdu:
Mais le voyant, tant luy feray de feste,

Tant emploiray de mes yeus le pouuoir,
Pour dessus lui plus de credit auoir,
Qu'en peu de tems feray grande conqueste.

SONNET VII

On voit mourir toute chose animee,
Lors que du corps l'ame sutile part:
Ie suis le corps, toy la meilleure part:
Ou es tu donq, ô ame bien aymee?

Ne me laissez pas si long tems pamee,
Pour me sauuer apres viendrois trop tard.
Las, ne mets point ton corps en ce hazart:
Rens lui sa part et moitié estimee.

Mais fais, Ami, que ne soit dangereuse
Cette rencontre et reuuë amoureuse,
L'acompagnant, non de seurité,

Non de rigueur: mais de grace amiable,
Qui doucement me rende ta beauté,
Iadis cruelle, à present favorable.

SONNET VIII

Ie vis, ie meurs: ie me brule et me noye.
I'ay chaut estreme en endurant froidure:
La vie m'est et trop molle et trop dure.
I'ay grans ennuis entremeslez de ioye:

Tout à un coup ie ris et ie larmoye,
Et en plaisir maint grief tourment i'endure:
Mon bien s'en va, et à iamais il dure:
Tout en un coup ie seiche et ie verdoye.

Ainsi Amour inconstamment me meine:
Et quand ie pense avoir plus de douleur,
Sans y penser ie me treuue hors de peine.

Puis quand ie croy ma ioye estre certaine,
Et estre au haut de mon desiré heur,
Il me remet en mon premier malheur.

SONNET IX

Tout aussi tot que ie commence à prendre
Dens le mol lit le repos desiré,
Mon triste esprit hors de moy retiré
S'en va vers toy incontinent se rendre.

Lors m'est auis que dedens mon sein tendre
Ie tiens le bien, ou i'ay tant aspiré,
Et pour lequel i'ay si haut souspiré,
Que de sanglots ay souuent cuidé fendre.

O dous sommeil, ô nuit à moy heureuse!
Plaisant repos, plein de tranquilité,
Continuez toutes les nuiz mon songe:

Et sie iamais ma poure ame amoureuse
Ne doit auoir de bien en verité,
Faites au moins qu'elle en ait en mensonge.

SONNET X

Quand i'aperçoy ton blond chef couronné
D'un laurier verd, faire un Lut si bien pleindre,
Que tu pourrois à te suiure contreindre
Arbres et rocs: quand ie te vois orné,

Et de vertus dix mile enuironné,
Au chef d'honneur plus haut que nul atteindre:
Et des plus hauts les louenges esteindre:
Lors dit mon coeur en soy passionné:

Tant de vertus qui te font estre aymé,
Qui de chacun te font estre estimé,
Ne te pourroient aussi bien faire aymer?

Et aioutant à ta vertu louable
Ce nom encor de m'estre pitoyable,
De mon amour doucement t'enflamer?

SONNET XI

O dous regars, ô yeus pleins de beauté,
Petis iardins, pleins de fleurs amoureuses
Ou sont d'Amour les flesches dangereuses,
Tant à vous voir mon oeil s'est arresté!

O coeur felon, ô rude cruauté,
Tant tu me tiens de façons rigoureuses,
Tant i'ay coulé de larmes langoureuses,
Sentant l'ardeur de mon coeur tourmenté!

Donques, mes yeus, tant de plaisir auez,
Tant de bons tours par ses yeus receuez:
Mais toy, mon coeur, plus les vois s'y complaire,

Plus tu languiz, plus en as de souci,
Or deuinez sie ie suis aise aussi,
Sentant mon oeil estre à mon coeur contraire.

SONNET XII

Lut, compagnon dē ma calamité,
De mes soupirs témoin irreprochable,
De mes ennuis controlleur veritable,
Tu as souuent auec moy lamenté:

Et tant le pleur piteus t'a molesté,
Que commencant quelque son delectable,
Tu le rendois tout soudain lamentable,
Feingnant le ton que plein auoit chanté.

Et si tu veux efforcer au contraire,
Tu te destens et si me contreins taire:
Mais me voyant tendrement soupirer,

Donnant faueur à ma tant triste pleinte,
En mes ennuis me plaire suis contreinte,
Et dous mal douce fin esperer.
d'un

SONNET XIII

Oh si i'estois en ce beau sein rauie
De celui là pour lequel vois mourant:
Si auec lui viure le demeurant
De mes cours iours ne m'empeschoit enuie,

Si m'acollant me disoit, chere Amie,
Contentons nous l'un l'autre, s'asseurant
Que ia tempeste, Euripꝛe, ne Courant
Ne nous pourra desiondre en notre vie:

Si de mes bras le tenant acollé,
Comme du Lierre est l'arbre encercelé,
La mort venoit, de mon aise enuieuse:

Lors que souef il me baiseroit,
Et mon esprit sur ses leures fuiroit,
Bien ie mourrois, plus que viuante, heureuse.

SONNET XIV

Tant que mes yeus pourront larmes espandre,
A leur passé auec toy regretter;
Et qu'aus sanglots et soupirs resister
Pourra ma voix, et un peu faire entendre:

Tant que ma main pourra les cordes tendre
Du mignart Lut, pour ces graces chanter:
Tant que l'esprit se voudra contenter
De ne vouloir rien fors que toy comprendre:

Ie ne souhaite encore point mourir.
Mais quand mes yeus ie sentiray tarir,
Ma voix cassee, et ma main impuissante,

Et mon esprit en ce mortel seiour
Ne pouuant plus montrer signe d'amante:
Priray la Mort noircir mon plus cler iour.

SONNET XV

Pour le retour du Soleil honorer,
Le Zephir, l'air serein lui apareille:
Et du sommeil l'eau et la terre esueille,
Qui les gardoit l'une de murmurer,

En dous coulant, l'autre de se parer
De mainte fleur de couleur nompareille.
Ia les oiseaus es arbres font merueille,
Et aus passans font l'ennui moderer:

Les Nymfes ia en mile ieus s'esbatent
Au cler de Lune, et dansans l'herbe abatent:
Veus tu Zephir de ton heur me donner,

Et que par toy toute me renouuelle?
Fay mon Soleil deuers moy retourner,
Et tu verras s'il ne me rend plus belle.

SONNET XVI

Après qu'un tems la gresle et le tonnerre
Ont le haut mont de Caucase batu,
Le beau iour vient, de lueur reuétu.
Quand Phebus ha son cerne fait en terre,

Et l'ocean il regaigne à grand erre
Sa seur se montre avec son chef pointu.
Quand quelque tems le Parthe ha combatu,
Il prent la fuite et son arc il desserre.

Un tems t'ay vù et consolé pleintif,
Et defiant de mon feu peu hatif:
Mais maintenant pue tu m'as embrassee,

Et suis au point auquel tu me voulois,
Tu as ta flame en quelque eau arrosee,
Et es plus froit qu'estre ie ne soulois.

SONNET XVII

Ie fuis la vile, et temples et tous lieus,
Esquels prenant plaisir a t'ouir pleindre,
Tu peus, et non sans force, me contreindre
De te donner ce qu'estimois le mieus.

Masques, tournois, ieus me sont ennuieus,
Et rien sans toy de beau ne me puis peindre:
Tant que tachant à ce desir esteindre,
Et un nouuel obget faire à mes yeus,

Et des pensers amoureus me distraire,
Des bois espais sui le plus solitaire:
Mais i'aperçoy, ayant erré maint tour,

Que si ie veus de toy estre deliure,
Il me conuient hors de moymesme viure,
Ou fais encor que loin sois en seiour.

SONNET XVIII

Baise m'encor, rebaise moy et baise:
Donne m'en un de tes plus sauoureus,
Donne m'en un de tes plus amoureus:
Ie t'en rendray quatre plus chaus que braise.

Las, te pleins tu? ca que ce mal i'apaise,
En t'en donnant dix autres doucereus.
Ainsi meslans nos baisers tant heureus
Iouissons nous l'un de l'autre à notre aise.

Lors double vie à chacun en suiura.
Chacun en soy et son ami viura.
Permets m'Amour penser quelque folie:

Tousiours suis mal, viuant discrettement
Et ne me puis donner contentement,
Si hors de moy ne fay quelque saillie.

SONNET XIX

Diane estant en l'espesseur d'un bois,
Apres avoir mainte beste assenee,
Prenoit le frais, de Nynfes couronnee:
I'allois resuant comme fay maintefois,

Sans y penser: quand i'ouy une vois,
Qui m'apela, disant, Nynfe estonnee,
Que ne t'es tu vers Diane tournee?
Et me voyant sans arc et sans carquois,

Qu'as tu trouué, ô compagne, en ta voye,
Qui de ton arc et flesches ait fait proye?
Ie m'animay, respons ie, à un passant,

Et lui getay en vain toutes mes flesches
Et l'arc apres: mais lui les ramassant
Et les tirant me fit cent et cent bresches.

SONNET XX

Predit me fut, que deuoit fermement
Un iour aymer celui dont la figure
Me fut descrite: et sans autre peinture
Le reconnu quand vy premierement:

Puis le voyant aymer fatalement,
Pitié ie pris de sa triste auenture:
Et tellement ie forçay ma nature,
Qu'autant que lui aymay ardentement.

Qui n'ust pensé qu'en faueur deuoit croitre
Ce que le Ciel et destins firent naitre?
Mais quand ie voy si nubileus aprets,

Vents si cruels et tant horrible orage:
Ie croy qu'estoient les infernaus arrets,
Qui de si loin m'ourdissoient ce naufrage.

SONNET XXI

Quelle grandeur rend l'homme venerable?
Quelle grosseur? quel poil? quelle couleur?
Qui est des yeus le plus emmieleur?
Qui fait plus tot une playe incurable?

Quel chant est plus à l'homme conuenable?
Qui plus penetre en chantant sa douleur?
Qui un dous lut fait encore meilleur?
Quel naturel est le plus amiable?

Ie ne voudrois le dire assurément,
Ayant Amour forcé mon iugement:
Mais ie Say bien et de tant ie m'assure,

Que tout le beau que lon pourroit choisir,
Et que tout l'art qui ayde la Nature,
Ne me sauroient acroitre mon desir.

SONNET XXII

Luisant Soleil, que to es bien heureus,
De voir tousiours de t'Amie la face:
Et toy, sa seur, qu'Endimion embrasse,
Tant te repais de miel amoureus.

Mars voit Venus: Mercure auentureus
De Ciel en Ciel, de lieu en lieu se glasse:
Et Iupiter remarque en mainte place
Ses premiers ans plus gays et chaleureus.

Voilà du Ciel la puissante harmonie,
Qui les esprits diuins ensemble lie:
Mais s'ils auoient ce qu'ils ayment lointein,

Leur harmonie et ordre irreuocable
Se tourneroit en erreur variable,
Et comme moy trauailleront en vain.

SONNET XXIII

Las! que me sert, que si parfaitement
Louas iadis et ma tresse doree,
Et de mes yeus la beauté comparee
A deus Soleils, dont Amour finement

Tira les trets causes de ton tourment?
Ou estes vous, pleurs de peu de duree?
Et Mort par qui deuoit estre honoree
Ta ferme amour et iteré serment?

Donques c'estoit le but de ta malice
De m'asseruir sous ombre de seruice?
Pardonne moy Ami, à cette fois,

Estant outree et de despit et d'ire:
Mais ie m'assure, quelque part que tu sois,
Qu'autant que moy tu soufres de martire.

SONNET XXIV

Ne reprenez, Dames, si i'ay aymé:
Si i'ay senti mile torches ardentes,
Mile trauaus, mile douleurs mordantes:
Si en pleurant i'ay mon tems consumé,

Las que mon nom n'en soit par vous blamé.
Si i'ai failli, les peines sont presentes,
N'aigrissez point leurs pointes violentes:
Mais estimes qu'Amour, a point nommé,

Sans votre ardeur d'un Vulcan excuser,
Sans la beauté d'Adonis acuser,
Pourra, s'il veut, plus vous rendre amoureuses:

En ayant moins que moy d'ocasion,
Et plus d'estrange et forte passion.
Et gardez vous d'estre plus malheureuses.

LOUÏZE LABÉ

SONNET I

Non hauria Ulysse o qualunqu'altro mai
Piu accorto fu, da quel diuino aspetto
Pien di gratie, d'honor et di rispetto
Sperato qual i sento affanni e guai.

Pur, Amor, co i begli ochi tu fatt' hai
Tal piaga dentro al mio innocente petto,
Di cibo et di calor gia tuo ricetto,
Che rimedio non v'e si tu nol' dai.

O sorte dura, che mi fa esser quale
Punta d'un Scorpio, et domandar riparo
Contr' el velen' d'all' istesso animale.

Chieggio li fol' ancida questa noia,
Non estingua el desir a me si caro,
Che mancar non potra ch' i non mi muoia.

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LOUÏZE LABÉ

SONNET II

O beaus yeus bruns, ô regars destournez,
O chaus soupirs, ô larmes espandues,
O noires nuits vainement atendues,
O jours luisans vainement retournez:

O tristes pleins, ô desirs obstinez,
O tems perdu, ô peines despendues,
O mile morts en mile rets tendues,
O pires maus contre moi destinez.

O ris, ô front, cheueus, bras, mains et doits:
O lut pleintif, viole, archet et vois:
Tant de flambeaus pour ardre une femmelle!

De toy me plein, que tant de feus portant,
En tant d'endrois d'iceus mon coeur tatant,
N'en est sur toy volé quelque estincelle.

LOUÏZE LABÉ

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En tant d'endrois d'iceus mon coeur tatant,
N'en est sur toy volé quelque estincelle.

SONNET VII

Louïze Labé

On voit mourir toute chose animee,
Lors que du corps l'ame sutile part:
Ie suis le corps, toy la meilleure part:
Ou es tu donq, ô ame bien aymee?

Ne me laissez pas si long tems pamee,
Pour me ſauuer apres viendrois trop tard.
Las, ne mets point ton corps en ce hazart:
Rens lui sa part et moitié estimee.

Mais fais, Ami, que ne soit dangereuse
Cette rencontre et reuuë amoureuse,
L'accompagnant, non de seuerite,

Non de rigeur: mais de grace amiable,
Qui doucement me rende ta beaute,
Iadis cruelle, à present favorable.

SONNET VII

On voit mourir toute chose animee,
Lors que du corps l'ame sutile part:
Ie suis le corps, toy la meilleure part:
Ou es tu donq, ô ame bien aymee?

Ne me laissez pas si long tems pamee,
Pour me sauuer apres viendrois trop tard.
Las, ne mets point ton corps en ce hazart:
Rens lui sa part et moitié estimee.

Mais fais, Ami, que ne soit dangereuse
Cette rencontre et reuuë amoureuse,
L'acompagnant, non de seuerite,

Non de rigueur: mais de grace amiable,
Qui doucement me rende ta beaute,
Iadis cruelle, à present favorable.

SONNET VIII

Ie vis, ie meurs: ie me brule et me noye.
I'ay chaut estreme en endurant froidure:
La vie m'est et trop molle et trop dure.
I'ay grans ennuis entremeslez de ioye:

Tout à un coup ie ris et ie larmoye,
Et en plaisir maint grief tourment i'endure:
Mon bien s'en va, et a iamais il dure:
Tout en un coup ie seiche et ie verdoye.

Ainsi Amour inconstamment me meine:
Et quand ie pense avoir plus de douleur,
Sans y penser ie me treuue hors de peine.

Puis quand ie croy ma ioye estre certeine,
Et estre au haut de mon desiré heur,
Il me remet en mon premier malheur.

SONNET XVIII

Baise m'encor, rebaise moy et baise:
Donne m'en un de tes plus sauoureus,
Donne m'en un de tes plus amoureus:
Ie t'en rendray quatre plus chaus que braise.

Las, te pleins tu? ça que ce mal i'apaise,
En t'en donnant dix autres doucereus.
Ainsi meslans nos baisers tant heureus
Iouissons nous l'un de l'autre à notre aise.

Lors double vie à chacun en suiura.
Chacun en soy et son ami viura.
Permets m'Amour penser quelque folie:

Tousiours suis mal, viuant discrettement
Et ne me puis donner contentement,
Si hors de moy ne fay quelque saillie.

SONNET XXIII

Las! que me sert, que si parfaitement
Louas iadis et ma tresse doree,
Et de mes yeux la beauté comparee
A deus Soleils, dont Amour finement

Tira les trets causez de ton tourment?
Ou estes vous, pleurs de peu de duree?
Et Mort par qui deuoit estre honoree
Ta ferme amour et iteré serment?

Donques c'estoit le but de ta malice
De m'asseruir sous ombre de seruice?
Pardonne moy Ami, à cette fois,

Estant outree et de despit et d'ire:
Mais ie m'assure, quelque part que to sois,
Qu'autant que moy to soufres de martire.

SONNET XXIV

Ne reprenez, Dames, si i'ay aymé:
Si i'ay senti mile torches ardantes,
Mile trauaus, mile douleurs mordantes:
Si en pleurant i'ay mon temps consumé,

Las que mon nom n'en soit par vous blamé.
Si i'ai failli, les peines sont presentes,
N'aigrissez point leurs pointes violentes:
Mais estimez qu'Amour, à point nommé,

Sans votre ardeur d'un Vulcan excuser,
Sans la beauté d'Adonis acuser,
Pourra, s'il veut, plus vous rendre amoureuses.

Et ayant moins que moy d'ocasion,
Et plus d'estrange et forte passion.
Et gardez vous d'estre plus malheureuses.

AR 25164

Max and Lola Gruenthal Collection

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

Center for Jewish History

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PROF. DR. FREUD

WIEN IX., BERGGASSE 19

7.VII.25.

Sehr geehrter Herr Kollega!

Wie merkwürdig, die Stimme der Psychoanalyse aus dem fernen China zu hören und Einblick in die merkwürdigen Schicksale zu bekommen, welche Sie, den Leydner Studenten, so weit verschlagen haben. Unvermeidlich wendet sich die Sympathie dem jungen Manne zu, der in solcher Abgeschiedenheit an wissenschaftlichen Interessen festhält, arbeitet und spekuliert.

Nun kommt für mich die Schwierigkeit. Ich bin ein natürlicher Feind aller zusammenfassenden Spekulationen, Weltanschauungen, Systembildungen und kann mich nicht dazu bewegen, sie zu schätzen. Ich habe gelegentlich selbst einige Ausschreitungen gewagt und die Beobachtung zum Sprungbrett genommen, um mich in weitgehende Spekulationen zu stürzen. Aber ich muss sagen, es geschah nicht mit gutem Gewissen, im Grunde kann ich es mir selbst nicht verzeihen. Meine Entschuldigung ist, dass ich vorher ein Menschenalter lange E beobachtet, studiert und meine eigenen phantastischen Neigungen eingeschränkt habe. So meine ich also, die weitumfassende Spekulation sollte man sich fürs Alter vorbehalten, in jungen Jahren soll man Beobachtungen und Erfahrungen sammeln. Ich getraue mich nicht, Ihre spekulative Arbeit zu verurteilen. Vielleicht begehe ich damit ein schweres Unrecht. Aber ich enthalte mich, Sie zu beurteilen. Im allgemeinen rate ich Ihnen davon ab. Nach meinen Erfahrungen hat die Wissenschaft nicht viel von solchen Versuchen, auch wenn sie sehr geistreich ausfallen.

Im Uebrigen möchte ich gerne zu Ihren Diensten sein. Die "Traumdeutung" ist im Deutschen gewiss zu bekommen, wenn Sie sich an die Buchhandlung Deuticke, Wien I., Helfersdorferstrasse 4, wenden. Mein "Totem und Tabu" ist längst in Amerika von Dr. Brill übersetzt erschienen. Ich glaube, auch Jungs "Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido".

an P. W. Schotmann, Coll. Psychiater, Simoke 9, Leiden

Ich bedaure sehr, holländisch nicht zu verstehen.

In der Hoffnung, Ihnen ein andermal bei konkreteren Wünschen besser dienen zu können,

Ihr ergebener

Freud

PROF. DR. FREUD

WIEN IX., BERGGASSE 19

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Wie merkwürdig, die Stimme der Psychoanalyse aus dem fernen China zu hören und Einblick in die merkwürdigen Schicksale zu bekommen, welche Sie, den Leydner Studenten, so weit verschlagen haben. Unvermeidlich wendet sich die Sympathie dem jungen Manne zu, der in solcher Abgeschiedenheit an wissenschaftlichen Interessen festhält, arbeitet und spekuliert.

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an F. W. Schofmann, holl. Psychiater; Sinolog, Dichter

Ich bedaure sehr, holländisch nicht zu verstehen.

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Ihr ergebener

Freud

Translation of Freud letter to T.W. Schotmann, Dutch psychiatrist, Sinologue, poet

PROF. Dr. FREUD

Wien IX, Berggasse 19
7.7.25

Dear Colleague:

How curious to hear the voice of psychoanalysis from distant China and to gain insight into the strange turns of fate that took you, a student from Leyden, that far away. Inevitably, one's sympathy goes out toward the young man who, in such complete isolation, continues to pursue his scientific interests, to work and to speculate.

Here is where I have a problem. I am a natural enemy of all comprehensive theories, philosophies of life, constructions of systems, and I can not get myself to appreciate them. Occasionally I myself have been guilty of a few transgressions, using my observation as a spring-board to plunge into far-reaching speculations. But I must say, I did not do it with a good conscience, actually I can not forgive myself for it. My excuse is that I had already spent a lifetime with studies and observations, keeping my own phantastic tendencies in check. That is why I think that far-reaching speculations should be reserved for one's old age, whereas in younger years one should collect observations and experiences. I would not dare to condemn your speculative work. Perhaps this is a serious wrong I am doing. But I refrain from judging it. Generally speaking, I would advise against it. Experience taught me that science does not have much use for such efforts, even when they are very ingenious.

Aside from this, I would be glad to be of service to you. The "Interpretation of Dreams" should be easy to get in German, if you write to the book-store Deuticke, Wien I., Helfersdorferstrasse 4.

My "Totem and Taboo", translated by Dr. Brill, was published in America quite some time ago. I think also Jung's "Psychology of the Unconscious".*

I am very sorry that I do not understand Dutch.

Hoping that I may be of better service some other time in connection with more tangible requests,

Yours sincerely,

Freud

Translated by Lola Gruenthal

*Translator's note: Jung's "Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido" was first published in English under the above title. Jung later revised the original and the title of the new edition, published in 1952, was changed to "Symbols of Transformation".

LOLA GRUENTHAL
107 WEST 86TH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10024

February 3, 1988

Ms. Trudy Savasta
Ms. Kate R. Whitney
110 West 51st Street
New York, N.Y. 10020

Dear Ms. Savasta,
dear Ms. Whitney,.

Please find enclosed my translation of the Freud letter which I just finished copying. As I mentioned on the phone, the original contains some ambiguities which I did not attempt to eliminate in the English version. If there are any questions regarding the German text or my understanding of it, please let me know, and I'll be glad to discuss it on the telephone.

My fee for this translation is $60.00.

Sincerely,

Lola Gruenthal

1866 - 1924

Berlin.

Hochverehrter
Herr — Freund —
und Meister!

Indem ich Ihnen für
die überaus aufmerk-
-same, freund. Zusendung
des letzten Heftes der
„griechischen Denker"
wärmstens danke, beglück-
-wünsche Sie zu der Vollen-
dung des ebenso großen
als schönen Werkes auf
das herzlichste u. theilnehmend-
-ste Ihres stets kindlich ergebenen

Ferruccio Busoni

6. Okt. 1909.

Berlin, 16. Dez. 1908
Kohenzollernstr. 7

Hochgeehrter, lieber Freund!

Ich danke Ihnen herzlich für Ihr liebes Zeilen v. die freundliche Einladung.

Wenn ich schließlich hier doch, wo selbst ich mir irgendwie fest vorgenommen, mir Ruhe v. vergnügliches Ostern selber für nächstes Jahr
Sachlich engagiert
Räume zur Heimsuchung machen. Mein Befinden
nächst nächsten Jahren --- in dem Maasse als die
will mir dazu vorläufig in den Knochen ist ein Zeichen
meines Alterzeigers sind
meine Absage finden v. so war ich wirklich in Zweifel,
Einerseits aber der Umstand
Ihnen herzlich danken abzusagen. Andrerseits aber da Ihnen,
dass ich nächstens sowieso gehen zu Ihnen kann
als ich wichtig genug zum für Ihnen sein, andrerseits aber noch
die gemeinsame, geschäftliche Besprechung, die doch mal eine
gesonderte Erörterung, will
zu machen, selbst das vorliegende Concrete ist für Ihr Befinden, lassen
gut bezahlt
mich noch einmal überdenken, ehe ich
mich endgültig erklären v. Ihnen absagen, doch ich
Ihnen nahelegen, dass ich
möchte

Ihr

to Lea a cole

my

für ein Honorar v.

(ich nehme an, dass

bis ins Jahr von 4000 Mark (je eher, desto lieber, spätestens bis zu 2 Monate

ich am 2. Abend den Direktoren sage), mich doch viell.

Direktor Volk mit der völlig absurden Idee, mir Lust in einem

entsetzlichen Loche, ein Loch im meinem herrlichen (?)

Garnisonen Garnisonsaufenthalt zu raisen.

Liebe Gemahlin Ihr sehr Verehrter Herr unser liebster Cornelius

v. Ihnen Ihr mir sehr böse, weil ich Ihnen so knapp geschäftsmässig

auf Ihre freundliche Einladung antworte. Aber der Fall liegt so,

dass ich wirklich am liebsten in meinem Hause

weil ich wirklich am liebsten in meine häusliche Einsamkeit bleiben

Einsamkeit bleibe u. allenfalls überhaupt die ganze

v. allmählig überhaupt die ganze Concertreiserei einstellen werde

Concertreiserei einstellen werde

Obwohl Ihr mir ganz zugesagt, nun die Stellung mir anerbietend

antworten Sie mir ganz ungenügend, wenn die Er-

Forderung unbedingt — Forderung unumgänglich

füllung meinerseits — Forderung unumgänglich

ist und — — — auf einen Widerstand stossen

französische Künstler v. Ihnen Ihr grösster Enthusiast bekannt

der die Forderung eines Honorars oder einer Honorarab-

v. gewiss — von Ihnen sehr wünschenswerthen

Dr Richard Strauss.

B. 11. Mai
1880.

Hochgeehrter Herr,

Der Comité hat mit
Interesse von Ihrer
Sammlung Kenntniss
genommen; indessen
bleibt dieselbe leider
unfolglos, da gestern
Herr Rothmüller Ernst

Rudorff an sei mi-
stimmig gerührt
hat i[ch].
Indem ich hoffe, mich
Ihnen bei andern
Gelegenheiten dankbig
erweisen zu können,
bin ich mit der besten
Grüßen

Ihr

ganz ergebenen

Max Bauer.

Lou Andreas-Salome an Frieda von Buelow, 1908/09:

Wieder Tage und Tage, mein Geliebtes, und Naechte und Naechte, und wie schwer mag jede einzelne Stunde davon dir geworden sein! Jede wie ein entsetzliches Gewicht, das so niederzieht, dass es schliesslich nichts mehr gibt, was man auf die andere Wagschale legen kann, ja dass man ganz vergisst, dass es ueberhaupt eine andere Wagschale noch gibt, und dass sie heimlich gefuellt bereit steht mit solchen Gegengewichten, die sich ihrer besondern Natur nach waehrend gewisser Prozesse nicht bemerkbar machen koennen. Und <u>das</u> ist so schrecklich! Da ist kein andrer Trost moeglich, als zu wissen: Das Gleichgewicht <u>wird</u> sich herstellen, auch wenn man von entsetzlichen Bleigewichten ganz zu Boden gezogen ist! Es sind Gewichte von blosser Pappe, glaube mir, fuer die Betrachtungsweise eine Weile spaeter, wenn man sie los ist, denn dann ist man auch alles Grauen vor ihnen los, so wie die gebaerenden Muetter nach einer Weile jeden Massstab fuer den erlittenen Schmerz so eigentuemlich vergessen. <u>Mechanisch</u> dran festhalten, dass es so ist, mit aller Gewalt sich das befehlen! Keine Angst aufkommen lassen, sondern sich zusammenreissen zum siegenden Glauben, dass solche Krankheiten <u>Geburten</u> sind. Sie sind das <u>Schwerste</u> was man erleben kann (-es sei denn, dass es sich um Fieberkrankheiten handelt, die man im Halbtraum erlebt-). Denn das Schwerste ist und bleibt die Entfremdung vom eigenen Koerper. Alles andere Leid kommt von ausserhalb, und so kann man sich kaempfend dawider stellen, dies aber sind wir scheinbar selbst, und so sind wir hineingebannt. Gerade deshalb, weil wir nicht Koerper '<u>sind</u>', sondern nur Koerper'haben', geschieht uns ein so Ungeheuerliches, wenn er alles in uns sozusagen mundtot macht und sich an unsere Stelle zu setzen scheint. Unser Selbsterhaltungs trieb ist teilweise so eins mit ihm, dass er sich nur mit einem erschuetternden Ruck von ihm losmachen kann. Aber in Wirklichkeit ist unser Selbst nicht erst dann, sondern schon laengst, nicht mehr identisch mit seinen Prozessen, ist so <u>in sich selbst</u> geformt und zur Gestalt geballt, dass es, von ihm befreit, sofort in sich existent waere wie in einer viel eignern, feinern 'Koerperlichkeit'. Denn Geist und Koerper, das sind ja nur unsere Worte: wir nennen <u>alles</u> in irgend einem Sinn stets koerperlich, was wir mit den groebsten Mitteln zerlegen und besichtigen koennen,- und nennen geistig alles, was in seinen Wirkungen drueber hinaus liegt. Auf einer Stufe hoeher - und sie braucht noch gar nicht so ueberbrueckbar hoch zu sein - erschiene, was uns jetzt Geist ist, seinerseits koerperlicher Art, und waere wohl wiederum der Spiegel, das Gefaess fuer hoeherliegende, 'Geist' genannte Wirkungen.- Fortwaehrend im Leben betaetigen alle ernstern Menschen einen Selbsterhaltungstrieb, der ueber den leiblichen hinaus liegt,- eigentlich bei allem Bedeutendern wonach sie greifen, allem Schoenen drin sie versinken, allen frohen Opfern ueber sich hinaus,- und wie viel mehr noch in dem hundertmal gebrachten Opfer des Wohlergehens oder sogar Lebens, fuer irgend eine Idee, eine Liebe oder sonst was. Alle diese Faelle fallen nicht aus dem Selbsterhaltungstrieb-Zirkel heraus,- das kann nichts Lebendes, das waere pervers und unschoen, nicht gross,- nein, sie besitzen nur laengst ihr Selbst in seinem Schwerpunkt anderswo, und dort ist es geborgen, befestigt und unterliegt <u>seinen</u> weitern Wachstumsgesetzen. Aehnlich hat es sich beim

hohen Alter schon ohne Krankheit so hinwegverzogen, dass es nach aussen kaum noch vorhanden scheint, der Koerper bindet es nur noch, legt es lahm, ist ihm Gefaengnis, Hindernis. Dies 'Gefangensein' ist es, was du jetzt durch Krankheit so grauenvoll zu fuehlen bekommst, und so eng, so eng um Dich wird es gewiss oft und oft, dass mir vor Mit-Angst und-Schmerz der Schweiss manchmal ausbricht. Halten moecht ich Dich! Ausgehalten werden muss es, wir moegen tun was wir wollen! Was ueber Dir ist, mein ueber alles Liebes, Geliebtes, verlangt danach, Du selbst bist es, die daraus hervorgeht, Wehen sind es,- aber nichts Grausames, Unedles erlegt sie Dir auf, wie alte Traeume Dich manchmal das ahnen liessen,- sondern das Leben, das unendliche, will es so, des Lebens 'stirb und werde!', darin wir alle eins sind, - Ein hinaufstrebender Mensch! Ich kann nicht mehr schreiben, ich bin ja so ganz, ganz mit Dir."

"Mein Liebes, ich schimpfe mich aus dafuer, dass ich Dir soviel Zeug geschrieben habe was Du vielleicht garnicht alles lesen magst,- aber das Gute ist ja, dass Du es auch nicht zu lesen brauchst, es ist ja nicht wie ein belastigendes Gerede, sondern es bleibt stumm nach Belieben. Es kam auch davon, dass ich in ~~diesen~~ diesen Jahren mir so viele Gedanken gemacht habe ueber allerlei Studien von Physik, Chemie und aehnlichem, und manche Gedanken so gern siedend warm gleich zu Dir getragen haette. Besonders die hochmerkwuerdige Gewissheit, bis zu welchem Grade der Prozess, den wir Leben nennen, ein Todesprozess ist, und umgekehrt auch,- beide ganz dasselbe im Wesen. Das wusste man ja laengst, dass ueberall wo 'Leben' ist, irgendwas am betreffenden Organismus zerfaellt, stirbt; der Wiederaufbau, der dann stattfindet, dokumentiert sich keineswegs als 'Leben', er ist zum Beispiel sehr vorhanden im Schlaf, in der Verdauungsmuedigkeit etc. Damit 'Leben' so recht stark frei wird, muss tuechtig viel sterblich werden,- so ist Leben in der Tat bestaendig nur moeglich als ein 'dem Koerperlichen Entwischen und Entweichen' gleichsam. Indem wir sagen: es bedarf des Koerpers, meinen wir bloss damit: er ist noetig, um es fuer uns sichtbar zu spiegeln,- aber es selbst 'lebt' nur im Gegensatz zu ihm, denn es erscheint nur insofern und soweit, als an ihm 'was stirbt'. Organisches, oder gar Geistiges, Bewusstes, unterscheidet sich vom Anorganischen am Staerksten durch das Mass und den Grad seiner Sterblichkeit, d.h. der Lockerheit aller materiellen Teilchen, die es fortwaehrend sprengt um frei zu werden, d.h. als 'Leben' zu erscheinen. Man kann alles Organische, Geistige, geradezu definieren unter dem Wort: 'durch Tod zum Leben'. Bei den hoehern Graden seines Freiwerdens, so z.B. in Krankheit wie auch im hohen Alter, und am voelligsten im Tod, wird es infolge dieser gesprengten koerperlichen Spiegelung zuletzt fuer die Andern, fuer alle noch im Koerper Gebundenen (schwaecher 'Sterbenden') fast oder endlich ganz unmerkbar, unkonstatierbar, man sieht nur noch das Negative dran: das sich nicht mehr im Materiellen aeussern, das Entwichensein. Aber das ist der Punkt, wo es im Begriff steht, am positivsten sein Selbst zu erreichen,- das Centrum seines Selbst, das wir nur ahnen koennen, weil so viel Schlacke und Beeinflussung durch Materielles (woran wir es erkannten) nicht mehr dran haftet. So wahr Gott lebt, so ist es!"

Aus Margarethe von Trotta: Tagebuchnotizen und ein Interview

Zur Entstehung des Films HELLER WAHN

1.4.80

'Er hatte die fixe Idee, dass, wenn er vor seinem Tod nicht vergaesse, er sich in alle Ewigkeit werde erinnern müssen. Gewisse Dinge mussten aus seinem Leben entfernt, aus Sichtweite verbannt, zerstoert und vergessen werden...' (Joseph Conrad: 'Almayers Wahn')

Ich glaube, ich muss die Dinge zerstoeren, indem ich sie aufschreibe, beschreibe, darstelle, Nur so gelingt es mir, sie zu vergessen. Um mich nicht in alle Ewigkeit erinnern zu muessen, habe ich nur die Wahl, sie aus mir 'hinauszuwerfen'. Auch eine Art von Verbannung.

Das Motto des Films...: 'Der nur liebt dich, bei dem du schwach dich zeigen darfst, ohne Staerke zu provozieren.' (Adorno)

Ein Gedankengang, der mich schon lange beschaeftigt. Rettung. Retten wollen, gerettet werden wollen. Im "Lenz" von Buechner sagt Lenz zu Oberlin, als dieser ihm von Gott spricht: "Aber ich, waer ich allmaechtig, sehen Sie, wenn ich so waere, ich koennte das Leiden nicht ertragen, ich wuerde retten, retten..." Seit die Menschen nicht mehr an Gott als Retter glauben, haben sie dennoch das Verlangen nach Rettung nicht loswerden koennen. Sie suchen immer wieder Hilfe, um von ihrem Leiden befreit zu werden. Bei Menschen, bei Ideen. In all meinen Filmen stossen Menschen solche Hilferufe aus, laut oder unhoerbar, und es gibt die anderen, die retten wollen. Das geht zwar immer alles schief, muss es ja auch, Lebensrettung ist nicht erlernbar wie fuer den Bademeister, der den Ertrinkenden aus dem Wasser fischt.

August 80 (Tageguch)
Was treibt mich an und laehmt mich zugleich? Immer nur wieder die Angst zu sterben. Etwas hinterlassen, zuruecklassen wollen? Ich glaube nicht, dass auch nur eine winzige Auesserung von mir ueberdauert. In die Finsternis eindringen, sie mir einverleiben, bis ich keine Angst mehr vor ihr habe? Die Dunkelheit verschlingen, sie einatmen, aufsaugen... Manchmal habe ich ein Gefuehl wie in der Schule, wenn die Schularbeiten eingesammelt wurden und ich noch nicht ganz fertig war... wenn es hiess "abgeben", konnte ich nicht mehr weiterschreiben, erstarrte. So erstarre ich heute manchmal beim Gedanken an meinen Tod. Ich soll etwas abgeben und bin doch noch nicht fertig.

FRAGE Du stellst dem Film den Satz von Adorno vorweg: "Der nur liebt dich, bei dem du schwach dich zeigen darfst, ohne Staerke zu provozieren." Was bedeutet er fuer dich?

ANTWORT Man stoesst beim Lesen oft auf Saetze, die einen ganz besonders betreffen und die man sich deswegen merkt oder sie aufschreibt. Das habe ich schon in der Schulzeit getan, da hatte ich so ein richtiges Merkheft mit Spruechen drin. Heute notiere ich

sie ins Tagebuch. Das ist vielleicht unsere europaeische Kulturbeflissenheit oder auch der Autoritaetsglaube. Wenn ein kluger Mensch etwas sagt, das man selbst empfindet, das man aber nie auf eine solche Weise formulieren koennte, klammert man sich daran. Natuerlich waere es mir lieber, ich koennte diese Gedanken selber ausdruecken, muesste mich nicht auf andere berufen. Achternbusch wuerde es nie einfallen, andere zu zitieren. Uebrigens auch Adorno nicht. Er hat sich immer nur selbst zitiert.....

FRAGE Die Tatsache, dass in deinen Filmen die Frau meist in einer aufbegehrenden, in einer revolutionaeren Entwicklung steht, bringt ja zum Ausdruck, dass du ein Unbehagen fuehlst, was die Stellung der Frau in unserer Gesellschaft angeht. Andererseits habe ich den Eindruck, dass nun beim "Hellen Wahn" die gesellschaftlichen Implikationen weit weniger wichtig sind als die psychologischen Aspekte?

ANTWORT Bei "Schwestern oder Die Balance des Gluecks" hat man auch schon gesagt, dass sei ein privater Film, ein psychologischer, kein gesellschaftskritischer. Ich glaube, dass wir alle auch in unseren alltaeglichen Verhaltensweisen oder Denkungsarten sehr wohl die Gesellschaft widerspeigeln, ihre Zwaenge oder auch Freiheiten weitertragen. Wir leben ja nicht im luftleeren Raum, sondern in ganz bestimmten ueberlieferten oder uns uebergestuelpten Formen und Mechanismen, in Zwaengen, die bis zu bewussten oder unbewussten Neurosen fuehren koennen, die wir dann ebenso bewusst oder unbewusst an den anderen Menschen auslassen. Wir bestrafen uns doch dauernd gegenseitig fuer das, was uns die Gesellschaft antut. Das beschreibe ich.... Ich muss nicht unbedingt das Wort Politik im Munde oder Bild fuehren, um einen politischen Film zu machen, glaube ich.

Mai 82 (Tagebuch)
Wenn es ueberhaupt eine weibliche Form der Aesthetik gibt, was Filme anbelangt, so liegt sie fuer mich in der Themenwahl, in der Aufmerksamkeit auch, dem Respekt, der Feinfuehligkeit, der Vorsicht, mit der wir an Menschen, die wir darstellen, herangehen..... Das Wesentliche aber ist: Wir machen keine Trennung zwischen Verstand und Gefuehl, grossen und kleinen Ereignissen, wir haben uns noch ein wenig die antihierarchische Einstellung des Matriarchats erhalten. Im Matriarchat waren alle Menschen gleich, weil sie alle Kinder von Muettern waren. Die Liebe der Mutter wird voraussetzungslos und bedingungslos gewaehrt, man muss sie sich nicht durch Leistung oder Verdienst erwerben. Das Patriarchat hat den Lieblingssohn eingefuehrt, er musste sich die Liebe des Vaters durch Verdienst und durch Gehorsam erwerben. Das war der Beginn des hierarchischen Denkens. Mit der Hierarchie entstand die Abtrennung der einzelnen Bereiche, entstand allmaehlich der Gegensatz zwischen Oeffentlichem und Privatem.... (Ueber den Unterschied zwischen maennlichem und weiblichem Denken): Wir machen keine Trennung zwischen privat und politisch, zwischen oeffentlichem und persoenlichem Leben. Deshalb stehen wir auch oeffentlich eher fuer das ein, was wir privat denken, sind nicht so schnell zu Kompromissen xxxxx faehig und bereit. Ich halte das fuer eine Qualitaet, und genau diese Qualitaet ist es, die sich in unseren Filmen wiederfinden laesst, die vielleicht zu einer neuen Aesthetik fuehren kann.

INTERVIEW MIT ANGELA WINKLER
Waehrend der Arbeit trifft fuer mich zu, was Andrzej Wajda so for-

muliert hat:"Kuenstlerische Taetigkeit verlangt ein so hohes Mass an Konzentration und ist eine so ausschliessliche Beschaeftigung mit einer einzigen Sache, dass das Leben selbst in den Hintergrund tritt."

PAUL KLEE - Tagebucheintrag Nr. 638, 1905

Die Individualitaet ist nichts Elementares, sondern ein Organismus. Elementare Dinge unterschiedlicher Art wohnen da unteilbar zusammen. Wenn man teilen wollte, stuerben die Teile ab. Mein Ich ist beispielsweise ein ganz dramatisches Ensemble. Da tritt ein prophetischer Urvater auf. Da bruellt ein brutaler Held. Da raesonniert ein alkoholischer Bonvivant mit einem gelehrten Professor. Da himmelt eine chronisch-verliebte Lyrica. Da tritt der Papa pedantisch entgegen. Da vermittelt der nachsichtige Onkel. Da tratscht die Tante Schwaetz. Da kichert die Zofe Schluepfrig. Und ich schaue zu mit erstaunten Augen, die gespitzte Feder in der Linken. Eine schwangere Mutter will auftreten. Bscht! rufe ich, du gehoerst nicht hierher. Du bist teilbar. Und sie verblasst.

PAUL KLEE - Tagebucheintrag Nr. 1008, wohl Juli 1916

Wenn ich sage, wer Franz Marc ist, muss ich zugleich bekennen, wer ich bin, denn vieles, woran ich teilnehme, gehoerte auch ihm.

Menschlicher ist er, liebt waermer, ausgesprochener. Zu den Tieren neigt er sich menschlich. Er erhoeht sie zu sich. Er loest nicht zuerst als zum Ganzen zugehoerig auf, um sich dann nicht nur mit Tieren, sondern auch mit Pflanzen und Steinen auf einer gleichen Stufe zu sehen. In Marc steht der Erdgedanke vor dem Weltgedanken (ich sage nicht, dass er sich nicht haette dahin entwickeln koennen, und doch: warum starb er dann?)..

Ein frauenhafter Drang, jedem von seinem Reichtum mitteilen zu koennen, war ihm eigen. Dass nicht alle folgten, erfuellte ihn mit Bedenken ueber seinen Weg. Oft ahnte ich bang, er wuerde sich nach der Gaerung zurueckwenden zu irdischer Schlichtheit. Nicht aus Totalitaetsabsichten diese Welt mitberuehren, sondern ganz in sie zurueckkehren aus Menschenliebe.

Meine Glut ist mehr von der Art der Toten oder der Ungeborenen. Kein Wunder, dass er mehr Liebe fand. Edle Sinnlichkeit zog waermend ziemlich viele an. Marc war noch Spezies, nicht Neutralgeschoepf. Ich erinnere mich seines Laechelns, wenn meinem Auge irdische Momente entgingen.

Kunst ist wie Schoepfung und gilt am ersten und am letzten Tag...

Meiner Kunst fehlt wohl eine leidenschaftliche Art der Menschlichkeit. Ich liebe Tiere und saemtliche Wesen nicht irdisch herzlich. Ich neige mich weder zu ihnen, noch erhoehe ich sie zu mir. Ich loese mich eher vorher ins Ganze auf und stehe dann auf einer bruederlichen Stufe zum Naechsten, zu aller irdischen Nachbarschaft. Ich habe. Der Erdgedanke tritt vor dem Weltgedanken zurueck. Meine Liebe ist fern und religioes.

Alles Faustische liegt abseits von mir. Ich nehme einen entlegenen, urspruenglichen Schoepfungspunkt ein, wo ich Formeln voraussetze fuer Mensch, Tier, Pflanze, Gestein und fuer die Elemente, fuer alle kreisenden Kraefte zugleich. Tausend Fragen verstummen, als ob sie geloest waeren. Weder Lehren noch Irrlehren gibt es da. Die Moeglichkeiten sind zu unendlich, nur der Glaube an sie lebt schoepferisch in mir.

Geht Waerme von mir aus? Kuehle?? Davon ist dort, jenseits der Weissglut nicht die Rede. Und weil dorthin nicht allzu viele hinreichen, werden wenige beruehrt. Keine noch so edle Sinnlichkeit brueckt zu den Vielen hinueber. Der Mensch meines Werkes ist nicht Spezies, sondern kosmischer Punkt. Mein irdisches Auge ist zu weitsichtig und sieht meist durch die schoensten Dinge hindurch. "Er sieht ja die schoensten Dinge nicht", heisst es dann oft von mir. Kunst ist ein Schoepfungsgleichnis. Gott gab sich auch nicht mit den zufaellig gegenwaertigen Stadien besonders ab.

Aus Kafkas Tagebüchern: (1921)

Ich glaube nicht, dass es Leute gibt, deren innere Lage ähnlich der meinen ist, immerhin kann ich mir solche Menschen vorstellen, aber dass um ihren Kopf so wie um meinen immerfort der heimliche Rabe fliegt, das kann ich mir nicht einmal vorstellen.

Es ist sehr gut denkbar, dass die Herrlichkeit des Lebens um jeden und immer in ihrer ganzen Fülle bereitliegt, aber verhängt, in der Tiefe, unsichtbar, sehr weit. Aber sie liegt dort, nicht feindselig, nicht widerwillig, nicht taub. Ruft man sie mit dem richtigen Wort, beim richtigen Namen, dann kommt sie. Das ist das Wesen der Zauberei, die nicht schafft, sondern ruft.

Derjenige, der mit dem Leben nicht lebendig fertig wird, braucht die eine Hand, um die Verzweiflung über sein Schicksal ein wenig abzuwehren - es gelingt ihm unvollkommen -, mit der anderen Hand aber kann er ertragen, was er unter dem Trümmern nicht, denn er sieht anderes und mehr als die anderen, er ist doch tot zu Lebzeiten und der eigentlich Überlebende. Wobei vorausgesetzt ist, dass er nicht beide Hände und mehr, als er hat, zum Kampf mit der Verzweiflung braucht.

Copied from penciled notes
11/18/85

Dore Ashton

~~I dwell~~ in impossibility, ~~I know that others are there~~, ~~but~~ I ~~can~~ do not see them. I am aware of the presence of others, although There is Kafka whose voice I hear speaking to himself about himself:

> "If it were a prison, he could have accepted it. To end as a prisoner - that would have been a life's goal. But it was a barred cage. Indifferently, arrogantly, the way it was at home, the noise of the world flowed in and out through the bars, the prisoner was actually free, he could participate in everything, nothing outside eluded him, he even could have left the cage, there was plenty of space between the bars, he was not even imprisoned. He has the feeling that - by being alive - he blocks his way. This handicap again serves him as proof that he is alive."

And Rilke says about 'Malte Laurids Brigge'..."this book that seems to end in the proof that life is impossible..." It is no comfort that I can hear their words, for I have no words of my own to communicate with them. Sometimes I say: "Lieber-Gott-hilf", but I don't really know any Gotthilf. Sometimes I hear Emily Dickinson's voice, and she sounds like a happy child when she says "I dwell in Possibility" or "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" But she also speaks about the funeral in her brain and what it means "to die without the dying/ to live without the life..." Still, Emily was wise in playing the role of the gentle, harmless spinster and recluse. Since she did not "go public", nobody expected anything from her, and therefore she could develop her great gift by obeying only the laws of her own nature. She had a high price to pay for it, for she was often close to being swallowed up by her unconscious, but amazingly she always saved herself by doing exactly what Kafka says in his diaries:

> "He who cannot cope with life actively needs one hand to ward off despair about his fate - it is done very inadequately -, but with the other hand he can record what he sees under the wreckage (ruins, rubble), for he sees different things and more than the others, being dead in his lifetime and the only actual survivor. That is, provided that he does not need both hands,and more than he has, to help him in his struggle against despair."

Thus ED was able to "dwell in possibility" and to claim "For occupation this:/ The spreading wide my narrow hands/ To gather Paradise." dwelled

~~These who~~ "~~dwell~~ in impossibility" are worse off, it seems, because they do not believe in their own reality and still they have to keep pretending that they are more or less like everybody else. This is an exhausting effort that does not leave them sufficient energies to furnish the uncomfortable world they live in. Kafka speaks of his wish to maintain a double view of life, doing justice to its everyday reality in a workman-like way and at the same time experiencing it as "a nothing, a dream, a suspension (ein Schweben)" and then calls it "not even a wish, but only a justification, a gentrification of nothingness (Verbuergerlichung des Nichts)." Rather than dig around among the rubble of my own feelings, I will try to translate some more notes from K's Journal.

Rilke's "Das ist die Sehnsucht!

"He who can not cope with life while being alive needs one hand to ward off some of the despair about his fate - it is done very inadequately -, but with the other hand he can ~~xxx~~ record what he sees in the wreckage, for he sees different things and more than the others, since he is dead in his own lifetime and the only actual survivor. That is, provided he does not need both hands, and more than he has, in his struggle against despair."

Wer sich nähert, den stosst nicht
zurück, und wer sich entfernt, den
haltet nicht zurück, und wer
wiederkommt, den nehmt auf, als
ob er nicht weggewesen wäre.

Goethe zitiert von Hannah Höch
in ihrer Collage "Meine Haussprüche".

The Watcher at the Gates

The Guest Word

By GAIL GODWIN

I first realized I was not the only writer who had a restraining critic who lived inside me and sapped the juice from green inspirations when I was leafing through Freud's "Interpretation of Dreams" a few years ago. Ironically, it was my "inner critic" who had sent me to Freud. I was writing a novel, and my heroine was in the middle of a dream, and then I lost faith in my own invention and rushed to "an authority" to check whether she could have such a dream. In the chapter on dream interpretation, I came upon the following passage that has helped me free myself, in some measure, from my critic and has led to many pleasant and interesting exchanges with other writers.

Freud quotes Schiller, who is writing a letter to a friend. The friend complains of his lack of creative power. Schiller replies with an allegory. He says it is not good if the intellect examines too closely the ideas pouring in at the gates. "In isolation, an idea may be quite insignificant, and venturesome in the extreme, but it may acquire importance from an idea which follows it. . . . In the case of a creative mind, it seems to me, the intellect has withdrawn its watchers from the gates, and the ideas rush in pell-mell, and only then does it review and inspect the multitude. You are ashamed or afraid of the momentary and passing madness which is found in all real creators, the longer or shorter duration of which distinguishes the thinking artist from the dreamer . . . you reject too soon and discriminate too severely."

So that's what I had: a Watcher at the Gates. I decided to get to know him better. I discussed him with other writers, who told me some of the quirks and habits of their Watchers, each of whom was as individual as his host, and all of whom seemed passionately dedicated to one goal: rejecting too soon and discriminating too severely.

It is amazing the lengths a Watcher will go to to keep you from pursuing the flow of your imagination. Watchers are notorious pencil sharpeners, ribbon changers, plant waterers, home repairers and abhorrers of messy rooms or messy pages. They are compulsive looker-uppers. They are superstitious scaredy-cats. They cultivate self-important eccentricities they think are suitable for "writers." And they'd rather die (and kill your inspiration with them) than risk making a fool of themselves.

My Watcher has a wasteful penchant for 20-pound bond paper above and below the carbon of the first draft. "What's the good of writing out a whole page," he whispers begrudgingly, "if you just have to write it over again later? Get it perfect the first time!" My Watcher adores stopping in the middle of a morning's work to drive down to the library to check on the name of a flower or a World War II battle or a line of metaphysical poetry. "You can't possibly go on till you've got this right!" he admonishes. I go and get the car keys.

Other Watchers have informed their writers that:

"Whenever you get a really good sentence you should stop in the middle of it and go on tomorrow. Otherwise you might run dry."

"Don't try and continue with your book till your dental appointment is over. When you're worried about your teeth, you can't think about art."

Another Watcher makes his owner pin his finished pages to a clothesline and read them through binoculars "to see how they look from a distance." Countless other Watchers demand "bribes" for taking the day off: lethal doses of caffeine, alcoholic doses of Scotch or vodka or wine.

There are various ways to outsmart, pacify or coexist with your Watcher. Here are some I have tried, or my writer-friends have tried, with success:

Look for situations when he's likely to be off-guard. Write too fast for him in an unexpected place, at an unexpected time. (Virginia Woolf captured the "diamonds in the dustheap" by writing at a "rapid haphazard gallop" in her diary.) Write when very tired. Write in purple ink on the back of a Master Charge statement. Write whatever comes into your mind while the kettle is boiling and make the steam whistle your deadline. (Deadlines are a great way to outdistance the Watcher.)

Disguise what you are writing. If your Watcher refuses to let you get on with your story or novel, write a "letter" instead, telling your "correspondent" what you are going to write in your story or next chapter. Dash off a "review" of your own unfinished opus. It will stand up like a bully to your Watcher the next time he throws obstacles in your path. If you write yourself a good one.

Get to know your Watcher. He's yours. Do a drawing of him (or her). Pin it to the wall of your study and turn it gently to the wall when necessary. Let your Watcher feel needed. Watchers are excellent critics after inspiration has been captured; they are dependable, sharp-eyed readers of things already set down. Keep your Watcher in shape and he'll have less time to keep you from shaping. If he's really ruining your whole working day sit down, as Jung did with his personal demons, and write him a letter. On a very bad day I once wrote my Watcher a letter. "Dear Watcher," I wrote, "What is it you're so afraid I'll do?" Then I held his pen for him, and he replied instantly with a candor that has kept me from truly despising him.

"Fail," he wrote back. ■

Gail Godwin's most recent book is "Dream Children."

Brief von Schiller an Koerner, 1. Dezember 1788 - zitiert
von Freud in TRAUMDEUTUNG

"Der Grund Deiner Klage liegt, wie mir scheint, in dem Zwange, den Dein Verstand Deiner Imagination auflegt. Ich muss hier einen Gedanken hinwerfen und ihn durch ein Gleichnis versinnlichen. Es scheint nicht gut und dem Schoepfungswerke der Seele nachteilig zu sein, wenn der Verstand die zustroemenden Ideen, gleichsam an den Toren schon, zu scharf mustert. Eine Idee kann, isoliert betracht, sehr unbetraechtlich und sehr abenteuerlich sein, aber vielleicht kann sie in einer gewissen Verbindung mit anderen, die vielleicht ebenso abgeschmackt scheinen, ein sehr zweckmaessiges Glied abgeben: - Alles das kann der Verstand nicht beurteilen, wenn er sie nicht so lange festhaelt, bis er sie in Verbindung mit diesen anderen angeschaut hat. Bei einem schoepferischen Kopfe hingegen, daeucht mir, hat der Verstand seine Wache von den Toren zurueckgezogen, die Ideen stuerzen pêle-mêle herein, und alsdann erst uebersieht und mustert er den grossen Haufen.- Ihr Herren Kritiker, und wie Ihr Euch sonst nennt, schaemt oder fuerchtet Euch vor dem augenblicklichen, voruebergehenden Wahnwitze, der sich bei allen eigenen Schoepfern findet und dessen laengere oder kuerzere Dauer den denkenden Kuenstler von dem Traeumer unterscheidet. Daher Eure Klagen der Unfruchtbarkeit, weil Ihr zu frueh verwerft und zu strenge sondert."

READING AND WRITING
By Michiko Kakutani

Dashers and Dawdlers

Michael Witte

Samuel Johnson used to contend that "a man may write at any time if he will set himself doggedly to it," and he made a point of living up to those words. It is estimated that he wrote the "Parliamentary Debates" at the astonishing rate of 1,800 words an hour, and he claimed to have completed his life of the poet Richard Savage in 36 hours. Urging a young friend to try to write as quickly as possible, he argued that "if a man is accustomed to compose slowly and with difficulty upon all occasions, there is danger that he may not compose at all, as we do not like to do that which is not done easily."

In reading about and talking with authors, one occasionally comes across similar examples of fluency. Ann Beattie, for instance, finished "Chilly Scenes of Winter" in several weeks, and John Updike recalls writing short stories with "that sense of just being like a piece of ice on a stove." In "Soldiers' Pay" and "Mosquitoes," said Faulkner, he discovered that writing was actually "fun," and Hemingway maintained that writing was not only his "major vice" but also his "greatest pleasure." "It is the wait until the next day," he said, "that is hard to get through."

Most writers, however, are complainers, and even those who are passionate about their work tend to procrastinate. Indeed, biographies, interviews and collections of authors' letters all attest to the difficulty and pain involved in writing.

In a letter to a friend, for instance, Joseph Conrad wearily recounted his efforts to finish "The Rescue": "I sit down for eight hours every day and the sitting down is all. In the course of that working day of eight hours I write three sentences which I erase before leaving the table in despair." Though he finished that novel 25 years later — many other works of fiction intervened — he felt such frustration at the time that he considered giving up writing altogether and going back to sea. Collaboration with Ford Madox Ford helped him through that bout of paralysis, but Conrad suffered recurrent attacks the rest of his life.

At one point, he fell so behind schedule on "Under Western Eyes" that his agent offered him a wage of £6 a week in return for "regular supplies of manuscript." The offer infuriated him. "It is outrageous," he wrote to John Galsworthy. "Does he think I am the sort of man who wouldn't finish the story in a week if he could? Do you? Why? For what reason? Is it my habit to lie about drunk for days instead of working? I reckon he knows well enough I don't. It's a contemptuous playing with my worry."

Charles Dickens, too, worried about meeting deadlines, and in his case, serial publication meant that the deadlines were both frequent and strict. Having found "Dombey and Son" especially hard, he moved from Lausanne to Paris, hoping the change would oil his imagination. It didn't. "I took a violent dislike to my study," he recalled, "and came down into the drawing room, couldn't find a corner that would answer my purpose; fell into a black contemplation of the waning month, sat six hours at a stretch" and wrote only six lines. He then tried rearranging the furniture, sat down again and started "dodging" "at it, like a bird with a lump of sugar."

John Steinbeck's "dawdling," as he called it, took a different form. When his prose failed to "coagulate" — "it is as unmanageable as a raw egg on the kitchen floor," he complained once — he would begin fussing about his desk, debating the merits of a plain wood surface versus those of a green blotter. After sandpapering the callus on his writing finger, he would sharpen a couple of pencils and then set about cleaning the pencil sharpener itself.

In the case of Katherine Anne Porter, distractions — which included music lessons, love affairs and frequent moves from one country to another — were so effective they kept her from writing anything for years.

What causes this fear of putting pen to paper, this inability to work? For some, it is simply a technical problem. E. M. Forster, for instance, who usually found writing pleasant, said he couldn't figure out the plot of a work entitled "Arctic Summer" and so, after much agonizing, abandoned the project. For others, it may stem from almost superstitious meditations on the vocation of writing itself or from the solitude of sitting alone in a room.

Perhaps the most common cause of paralysis is expectation — not so much the expectation of others, but the writer's own. Will the finished product confirm one's talent? Will the propositions of the imagination be expressed artfully and faithfully? "When I think of what it can be, I am dazzled," wrote Flaubert of "Madame Bovary." "But then, when I reflect that so much beauty has been entrusted to me — to *me* — I am so terrified that I am seized with cramps and long to rush off and hide, no matter where. I have been working like a mule for 15 long years. . . . Oh, if I ever produce a good book I'll have earned it." ■

George Santayana: "I am sorry, and I can't say it has been because I was too busy or because I had nothing to say, which are the grown-up and the childish excuses for such delinquences."

Rupert Brooke to Geoffrey Keynes: "Long ago I had a letter from you which I have been too bored to answer. But now being too bored to do anything else, I reply."

Flattery Will Get You

Then there is flattery, as in this letter from Robert Browning to Leigh Hunt: "A nine months' silence after such a letter as yours seems too strange even to you perhaps. So understand that you gave us more delight at once than we could bear, that was the beginning of the waiting to recover spirit and try and do one's feeling a little less injustice."

Eugène Delacroix shows finesse in his opening to George Sand: "It's very lucky for you that I did not answer you immediately, you would have had a whole volume of ridiculous endearments and I could not find a sheet of paper big enough to write them on."

I'm a Worthless Person

Joseph Conrad: "I am ashamed of myself. I ought to have written to you before but the fact is I have not written anything at all. . . . I sit down religiously every morning, I sit down for eight hours every day — and the sitting down is all. In the course of that working day of 8 hours I write 3 sentences which I erase before leaving the table in despair. There's not a single word to send you. Not one!"

Henry James: "I always delay hideously, and my shamelessness is rapidly becoming (in the matter of letter-writing) more disgraceful even than my procrastination. I brought your letter with me to Ireland more than a fortnight ago with every intention of answering it on the morrow of my arrival; but I have been leading here a strange and monstrous life of demoralisation and frivolity and the fleeting hour has mocked, till today, at my languid effort to stay it, to clutch it, in its passage."

"I grovel in the dust," James wrote in another letter, "so ashamed am I to have made no response to your so generous bounty and to have left you unthanked and unhonoured. And all the while I was (at once) so admiring your consummately clever book, and so blushing to the heels and groaning to the skies over the daily paralysis of my daily intention. . . . And I have absolutely no valid, no sound, excuse to make but that *I am like that!*"

Dryden wrote of being "betwixt Sinn and Repentance." "We are all sinners, more or less in this way," wrote Longfellow. "The good intention — and the shortcoming — the meant-to-do-it, and the hazardous delay, till the sheet of paper becomes as heavy as Dante's hoods of lead, we have all experienced it. Who, then, shall throw the first inkstand at another!" He wrote one correspondent: "How they haunt me — the unanswered ones! legions of sheeted ghosts, that will not be laid till they are answered."

What's in It for Me?

There is the lure of writing for profit: Charles Lamb noted that he had "arrived at that indisposition to letter-writing, which would make it a hard exertion to write three lines to a king to spare a friend's life. Whether it is that the Magazine paying me so much a page, I am loath to throw away composition — how much a sheet do you give your correspondents?" "I always feel as if I had nothing to say," Lamb wrote another correspondent, "and the performance generally justifies the presentiment."

And David Hume: "I think nothing of dispatching a Quarto in fifteen or eighteen Months; but am not able to compose a Letter once in two Years: And am very industrious to keep up a Correspondence with Posterity, whom I know nothing about, & who probably will concern themselves very little about me; while I allow myself to be forgot by my Friends, whom I value and regard."

Busy, Busy, Busy

Some writers simply have more important things to do: Archibald MacLeish wrote to his parents, "The trouble is that I have gotten into the habit of spending all the time I can each day writing and though that time is not long — from three to six hours — it always manages to consume all my ink expending energy and I feel as though the last thing I could do was the construction of a letter."

Mark Van Doren to Thomas Merton: "Your last letter (not owed; letters aren't owed, any more than breaths are, or smiles) followed me to California, where I didn't answer it (letters don't have to be answered either, any more than thought does, or praise) because I was writing a play."

Sylvia Townsend Warner wrote to a correspondent on Sept. 7, 1951: "A story demanded to be written, and that is why I have not answered your letter before: a wrong-headed story, that would come blundering like a moth on my window, and stare in with small red eyes, and I the last writer in the world to manage such a subject." Then to Nancy Cunard, Nov. 9, 1951: "I got started on a new book, and am completely, brazenly devoted to it: my hair is uncut, my letters are unwritten, the house is a shambles."

It's My Wife's Fault

Blaming one's spouse is always convenient. Here's Dylan Thomas: "My lying cable said, 'Letter in mail.' And I did intend to write at once, but had to go away, felt suddenly ill, clean forgot, put it all off for a rainy day, was struck by lightning, any or all of these. And your cable about a second reading, my wife's mislaid, found only this morning in a mouse-nest handbag."

MacLeish wrote Louis Untermeyer: "I found your letter this morning lying on top of a pile of lingerie which my wife brought down from Paris a week ago. I shall be continuously grateful to the now forgotten impulse which led me to stick my head into that particular armoire. But I regret even more warmly the delay in answering it."

I Haven't Been Feeling Well

To Princess Bassiano the following year, MacLeish wrote: "Forgive my delay in answering your two letters. My attempts to learn skiing have had a fairly disastrous effect on my thumb-joint and I have had to forego the making of small curves for almost a week. I can hardly claim to have learned to ski either."

Voltaire, writing in English to Boswell: "My distempers and *my* bad eyes do not permit me to answer with that celerity and exactness that my duty and my heart require."

Thomas Jefferson to the Marquis de Lafayette: "Two dislocated wrists and crippled fingers have rendered writing so slow and laborious, as to oblige me to withdraw from nearly all correspondence."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge went at it with vigor: "I should have written you long ere this . . . my Health has been very bad, and remains so — A nervous Affection from my right temple to the extremity of my right shoulder almost distracted me, & made the frequent use of Laudanum absolutely necessary. And since I have subdued this, a Rheumatic Complaint in the back of my Head & Shoulders, accompanied with sore throat, and depression of the animal Spirits, has convinced me that a man may change bad Lodgers without bettering himself."

Of Time and the Weather

The poet Wilfred Owen: "I don't seem to get an instant large enough to hold the debt of writing I owe you."

Dylan Thomas: "I have such little time." Or: "I have got to type this letter. The keys are cold." Plus: "The mornings have been cold, the pencil has not been near enough, the paper has been too virgin to deflower, and my own incorrigible laziness has made me postpone, time upon time, the pleasure of continuing our correspondence." Then again: "And the drafts of letters piled up, and time lapped on and thickened, putting on skins of distance, and daily, and even more so nightly, I grew more ashamed of my silence and more angry with my procrastination until, at last, I couldn't write at all. I buried my head in the sands of America: flew over America like a damp, ranting bird; boomed and fiddled while home was burning; carried with me, all the time, my unfinished letters, my dying explanations and self-accusations, my lonely half of a loony maybe-play, in a heavy, hurtful bunch."

The Dog Ate My Homework

E. B. White to Katharine Sergeant Angell: "I once started a letter to you (date uncertain) but it dried up and got crumbly. Later I started another, but it got wet and mouldy. I intend to get this one down on the floor with my knees on it and push it into an envelope even if it's got maggots." To Faith McNulty Martin, he wrote: "I would have written sooner but I got a Christmas tree ornament stuck in my pancreas, and it kept winking on and off, and I was too distracted to write letters."

Simple Sloth

Charles Baudelaire, 1833: "Have a great many things to tell you, but *first of all* my excuses. My negligence has been partly a matter of self-pride; since you didn't answer, I thought it a question of honor not to write twice in succession." To his mother, in 1851, he explained that he had not written because of "vanity in wanting to send you some good news in my first letter. Well, there is nothing, nothing, or almost nothing."

Lame Humor

Edith Wharton: "Finalmente! a moment in which to thank you for your dear long letter of two weeks ago & more, which has long since been answered mentally, though not (ha! ha!) *pen*tally."

It Hurts Me More Than It Does You

Delacroix was adept at painting himself out of corners: "I am the first to suffer from my shocking laziness about writing, since it deprives me of hearing from you often and of reviving, in conversation with you, the delights of childhood memories."

It's Your Own Fault

Jane Welsh Carlyle wrote of one woman who eschewed lengthy apologies and defensiveness in favor of attack — " 'Is astonished that you have not written to inquire the reason of her silence,' 'thinks it strange that you should adopt with her the formal letter for letter system,' 'is hurt,' 'is angry,' is everything but what you expected, — namely, ashamed of herself, — and you find yourself suddenly, much to your surprise, transformed into the offending party, and thankful for the kind forgiveness with which she ends."

To his stepmother, Edward Gibbon began: "You will think me the most impudent fellow alive: but I am really angry with *you* for not being angry with *me* on account of my long and shameful silence."

The Social Whirl

Conrad Russell told his sister that he hadn't written because he was "intoxicated with haymaking." Delacroix's variation on the theme: "The fact is that I have not been left in peace for some time now, owing to the endless very tedious parties to which I've been dragged."

This Is a Terrible World

To his brother, Dostoyevsky was fulsomely apologetic: "Oh, what a long, what a very long time it has been since I last wrote you, my dear brother — that miserable exam! It prevented me from writing to you and to Papa and from seeing Ivan Nikolayevich. And all for what? I didn't pass. Oh, how awful; an extra year, a whole year more!"

Or else one — and certainly Dostoyevsky — could blame worries: "You've probably been waiting for my letter, my dear brother. But I was delayed by the instability of my situation. I am utterly incapable of concentrating on anything as long as I have nothing but the unknown and the undecided before my eyes. But since I still haven't got anything done about my private affairs, I am writing anyway, in fact I ought to have written long ago."

My Analyst Says . . .

Robert Frost, 1929: "For gods' sake dont give up writing to me simply because I dont write to you or anybody else. Probably I am not to blame for not writing letters. Probably it is something in my inheritance diet poverty training and luck; for all of which I should be treated at the root instead of made fun of imprisoned and slighted, or legislated against. Law, I'm pretty sure, will not help in the matter. It has been tried already in a small way to no avail. We made a rule in the family that I should take the first Sunday (if any) after the fourth Monday of every month to write letters and until I wrote them I should not be allowed on that day to attend worship, divine or human. I have suffered cruelly from the ordinance but, as I have said, to no purpose — I have gained no relief in the social pressure that sometimes makes us feel as if we would fly without wing or aeroplane, and the church has gained nothing in attendance, in fact has steadily lost."

Promise Them Everything

To a niece, Dostoyevsky wrote: "I give you my *word of honor* that from now on I shall send you a letter regularly every month. . . . It was painful for me to sit down and write a letter and, besides, what could I have written about? About my sadness? (It would certainly have been detectable in my letter); but it is poor material for a letter."

Finally he complained of the "terrible, unconquerable, unimaginable reluctance I have to write letters. . . . If I end up in hell, I am sure that I will be condemned to write at least ten letters a day there."

Henrik Ibsen to his sister: "Months have passed since I received your kind letter. . . . I cannot write letters; I must be near a person and give myself wholly and entirely."

I Grow Old

Here is Raymond Chandler, 1950, writing to the editor Charles Morton: "You are most correct in saying . . . that I owe you a letter. For quite a long time, I have owed practically everybody a letter. Why? Apparently it is what the years do to you. The horse which once had to be driven with a tight rein now has to be flicked with a whip in order to make him do much more than amble. Instead of being ready to slug it out with all comers, you find yourself having to give yourself pep talks before you can get a glove up. 'Come on, you dumb loafer, start hittin' them typewriter keys.' "

Brazen It Out

"Don't fill *more* than a page and a half with apologies for not having written sooner!" Charles Dodgson, a k a Lewis Carroll, urged, and wrote one friend: "Now I want to know what you *mean* by calling yourself 'naughty' for not having written sooner! Naughty, indeed! Stuff and nonsense! Do you think *I'd* call myself naughty, if I hadn't written to you, say for 50 years? Not a bit! I'd just begin as usual 'My dear Mary, 50 years ago, you asked me what to do for your kitten, as it had a tooth-ache, and I have just remembered to write about it. Perhaps the tooth-ache has gone off by this time — if not, wash it carefully in hasty-pudding, and give it 4 pin-cushions boiled in sealing-wax, and just dip the end of its tail in hot coffee. This remedy has never been known to fail.' There! *That's* the proper way to write!" □

Samuel Johnson: "That we think of importance we wish to do well, to do anything well requires time, and that requires time commonly finds us too idle or too busy to undertake it."

From Kafka's Journals, June 12, 1914

" Dostoyevsky's letter to a woman painter.

Social life goes on in a circle. Only those afflicted by a certain disease understand each other. Due to the nature of their disease they form a circle and support each other. They glide along the inner border of their circle, holding the door for each other or one ~~each~~ among pushing the other gently in the crowd. Each comforts the other, hoping for a reciprocal effect on himself, or - and then there is passion in it - while he is already enjoying this effect. Each has only the experience permitted him by his suffering (disease), and yet one hears among such partners an exchange of tremendously varied experiences. "This is ~~how~~ the way you are," one of them says to the other, "instead of complaining, thank the Lord for being the way you are, for if you were not that way, you would be in this or that misfortune, in this or that disgrace." Now, how does that man know all this? Obviously he belongs - as his words reveal - to the same circle as the person addressed, his need for comfort is of the same kind. But in the same circle one always knows the same things. There is no trace of a thought that might differentiate the comforter from the one he comforts. Hence, their conversations are only fusions of the imagination, transfusions of wishes from one to the other. Sometimes the one looks at the floor and the other at a bird in flight, these are the differences that characterize their relations. Sometimes both agree in their belief (faith), and both gaze head to head into infinite directions of height. But a realization (awareness) of their condition is shown only at that moment of mutuality when they both lower their heads and the mutual hammer comes down upon them."

Aus Elias Canetti

Die Provinz des Menschen

1954

Es gibt ein peinliches Unbehagen, das unverkennbar ist, ein Zustand, in dem sich nichts unternehmen laesst, weil man auf nichts Lust hat; in dem man ein Buch aufschlaegt, um es wieder zuzuschlagen; in dem man nicht einmal sprechen kann, denn jeder andre Mensch ist einem laestig, und man ist sich selbst auch ein andrer Mensch. Es ist ein Zustand, in dem alles von einem abfallen will was einen früher auszumachen pflegte, Ziele, Gewohnheiten, Wege, Einteilungen Konfrontationen, Launen, Gewissheiten, Eitelkeiten, Zeiten. Es ist ein dunkles und zaehes Vortasten in einem von etwas, das man ueberhaupt nicht kennt; nie ahnt man, was es sein wird; nie kann man ihm in seiner blinden Bewegung helfen. Immer ist man ueberrascht, wenn es schliesslich offenbar wird; man begreift nicht, dass man sich damit, gerade damit getragen hat und atmet erleichtert auf, nicht ohne Betroffenheit ueber die unaehmbare Welt, die man in sich traegt und die es lange vorzieht, sich nicht zu manifestieren.

Manche Menschen spueren so sehr die Qual der Andern, dass sie sonst nichts spueren. Dabei leben sie weiter, vermeiden, wo sie koennen, eigene Qual, und kommen sich noch gut vor. Sollten das die schlauesten Menschen sein? Dient ihnen ihre Feinfuehligkeit fuer Qual vielleicht nur dazu, sie rechtzeitig von sich abzuhalten, durch bessere Witterung, - Qual-Antennen?

Feig, wirklich feig ist nur, wer sich vor seinen Erinnerungen fuerchtet.

1957

Man koennte sich denken, dass die verlorenen Stunden in spaetere schluepfen und ploetzlich aus ihnen heraussehen. So waeren sie nicht verloren?

Manchmal habe ich mir gewuenscht, ich koennte meinen Kopf von allem, was sich darin angesiedelt hat, entleeren und so von vorn zu denken beginnen, als waere nie etwas dort gewesen.

Ich wuensche das jetzt nicht mehr. Ich anerkenne die Bevoelkerung meines Kopfes und versuche mit ihr auszukommen.

Es ist moeglich, dass ich ein Kleinstaedter geworden bin.

1959

Warum nur ist es so gut, zu sich selbst zu sprechen? - Weil man gar nichts von sich will? Weil man im Hasse sehr weit gehen kann, ohne einen Groll zu behalten? Weil man tollkuehn ist und niemand dabei gefaehrdet? Weil man etwas ueber andere erfaehrt, die man tief in sich versteckt hatte? Weil man seinem Hochmut schonungslos an den Leib ruecken kann, ohne ein billiges Schauspiel daraus zu machen? Weil man ernst und rein in der Wahrheit ist, ohne sich mit ihr zu bruesten? Weil man weder bittet noch draengt und ganz auf gleich und gleich ist?

1960

Nun taucht er wieder ins Meer des Ungelesenen und kommt prustend und verjuengt an die Oberflaeche, stolz, als haette er Poseidons Dreizack gestohlen.

Traeume ertrage ich nur unberuehrt und ganz, als Geheimnis. Sie sind so fremd, dass man sie sehr langsam begreift. Die Traeume anderer kann ich nur vereinzelt auffassen. Man nimmt sie zu sich, behutsam und mit Widerstreben. Wehe dem Narren, der sie gleich detet, er verliert sie und fasst sie nie wieder, sie welken, bevor sie ihm gruen waren.
.....

Vielleicht hat von allen nur Klee den Traum mit der Ehrfurcht behandelt, die ihm gebuehrt, als das Unantastbarste, das sich im Menschen ereignet.

Eine Frau, die jeden anlaecheln muss, die sich in die groesste Verwirrung laechelt, die im Elend ihr Laecheln nicht aufgeben kann, die auf dem Totenbett laechelt und laechelnd stirbt, um allen noch zu gefallen, die sie tot sehen koennten. Sie laechelt im Sarg und unter der Erde.

1961

Man muesste es in so wenig Saetzen sagen koennen wie Laotse oder Heraklit, und solange man das nicht kann, hat man nichts wirklich zu sagen.

Der Uebersetzer dringt in eine bekannte Sphaere ein. Alles um ihn ist wohlangebaut und er ist nie einsam. Er bewegt sich wie in einer Parklandschaft oder unter klar abgegrenzten Feldern. Worte wenden sich wie Leute an ihn und wuenschen ihm einen guten Tag. Der Weg wird ihm gewiesen und er kann sich kaum verlieren. Er muss fuer wahr nehmen, was man ihm sagt und darf es nicht bezweifeln. Die Kraft des Durchschauens ist dem Uebersetzer versagt. Er waere ein Narr, wenn er hier sein Vertrauen verloere. Alles Gelaende ist von jeher wohl bezeichnet.

Der Denker dagegen hat Leere um sich. Er stoesst alles von sich fort, bis genug Leere um ihn ist, und dann beginnt er von Diesem zu Jenem zu springen. In seinen Spruengen schafft er eine Strasse. Der Grund ist nur sicher, weil er auf ihn tritt, dazwischen ist alles Zweifel.

Uebertragung von Gedanken, mit denen man sich mehr als zwanzig Jahre befasst hat, in eine andere Sprache. Ihre Unzufriedenheit, weil sie nicht in dieser Sprache entstanden sind. Ihre Kuehnheit erlischt, sie weigern sich auszustrahlen. Sie schleppen Nichtzugehoeriges hinter sich her und lassen Wichtiges auf dem Wege fallen. Sie erbleichen, sie aendern ihre Farbe. Sie kommen sich feig und vorsichtig vor, der Winkel, unter dem sie urspruenglich einfielen, ist ihnen verloren. Sie hatten den Flug von Raubvoegeln, nun flattern sie wie Fledermaeuse. Ihr Lauf war der von Geparden, nun kriechen sie daher wie Blindschleichen.

Manchmal, wenn er schon gar nichts mehr sehen kann, rettet ihn eine Stunde im Nebel.

Er legt Saetze wie Eier, aber er vergisst, sie zu bebrueten.

1964

Die Kunst besteht darin, sich ueber einiges nicht zu taeuschen: winzige Felsinseln im Meer der Selbsttaeuschung. An diese sich zu klammern und nicht zu ertrinken, ist das Aeusserte, was ein Mensch zustande bringt.

KAROLINE aus Ricarda Huch: ROMANTIK

Ueber ihre Beziehungen zu "unwuerdigen Liebhabern", ihre Verhaftung als JaKOBINERIN nach der Wiedereinnahme von Mainz durch die Deutschen (die gescheiterte deutsche demokratische Republik), und ihre Schwangerschaft, die sie waehrend der Festungshaft entdeckte, die Schande, ein uneheliches Kind auszutragen und ihre Unfaehigkeit, sich gegen die vielen ungerechten Anschuldigungen wehren zu koennen:
S. 40

"Da sie nun aber allein in die entsetzlichsten Verhaeltnisse hinausgestossen war, fand sie ihre ganze Ueberlegenheit, Seelenruhe und Hoheit wieder. Das war es gerade, was ihrer Schwachheit das Veraechtliche nahm, dass sie bei aller Weichheit die edle maennliche Eigenschaft besass, nach einem Sturze unverletzt aufstehen und ebenso stark und sicher ihres Weges weitergehen zu koennen."

Wilhelm Schlegel setzte sich fuer sie ein.
In der Naehe von Leipzig erwartete sie die Entbindung von ihrem vaterlosen Kind. (R. Huch). Hier lernte Friedrich sie kennen. Er bewunderte sie schon auf Grund ihrer Briefe an seinen Bruder. "Ebenso lieblich wie im Glueck, so gross und ruehrend war sie im Unglueck." (R. Huch). "Wie ein Wunder erscheint es an dem selbstwussten Juengling, dass er ihren Verstand als dem seinigen ueberlegen achtete, dazu aber sagte er, habe sie das, was ihm fehle, naemlich die Seele der Seele: Liebe..... Er ruehmte an ihr "das Talent zur Liebe, mit der sie jede Entfernung ueberbruecken koenne - wenn sie wolle."

Friedrich Schlegel schilderte sie in "Lucinde" als "die Frau, die einzig war und die seinen Geist zum ersten Male ganz und in der Mitte traf."

"Ueberhaupt lag in ihrem Wesen jede Hoheit und jede Zierlichkeit, die der weiblichen Natur eigen sein kann, jede Gottaehnlichkeit und jede Unart, aber alles war fein, gebildet und weiblich. Frei und kraeftig entwickelte und aeusserte sich jede einzelne Eigenheit, als sei sie nur fuer sich allein da, und dennoch war die reiche, kuehne Mischung so ungleicher Dinge im ganzen nicht verworren, denn ein Geist beseelte es, ein lebendiger Hauch von Harmonie und Liebe. Sie konnte in derselben Stunde irgendeine komische Albernheit mit dem Mutwillen und der Feinheit einer gebildeten Schauspielerin nachahmen und ein erhabenes Gedicht vorlesen mit der hinreissenden Wuerde eines kunstlosen Gesanges. Bald wollte sie in Gesellschaft glaenzen und taendeln, bald war sie ganz Begeisterung, bald half sie mit Rat und Tat, ernst, bescheiden und freundlich wie eine zaertliche Mutter. Eine geringe Begebenheit war durch ihre Art, sie zu erzaehlen, so reizend wie ein schoenes Maerchen. Alles umgab sie mit Gefuehl und Witz, sie hatte Sinn fuer alles, und alles kam veredelt aus ihrer bildenden Hand und von ihren suess redenden Lippen. Nichts Gutes und Grosses war zu heilig oder zu allgemein fuer ihre leidenschaftlichste Teilnahme. Sie vernahm jede Andeutung, und sie erwiderte auch die Frage, die nicht gesagt war. Es war nicht moeglich,

Reden mit ihr zu halten; es wurden von selbst Gespraeche, und waehrend dem steigenden Interesse, spielte auf ihrem feinen Gesicht eine immer neue Musik von geistvollen und lieblichen Mienen." Friedrich Schlegel: Fragmente

R. Huch, S. 44 als Erklaerung dafuer, dass K. Wilhelm Schlegel heiratete: "Die Lage war so, dass sie die Bedraengte und Hilflose, er der Besuetzer war, was ihm ein Ansehen von groesserer Maennlichkeit und Ueberlegenheit verlieh, als er in Wirklichkeit besass.... Die Hauptsache war, dass sie ohne Liebe nicht sein konnte und dass der Rechte nicht zur Stelle war."

Der erste Mann, der anscheinend in ihrem Leben eine wirklich bedeutende Rolle spielte, ~~war Schelling~~ war, nach R. Huch, Schelling, der kurz nach ihrer Verheiratung mit W.Schlegel "in ihren Kreis trat." Diese Begegnung fuehrte zu starken Konflikten. Als Schelling an ihrer Faehigkeit zur Treue zweifelte, schrieb sie:

S. 45 "Spotte nur nicht, Du Lieber, ich war doch zur Treue geboren, ich waere treu gewesen mein Leben lang, wenn es die Goetter gewollt haetten, und ungeachtet der Ahndung von Ungebundenheit, die immer in mir war, hat es mir die schmerzlichste Muehe gekostet, untreu zu werden, wenn man das so nennen will, denn innerlich bin ich es niemals gewesen. Dieses Bewusstsein aber von innerlicher Treue hat mich oft boese gemacht, hat mir erlaubt, mir wagend zu erlauben; ich kannte das ewige Gleichgewicht in meinem Herzen. Konnte mich etwas anderes vor dem Untergang in meinem gefahrvollen Leben bewahren als dieses Hoechste? Und wenn ich mir Verzweiflung bereitet haette in der Verzweiflung der von mir Geliebten - ja, ich wuerde im Schmerz darueber verzweifeln, im Gewissen nicht, niemals koennt' ich wie Jakob ausrufen: Verlasse dich nicht auf dein Herz. Ich muesste mich verlassen auf mein Herz ueber Not und Tod hinaus, und haette es mich in Not und Tod geleitet." (nach dem Tod von Auguste).

S. 191. Schillers Ablehnung gegen Karoline hing damit zusammen, dass er sich einredete, sie sei eine "schriftstellernde Intrigantin." R. Huch: "war im Grunde der instinktive Unwille des Mannes gegen eine Frau, die durch harmonische Fuelle der Natur nicht nur seinem Herrscherrecht entrueckt war, sondern in gewisser Hinsicht sogar, naemlich insofern sie ein Ganzes war, wenn auch kein so bedeutendes wie seine grossartige Halbheit, ein Gefuehl von Ueberlegenheit ihm gegenueber haben mochte."

192. "Die Romantiker bemuehten sich nicht mehr sonderlich, das Grosse in seinen (Schillers/ Werken anzuerkennen, sondern gaben sich mit Vergnuegen ihrer Lust zum Spassmachen hin, wo sein Mangel an Ironie ihren Witz herausforderte. Dass sie ueber sein Lied von der Glocke so herzlich lachen konnten, mag manchen Verehrern Schillers eine Ruchlosigkeit duenken; aber abgesehen davon, dass sie es nicht mit einem verklaerten Toten zu tun hatten, erklaert es sich aus eben diesem Mangel an Ironie,

die-

dieser mehr buergerlichen als kuenstlerischen Ernsthaftigkeit, und dem Grundsatz der Romantiker, zwar kein unmoralisches Kunstwerk, aber auch nicht jedes moralische schoen zu finden."

S. 280: im Zusammenhang mit LUCINDE, von Wilhelm as "ein Unroman" bezeichnet und von anderen beruehmten Zeitgenossen als anstoessig kritisiert, zitiert Huch Schleiermacher, "Auch Schleiermachers Vertraute Briefe ueber die Lucinde sind der Ansatz zu einem Roman. Er und Eleonore, die von ihm geliebte Frau eines anderen, waeren die Hauptpersonen gewesen." Aber er weigerte sich, seine Beziehung auf diese Weise zu veroeffentlichen.

"Ebenso viel Einsicht und Geschmack hatte Karoline, die es bei einem Plane zur Geschichte ihres Werdens bewenden liess; wozu ihr freilich auch eine gewissen Bequemlichkeit geholfen haben mag. Der geschlossenste und lebendigste unter den romantischen Romanen waere er wahrscheinlich geworden."

S. 188 Huch: "Aus den wogenden psychologischen Anschauungen der Romantiker hob sich immer deutlicher das Idealbild der Androgyne, des Ganzmenschen, den Jakob Boehme die Idea oder Sophie nannte....Unermuedlich eiferte Friedrich Schlegel gegen die Verherrlichung der reinen Maennlichkeit und Weiblichkeit: 'Nur sanfte Maennlichkeit, nur selbstaendige Weiblichkeit ist die rechte, wahre und schoene.' Oder: 'Man muss den Charakter des Geschlechtes keineswegs noch mehr uebertreiben, sondern vielmehr durch starke Gegengewichte zu mildern suchen.' 'In der Tat sind die Maennlichkeit und die Weiblichkeit, so wie sie gewoehnlich genommen und getrieben werden, die gefaehrlichsten Hindernisse der Menschlichkeit, welche nach einer alten Sage in der Mitte einheimisch ist und doch nur ein harmonisches Ganzes sein, welches keine Absonderung leidet.' Sein Vorbild fand er in Plato. Friedrich Sch.: "Was ist haesslicher als ueberladene Weiblichkeit; was ist so ekelhaft als uebertriebene Maennlichkeit, die in unseren Sitten, unsern Meinungen, ja auch in unserer besseren Kunst herrschen." Huch: "Uebertrieben und haesslich nennt er das herrschsuechtige Ungestuem des Mannes sowie die selbstlose Hingegebenheit des Weibes." (anschließend von seiner Ehe mit Dorothea!)

Huch: "Die Lehre von der Androgyne wurde spaeter von dem Philosophen Baader, der auch hier von Jakob Boehme ausging, wissenschaftlich begruendet, und das Wort Mannweib, das in unserer Zeit so gesunken ist und einen schlechten Klang angenommen hat, bezeichnet danach die schoenste und vollkommenste Form, in welcher der Mensch sich darstellen kann."

Karoline als androgyner Typ.

Wilhelm Sch. parodierte Schillers "Wuerde der Frauen":

Ehret die Frauen, sie stricken die Struempfe,
Wollig und warm, zu durchwaten die Suempfe,
Flicken zerrissene Pantalons aus.

Kochen dem Manne die kraeftigen Suppen,
Putzen den Kindern die niedlichen Puppen,
Halten mit maessigem Wochengeld haus.
Doch der Mann, der toelpelhafte,
Findt am Zarten nicht Geschmack,
Zum gegornen Gerstensafte
Raucht er immerfort Tabak usw.

Huch ueber Friedrich Schlegel, S.19: "Waehrend man Wilhelm beklagen muss, dass er nicht mehr war, moechte man Friedrich vorwerfen, dass er nicht mehr wurde. Denn die Bestimmung zur Groesse war in ihm und hatte keinen anderen Feind als seine weibisch-traege Sinnlichkeit. Bewege, tummle dich, schaffe, handle, moechte man ihm immer zurufen, der niocht viel andres tat als lesen, lesen und lesen. Er las so viel, wie Wilhelm schrieb. 4

Fortsetzung von Wilhelm SchlegelsSchiller Parodie in Eckart Klessmann CAROLINE:

Brummt, wie Baeren an der Kette'
Knufft die Kinder spat und fruh;
Und dem Weibchen, nachts im Bette,
Kehrt er gleich den Ruecken zu.

Aus einem Brief von Robert Walser an Max Rychner (Redaktion des Neuen Schweizer Rundschau)

Bern, 20. Juni 1927

/..../

Ich erwaehnte den Begriff Brouillon, womit ich Ihnen eigentlich eine ganze Schaffens- und Lebensgeschichte erzaehlt habe, denn Sie sollen erfahren, mein Herr, dass ich vor ungefaehr zehn Jahren anfing, alles, was ich produziere, zuerst scheu und andaechtig mit Bleistift hinzuskizzieren, wodurch der Prozess der Schriftstellerei naturgemaess eine beinahe ins Kolossale gehende, schleppende Langsamkeit erfuhr. Ich verdanke dem Bleistiftsystem, das mit einem folgerichtigen, buerohaften Abschreibesystem verquickt ist, wahre Qualen, aber diese Qual lehrte mich Geduld, derart, dass ich im Geduldhaben ein Kuenstler geworden bin.

Sie mehren dem vorliegenden Beitrag vielleicht nicht an, dass die vier oder fuenf letzten Zeilen ausnahmsweise nicht aus dem Bleistiftgebiet stammen sondern bloss rasch noch, in der letzten Minute, angeflickt, beigefuegt wurden. Laecherlich kommt Ihnen vielleicht ein derartiges Genaunehmen der Entstehungsweise eines Aufsatzes vor. Fuer mich jedoch hat die Bleistifterei eine Bedeutung. Fuer den Schreiber dieser Zeilen gab es naemlich einen Zeitpunkt, wo er die Feder schrecklich, fuerchterlich hasste, wo er ihrer muede war, wie ich es Ihnen kaum zu schildern imstand bin, wo er ganz dumm wurde, so wie er sich ihrer nur ein bisschen zu bedienen begann, und um sich von diesem Schreibfederueberdruss zu befreien, fing er an zu bleistifteln, zu zeichnelen, zu gfaetterlen. Fuer mich liess es sich mit Hilfe des Bleistiftes wieder besser spielen, dichten; es schien mir, die Schriftstellerlust lebe dadurch von neuem auf. Ich darf Sie versichern, dass ich (es begann dies schon in Berlin) mit der Feder einen wahren Zusammenbruch meiner Hand erlebte, eine Art Krampf, aus dessen Klammern ich mich auf dem Bleistiftweg muesam, langsam befreite. Eine Ohnmacht, ein Krampf, eine Dumpfheit sind immer etwas koerperliches und zugleich seelisches. Es gab also fuer mich eine Zeit der Zerruettung, die sich gleichsam in der Handschrift, im Aufloesen derselben, abspiegelte und beim Abschreiben aus dem Bleistiftauftrag lernte ich knabenhaft wieder - schreiben.

Sie finden mich vielleicht uninteressant, weil aufrichtig; daher beeile ich mich, Sie so interessant und gekuenstelt wie moeglich zu gruessen und bleibe in unaufrichtigster, dafuer aber schimmerndster Hochachtung, die ich frei von Herzlichkeit hoffe, weil Letztere muede macht, Sie aber unter allen Umstaenden leistungsfaehig zu bleiben haben,

Ihr ergebener

Robert Walser

27. 3. 96

Benjamin ueber Kafka

Aufzeichnungen 4, S. 123

(Die beiden grundsaetzlichen Irrtuemer im Versuch, der Welt Kafkas nahezukommen sind die unmittelbar natuerliche und die unmittelbar historische Deutung: die eine vertreten durch die Psychoanalyse, die andere durch Brod.))

(Diese Umschreibung des Tao als "das, was dadurch, dass es 'nichts' ist, das Etwas 'brauchbar' macht", trifft den Ton vieler Aussagen und Worte bei Kafka. (Sancho Pansa als Taoist /s.o., S. 35,6f./

Sancho Pansa S.35

(im Zusammenhang mit Benjamins Betrachtungen ueber das Studium und Studenten in verschiedenen Werken Kafkas) Vielleicht sind diese Studien ein Nichts gewesen. Sie stehen aber jenem Nichts sehr nahe, dass das Etwas erst brauchbar macht - dem Tao naemlich. Ihm ging Kafka mit seinem Wunsch nach,"einen Tisch mit peinlich ordentlicher Handwerksmaessigkeit zusammenzuhaemmern und dabei gleichzeitig nichts zu tun und zwar nicht so, dass man sagen koennte: 'Ihm ist das Haemmern ein Nichts', sondern 'Ihm ist das Haemmern ein wirkliches Haemmern und gleichzeitig auch ein Nichts', wodurch ja das Haemmern noch kuehner, noch entschlossener, noch wirklicher und, wenn du willst, noch irrsinniger geworden waere." Und eine so entschlossene, so fanatische Gebaerde haben die Studierenden beim Studium. Sie kann nicht sonderbarer gedacht werden. Die Schreiber, die Studenten sind ausser Atem. Sie jagen nur so dahin. (Zitiert ein Beispiel.) Vielleicht versteht ,man es besser, wenn man an die Schauspieler des Naturtheaters (in Amerika) zurueckdenkt. Schauspieler muessen blitschnell auf ihr Stichwort aufpassen. Und sie aehneln diesen Beflissenen auch sonst.
Fuer sie ist in der Tat "das Haemmern ein wirkliches Haemmern und gleichzeitig auch ein Nichts" - wenn es naemlich in ihrer Rolle steht. Diese Rolle studieren sie; der waere ein schlechter Schauspieler, der ein Wort oder einen Gestus aus ihr vergaesse. Fuer die Glieder der Truppe von Oklahoma (Amerika) ist sie ihr frueheres Leben. Daher die"Natur"dieses Naturtheaters. Seine Schauspieler sind erloest. Der Student aber ist es noch nicht, dem Karl nachts aus dem Balkon stumm zusieht, wie er in seinem Buche liest, " die Blaetter wendete, hie und da in einem andern Buche, das er immer mit Blitzesschnell ergriff, irgend etwas nachschlug und oefters Notizen in ein Heft eintrug, wobei er immer ueberraschend tief das Gesicht zu dem Hefte senkte." (Hierauf folgt eine lange Untersuchung (von B.) ueber die "Jagd nach dem Ziel" (meine Worte) als haeufiges Thema bei Kafka (Der Kuebelreiter, Der Jaeger Gracchus u.a.), interessant, aber nicht unmittelbar zugaenglich weil B. hier einen weiten Sprung vom handwerklichen Haemmern zum besessenen Reiter oder Studenten macht. Eigentlich mehrere Spruenge wie auf einem Schachbrett, was mit

dem fragmentarischen Charakter der verschiedenen Texte,

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P r o b e n

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von

C o n v e r s a t i o n a t M i d n i g h t

by

Edna St. V i n c e n t M i l l a y

(Bronstein)

Ich bin's, der glaeubig ist, nicht John und auch nicht Du, Anselmo.
Ihr seid Zweifler beide, denn immer wieder ruehrt Ihr mit Euern Fingern
an offne Wunden.
Die Kirche hat ihr Ritual so kunstvoll aufgebaut, dass ihr ergebner
Diener
Auf seinem hast'gen Wege zwischen Markt und Messe die Zeit nicht hat
zum Zweifel.
Aber Ihr habt Zeit, Pascal hat Zeit gehabt, Ihr habt alle Zeit,
Die Ihr zum Denken Zeit habt.
Eure Kirche steht auf einem Felsen von Zweifel, - auf drei
Verleugnungen und einem Dutzend Herzen kleinen Glaubens.

Woran ein Mensch glaubt, damit lebt er schweigend.
Sie bauen
Keine Kirche ueber jedem Sonnenaufgang, wenn sie nicht heulen
Vor Entsetzen, waehrend der Drache die Sonne frisst.

Was mich betrifft, ich bin ein Schiff auf hoher See; mein Blick er-
streckt sich nach aussen
Wie die Speichen eines Rades, fuenf Meilen in alle Richtungen auf
einen runden Horizont:
Und hinter diesem Horizont ist das Mysterium.
Es hat kein Gesicht, es ist nicht gesichtlos, es ist nicht bewusst,
es ist nicht unbewusst; es ist das Mysterium.
Ich glaube an das Dasein jenes, dessen Art des Daseins
Ich nicht begreifen kann; denn ich bin nicht ausgeruestet mit den
Begriffsorganen
(Noch war je ein Mensch so ausgeruestet),
Solch Mass zu ahnen.

Du bist's, Anselmo, der hartnaeckig und vermessen ist, nicht ich;
Du bist es, der sich weigert, seinen Willen zu unterwerfen.
Du kannst es nicht erfassen, dass etwas dasein koennte, was Du nicht
erfassen kannst; Du bist vermessen,
Du stattest alle Dinge mit menschlichen Eigenschaften aus, Du zoegerst
nicht,
Das Unerfassliche "Vater" zu nennen.
Vergeblich schlaegst Du Deine Brust, vergeblich sagst Du
Mit ergeb'ner Stimme: "Domine, non sum dignus",
Du, dessen Hochmut keine Grenzen kennt, der Du die Kuehnheit hast,
Ein Mysterium "Gott" zu nennen, ihm eine Braut zu geben und ein Kind.

Nicht Hochmut ist's, Ricardo, tiefstes
Grauen und Einsamkeit
Sind's, die einen Menschen dazu bringen, das Leere "Du" zu nennen.
Der Mensch kann doch nicht atmen in einer Luft, die weder troestet
noch verdammt.
Dies Leben, dies Alles-Was-Ich-Habe, mein Besitz,
Ist's wirklich nichts als eine unergruendlich dunkle Hoehle, in die
es seinen reinsten Strahl verstroemt?-
Also keinen Strahl, vom Dunkel ausgeloescht, von keinem je gesehn?
Es ist entgegen der Natur des Menschen, es ist entgegen seinem tief-
sten Drange, anzunehmen,
Dass sein toenender Mund in seiner Qual zu dem ohrlosen Unerfasslichen
spricht und spricht,
Dass sein furchtbarer, sein bedeutsamer Kampf um die gute, die weise
Tat
Keinen Augenzeugen hat.
Und braeche oder hielte er
Mit zaeher Kraft den stolzen Schwur,
Zaehlte nicht hier nur nicht, oder auch heute nur,
Sondern hat nie gezaehlt, noch zaehlt es je, - und also lebt er und
stirbt.
Und ist nicht einmal fort
Aus seinem Niemals-Da-Sein, obgleich er da liegt und verdirbt.

Hat nicht diese kluge Folterlist sich immer erfolgreich betaetigt?
Wenn nicht Liebe mehr ist, wenn das Grab ihn umschliesst, und er
wird niemals
Auferstehn, hat zumindest der Hass ihn bestaetigt.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Aus GESPRAECH UM MITTERNACHT (S. 30)

ANSELMO

Wenn du in der Strasse wohnst, die "Heute" heisst, in dem Hause
namens "Hier" -
Sagen wir, du wohnst in Nummer""Hier-Nord-Heute",
Dann ist's klar, dass momentane Dinge, Unbehagen, Sorgen dir
Von Bedeutung sind; so fuehlen viele Leute.
Aber wenn du deine Zelte aufschlaegst jeden Abend naeher an
der Stadt
Deiner wahren Sehnsucht und du ihre Tore weniger weit erblickst,
Dann legst du dich auch auf Nesseln nieder und du teilst die
Lagerstatt
Selbst mit Schlangen - und du siehst nicht einmal, wo du liegst.
Damit ist die Welt nicht aufgegeben, doch die Welt bezieht
Ihren rechten Platz in dieser Perspektive, ist nicht alles:
Ist aus Neid und Gier und Herrschsucht hart, - oder blueht
Aus Freundschaft, Wahrheit, Mut, ist schoen; und dennoch
bestenfalles
Ist sie nur ein Gasthaus im Verkehrsgetriebe:
"Provinziell" der Geist, der dort befriedigt bliebe.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Aus GESPRAECH UM MITTERNACHT (S. 31)

RICARDO

Alle Lebewesen, um sich zu erhalten,
Passen sich den wechselnden Bedingungen des aussern Lebens an;
Wenn ihnen neue Faehigkeiten wachsen, die der neuen Forderung
Entsprechen, dann entfalten
Sie sich; anders nicht. Der ungeschmeidige Organismus, der in
vielerlei Gestalten
Heut noch lebt, ist morgen ausgestorben. Und der Mensch, der
Gott noch nicht versteht
Als Bedingtheit seiner geistigen Umgebung, faende kein
Beduerfnis zum Gebet.
Also hat der Mensch Gott nicht erfunden; ihm erwuchs der Glaube,
Einem Gotte zu begegnen, der besteht.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (p. 85)

RICARDO

Since, however, the intelligible has failed us on every hand,
how shall we hope
For ransom save from the coffers of the unintelligible alone?
Only in madness, or in the meadows adjacent to madness, is
there scope
Today for the stride of the tall unshackled. What have we known
That has not bound us? And shall we sit for ever bound,
Shuffling our chains into the yard for exercise at an appointed
hour, to keep the sick thing sound?

Too much has been explored; too great a tract of polar ice
Where not even God has walked since first he called it good,
is named "Marie".
Should we not insist upon the body's right to be drowned
In water unfathomed? - Why, no, - for there is no such sea.
The plummet has poked at our grave; the official lead
Knows all, there's not a word unsaid.

Who then would not depart with me
Into the Unpolluted, into the only Free?
Where Memory is a dissipating gas, where Reason
Draws off its boots; where to think twice
Is the only treason.

Let us go mad while there is yet time, under our own direction,
not wait
For the leisurely and outmoded spindle of an archaic Fate
To spin our destiny. Now, now under the scrubbed skin
Jab neatly the unhygienic needle, thrust in
The fluid, drink
Like sand all proud excesses, all abandons, think
To the end of thought, and leave that rutted road
Abruptly where it ends, pursue
The faintly visible track
Until it widens and is smoothed out, and there is no road
but you.

RICARDO (p. 110)

Wenn Du nicht an Gott glaubst, ist es eine gute Sache,
An die Volksherrschaft zu glauben. Es liegt viel Trost, -
Wie ich bemerke, wenn man in ein langes Loch einen vielgeruehmten
Gegenstand versenkt, -
In der Ueberlegung, dass entweder er (a) sanft in Jesu Armen ruht,
oder (b)
Nur ein Teil von einem Rade ist und dass das Rad sich immer weiter-
dreht - und dass allein das wichtig ist.

Wenn Du nicht an Gott glaubst und Dich auch nicht dazu bringen kannst,
An die Volksherrschaft zu glauben, dann, kann ich wohl sagen,
bist Du in einer besonders
Ungschuetzten Lage.
Du hast nicht mal soviel wie einen Wollkrautstiel vom vorigen Jahr
um Deinen Ruecken anzulehnen; alle Winde blasen Dich an.

Was mich betrifft, ich glaube nicht an Gott und mir liegt nichts
~~An~~ An einer Volksgemeinschaft.

Ich bin bereit, ihnen meinen Mantel wegzugeben, doch ich bin nicht
bereit,
Ihnen meinen Mantel zu verborgen und sie ihn tragen zu lassen
und ihn dann zurueckzunehmen.
Ich bin bereit, ihnen mein Brot zu geben, doch ich bin nicht bereit,
An einem Tisch mit ihnen zu sitzen und es zu teilen mit ihnen.
Ich will nicht sterben, aber ich will lieber sterben,
Als zu meinem taeglichen Horizont zu haben, jahrein, jahraus -
und noch obendrein Heissa! zu singen -
Die Haare auf den Nacken auf den Ruecken andrer Leute.
Lieber lehnt' ich meinen Ruecken gegen eine unverstaendliche und
eisige Leere,
Als von hinten angeweht zu werden von den aufrichtigen Atemstroemen
vieler wohlwollender Maenner.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Aus GESPRAECH UM MITTERNACHT (S. 112)

Es ist schwer, die liberale Haltung zu dramatisieren; deshalb
sind wir ohne Anhang. Unsre Flagge,
Wenn sie nicht auf Halbmast flattert, haelt zu hohe Wacht,
Um die ungeschliffne Sicht emporzuheben.
Wir weben
Keine Muster uniformer Maenner in Gestalt unsrer Symbole;
wir singen kein munteres Lied, wir schreien nicht "Auf zur
Schlacht!"
Grelle Farben und bestaendiger Laerm bringen die Masse zum
rennen,
Ohne deren gefaehrliche Gunst
Wir wohl leben, aber nicht handeln koennen.
Der brave Mann will Brot, und er will streiten und singen.
Wie soll's dem ueberlegten, dem ungeschrienen Ding gelingen
In ihm zu herrschen? Obgleich es ihn doch besser naehren sollte
als er genaehrt ward je vorher,
Gibt es ihm kein Ventil fuer seines biederen Gemuets Bedarf,
keine Maersche,
Monoton,...hypnotisierend, keine Taenze, leicht zu lernen;
Es gibt ihm Brot und garnichts mehr.

Nur durch Selbstbefleckung kann eine liberale Partei zu Ehren
Kommen unter jenen Herden, die das Brandmal tragen, und
zurueckzukehren
Aus den Lumpenjahren, aus Avernus, ist nicht leicht.
Hart
In dem amorphen Bernstein der Gewoehnlichkeit gefangen saesse
dann die Pracht
Des beschwingten, adligen Gedankens, hilflos und erstarrt.
Gewoehnlichkeit allein hat Macht.

CARL (p. 114)

Ihr Alten liegt im Sterben!
Der Winter findet Euch verstreut wie Spatzen auf dem Schnee,
Nette, kleine Spatzen, saeuberlich und steif gefaltet auf dem Schnee.

Und wir kehr'n Euch fort mit weichen Besen,
Euer Lied, eintoenig zwar, ist suees gewesen:
"Viel zu essen!" sangt Ihr, "Viel zu essen!"

Schuetzt Eure Gesundheit! Huetet Euch vor Sorgen!
Euer ist das Heute. Uns gehoert das Morgen.

PYGMALION (p. 114)

Das denkst Du - und wen, zum Teufel, kuemmert's, was Du denkst?
Erstens darfst Du nicht denken, weil Dir das Denken nicht erlaubt ist,
Und zweitens koenntest Du nicht denken, selbst wenn Du duerftest.
Dein Kopf ist
So voll von blauem Dunst, so voll von Gluecksgespinsten, so voll
von aufgeschnappten
Proletarier-Gluecksgespinsten.
Du und Intellekt? Gerade Du? Traeum weiter - Du bist doch bloss ein
Rauschgift-
Suechtiger.

ein Intellektueller? Du?

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Aus GESPRAECH UM MITTERNACHT (S. 115)

RICARDO

Jeder Boden wird zum Felsen unter dem verwehten Samen der
Vernunft;
Wohin er immer faellt, er faellt auf steinigen Grund.
Affekte, Eifersucht, Furcht, Aerger, Grausamkeit,
Sie klopfen an des Geistes Tor und finden gleich Audienz;
Nur die Vernunft schlaegt sich die Finger wund; der Geist
hat keine Zeit
Fuer unerwarteten Besuch; der Geist haelt Konferenz.

Der Zweck heiligt das Mittel, ja, - wenn der Zweck am Ende
verschont
Und unberuehrt das Mittel ueberstuende, doch das kann er
nicht, er bleibt befleckt;
Sein Ohr wird vollgefluestert, er nickt, er laechelt,
Er setzt Fett an, er dankt ab, - und das Mittel
Uebernimmt die Strahlenkrone.
Stalin ist das Mittel,
Das auf dem Sitz des Zweckes thront.

Du stehst ein fuer den Tod all dessen, was ich liebe.
Mein Gott, wir brauchten Jahre zu beweisen, dass die Erde rund ist! -
Und Du, Du machst sie wieder flach!

Es steht kein Berg mehr in Russland - Du hast sie alle flach gemacht
Mit Deinem Schulter-an-Schulter, Gemeinschaftssingen, Trab-Trab-Trab.
Es steht auch kein Berg mehr in Deutschland oder Italien -
Alle drei sind ~~aus~~geflacht, flach wie Eierkuchen - die Eierkuchen
Europas.

Wenn es ~~ginge~~ nach Dir, ~~so~~ lebten wir in einer zweidimensionalen Welt
und kauten alle pflichtgetreu Maulbeerblaetter fuer den Staat.
Jeder~~mann~~ fuer den Staat und den Einzelnen hole der Teufel.

Abscheulich, diese Gleichmachung der Gipfel, obszoen, ~~diese Ver-~~
~~mischung.~~
Insekten, das ist's, was Ihr seid - eine Ameisenkolonie.

Ja, und ~~doch geht es nicht~~; Ihr solltet lieber dabei bleiben, Menschen zu sein ~~und sehn, dass~~ Eure Lage ~~sich~~ verbessert,
Indem Ihr Euch ausschliesslich auf Eure Eigenschaft als Mensch besinnt.
Dies Gemeinschaftszeug, ~~glaubt mir~~, ~~ist~~
Nur als Mittel zum Zweck zu brauchen; es bietet keine Zukunft, ~~denn~~
~~seine Wirkung~~ wird durch Konkurrenz verwaessert:
Ein Mensch ~~wird~~ nie so gut als ein Insekt sein wie ein Insekt an
sich ~~sein~~ ist.

Oh Gott, wozu dann leben, um eine vorgeschriebene und rationierte
Luft zu atmen!
-Jede freie
Meinung, jeder Austausch lebenskraeftiger Gedanken so erstickt
Von dem giftigen Motorenauspuff geistiger Motoren!
Leidenschaften gleichgeschaltet, Wissbegierde gleichgeschaltet,
Bestreben gleichgeschaltet,
Kultur und Anmut und all ~~jene~~ Dinge, daran ich hing,
Gleichmaessig verteilt unter den ~~Menge~~ Pöbel und gewuerzt fuer ihren
Gaumen!
Dies ist der Zeitpunkt fuer den, der Stolz hat, seinen Stolz beim
Griff zu packen
Und sich die Eingeweide damit aufzuschlitzen; dies ist der Zeitpunkt
fuer das Individuum, fuer mich,
Sich einzusperrn in seinem Zimmer... und ~~davon loszukommen~~ damit Schluss zu machen.

Du, ein Individuum? - Du, Du rekrutierte Maus?
Du Harvard Club, Union Club, weisse Binde fuer die Oper, schwarze Binde fuers Theater,
Die Hosenbeine dies Jahr ein wenig weiter, der Herr,
Ich rate zu dunkelblau statt schwarz, der Herr,
Pumps traegt man nicht mehr, der Herr,
Mah-Jonng, Kreuzwortraetsel, Anagram, Backgammon, Whist, Auction-Bridge, Kontrakt-Bridge, - rekrutierte Maus!
Du bist's ja so gewohnt, flankiert zu werden rechts und links von Leuten, die Dir gleichen,
Dass Du nicht aufrecht stehen koenntest, wenn sie wirklich je beiseite treten wuerden!

Das ist noch das geringste Deiner Uebel, mein praecht'ger Knabe.
Wir wissen, womit Du einen Baum erklettern wuerdest in Deiner Angst -
Es sei denn, dass es Dir das Klettern erschweren wuerde, in welchem Falle Du
Auf dem Boden stehn und daran zupfen wuerdest, bis Du zu Tode zerkratzt waerst.

Das Uebel ist, Du bist zu keinem Zwecke gleichgeschaltet:
Million Deinesgleichen, in gestreiften Socken marschiert im Gaenseschritt Ihr nirgendshin.

Du, ein Individuum?
Du Salat zum Mittagessen, Suppe zum Abendbrot,
Maine im Sommer, Florida im Winter,
Weibumwedelnder Hundeverehrer!

"Mertie, ich glaube,ich hab mein Strickzeug im Wohnzimmer gelassen."
(Na und, zum Teufel, ist das meine Sache? - Bist Du gelaehmt?) Aber das sagst Du nicht etwa.
"Mertie, wir speisen heute abend mit den Klein-Kinkerlitzchens."
(Zum Teufel, ohne mich!) Du tust es trotzdem.

"Verflucht noch mal, muss ausgerechnet Dein Hund den einz'gen Stuhl besetzen, auf dem man sitzen kann und Licht zum Lesen hat?"
Antwort heisst: Ja.

Stricke, stricke,
Lies im Dunkeln.
Hunde auf jedem Sitzgestell,
Cadillac voller Hundefell.

"Mertie, moechtest Du die Hunde nicht spazieren fuehren?"

Millionen Deinesgleichen, die die Hunde spazierenfuehren und respektvoll Warten, waehrend sie den Buergersteig verschmieren.

Oh, suesse, milde Nacht! - Park Avenue liegt einsam und der Mond scheint nieder
Auf all die kleinen Hundehaufen.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (p. 30)

ANSELMO

If you live in the street called "Now", in a house named "Here"-
If you live at number "Here North Now Street", let us say,
Then immediate things, discomfort, sorrow, it is clear,
Are of first importance; you could feel no other way.
But if you pitch your tent each evening nearer the town
Of your true desire, and glimpse its gates less far,
Then you lay you down on nettles, you lay you down
With vipers, and you scarcely notice where you are.
The world is not relinquished; but the world assumes
Its proper place in that perspective, is not all;
Is harsh with envy, greed, assault, - or blooms
With friendship, courage, truth, is beautiful;
Yet is at best but an inn on a thoroughfare:
"Provincial", one might call the mind contented there.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATIONS AT MIDNIGHT (P. 31)

RICARDO

All creatures, to survive,
Adapt themselves to the changing conditions under which
they live;
If they can grow new faculties to meet the new
Necessity, they thrive;
Otherwise not; the inflexible organism, however much alive
Today, is tomorrow extinct. Man, until aware
Of God as a condition of his spiritual environment, would
know no need of prayer.
Man, then, has not invented God; he has developed Faith,
To meet a God already there.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (p.112)

RICARDO

It is difficult to dramatize the liberal attitude; therefore we
have no following. Our flag,
Unless it flap at half-mast, floats too high
For the crude of vision to perceive.
We weave
No pattern of uniformed men in the shape of our emblem;
we sing no lusty song; we have no battle-cry.
Bright colour and insistent noise attract
The multitude, without whose perilous favour
We may exist, but cannot act.
The simple man wants food, and wants to fight and sing.
How shall the thoughtful, the unshouted thing
Prevail with him? Though it should feed him better than
ever he was fed before,
Offering no outlet for his intense but simple spirit's need, no
marching,
Monotonous,...hypnotic; no dances easy to learn;
It offers him food, and nothing more.

Only by self-defilement could a liberal party earn
A place among the branded herds; and to return
From shoddy years, from Avernus, is not easy.
Caught
In the amorphous amber of vulgarity would sit at length,
Helpless and fossilized, the winged, the noble thought.
Vulgarity alone has strength.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (p. 115)

RICARDO

All soil is rock under the wafted seed of Reason;
Wherever it falls, it falls on stony ground.
Sentiment, jealousy, cruelty, anger fear
Tap at the door of the mind and are admitted at once;
But Reason knocks in vain at that occupied ear;
It has no appointment, and the mind is in conference.

The End might justify the Means, if the End could stand
Pure of the Means, but it cannot, it is for ever polluted;
Its ear is whispered in, it nods, it smiles,
It puts on fat, it abdicates, - and the Means
Assumes its radiant crown.
Stalin is the Means
Seated in the throne of the End.

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EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (p. 30)

ANSELMO

If you live in the street called "Now", in a house named "Here"-
If you live at number "Here North Now Street", let us say,
Then immediate things, discomfort, sorrow, it is clear,
Are of first importance; you could feel no other way.
But if you pitch your tent each evening nearer the town
Of your true desire, and glimpse its gates less far,
Then you lay you down on nettles, you lay you down
With vipers, and you scarcely notice where you are.
The world is not relinquished; but the world assumes
Its proper place in that perspective, is not all;
Is harsh with envy, greed, assault, - or blooms
With friendship, courage, truth, is beautiful;
Yet is at best but an inn on a thoroughfare:
"Provincial", one might call the mind contented there.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (P. 31)

RICARDO

All creatures, to survive,
Adapt themselves to the changing conditions under which
    they live;
If they can grow new faculties to meet the new
Necessity, they thrive;
Otherwise not; the inflexible organism, however much alive
Today, is tomorrow extinct. Man, until aware
Of God as a condition of his spiritual environment, would
    know no need of prayer.
Man, then, has not invented God; he has developed Faith,
To meet a God already there.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (p. 85)

RICARDO

Since, however, the intelligible has failed us on every hand,
how shall we hope
For ransom save from the coffers of the unintelligible alone?
Only in madness, or in the meadows adjacent to madness, is
there scope
Today for the stride of the tall unshackled. What have we known
That has not bound us? And shall we sit for ever bound,
Shuffling our chains into the yard for exercise at an appointed
hour, to keep the sick thing sound?

Too much has been explored; too great a tract of polar ice
Where not even God has walked since first he called it good,
is named "Marie".
Should we not insist upon the body's right to be drowned
In water unfathomed? - Why, no, - for there is no such sea.
The plummet has poked at our grave; the official lead
Knows all, there's not a word unsaid.

Who then would not depart with me
Into the Unpolluted, into the only Free?
Where Memory is a dissipating gas, where Reason
Draws off its boots; where to think twice
Is the only treason.

Let us go mad while there is yet time, under our own direction,
not wait
For the leisurely and outmoded spindle of an archaic Fate
To spin our destiny. Now, now under the scrubbed skin
Jab neatly the unhygienic needle, thrust in
The fluid, drink
Like sand all proud excesses, all abandons, think
To the end of thought, and leave that rutted road
Abruptly where it ends, pursue
The faintly visible track
Until it widens and is smoothed out, and there is no road
but you.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

From CONVERSATION AT MIDNIGHT (p.112)

RICARDO

It is difficult to dramatize the liberal attitude; therefore we
have no following. Our flag,
Unless it flap at half-mast, floats too high
For the crude of vision to perceive.
We weave
No pattern of uniformed men in the shape of our emblem;
we sing no lusty song; we have no battle-cry.
Bright colour and insistent noise attract
The multitude, without whose perilous favour
We may exist, but cannot act.
The simple man wants food, and wants to fight and sing.
How shall the thoughtful, the unshouted thing
Prevail with him? Though it should feed him better than
ever he was fed before,
Offering no outlet for his intense but simple spirit's need, no
marching,
Monotonous,...hypnotic; no dances easy to learn;
It offers him food, and nothing more.

Only by self-defilement could a liberal party earn
A place among the branded herds; and to return
From shoddy years, from Avernus, is not easy.
Caught
In the amorphous amber of vulgarity would sit at length,
Helpless and fossilized, the winged, the noble thought.
Vulgarity alone has strength.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Aus GESPRAECH UM MITTERNACHT (S. 115)

RICARDO

Jeder Boden wird zum Felsen unter dem verwehten Samen der
Vernunft;
Wohin er immer faellt, er faellt auf steinigen Grund.
Affekte, Eifersucht, Furcht, Aerger, Grausamkeit,
Sie klopfen an des Geistes Tor und finden gleich Audienz;
Nur die Vernunft schlaegt sich die Finger wund; der Geist
hat keine Zeit
Fuer unerwarteten Besuch; der Geist haelt Konferenz.

Der Zweck heiligt das Mittel, ja, - wenn der Zweck am Ende
verschont
Und unberuehrt das Mittel ueberstuende, doch das kann er
nicht, er bleibt befleckt;
Sein Ohr wird vollgefluestert, er nickt, er laechelt,
Er setzt Fett an, er dankt ab, - und das Mittel
Uebernimmt die Strahlenkrone.
Stalin ist das Mittel,
Das auf dem Sitz des Zweckes thront.

FRANCOIS VILLON

BALLAD

I die of thirst close to the flowing fountains;
Aglow with heat, my teeth are chattering;
In my low homeland I'm on distant mountains,
And near the stove I can't help shivering;
Bare as a worm, yet vested as a king,
I laugh through tears and wait in hopelessness,
Finding my solace in the worst distress,
I live for pleasures, though enjoying none;
While potent, I am weak and powerless,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

Nothing seems sure to me but the uncertain,
Nothing obscure but what is evident;
I do not doubt a thing unless it's certain;
I hold that science is pure accident;
In winning all I lose each single cent;
When day appears, I say: "God bless your night!"
Flat on the ground I'm frightened by the height;
I'm well-to-do, though money I have none;
Expecting legacies, I have no legal right,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

I care for nothing, using no excuses
To strive for goods which not for me are meant;
He serves me best who heaps me with abuses
And speaks the truth the more he's insolent;
My friend is he who proves in argument
That a white swan's a raven black as night;
And he who hurts me helps me out of spite.
It's one to me if right or wrong is done.
My thoughts escape the more I hold them tight,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

L'ENVOI

Most clement Prince, I beg you to believe
That words I know, though sense I can't perceive;
Mine is the law that rules the common run.
What most I do? Why? Wages I retrieve,
Welcomed by all, rebuffed by everyone.

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CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

LAERMSCHUTZ

Palmstroem liebt, sich in Geraeusch zu wickeln,
teils zur Abwehr wider fremde Laerme,
teils um sich vor drittem Ohr zu schirmen.

Und so laesst er sich um seine Zimmer
Wasserroehren legen, welche brausen.
Und ergeht sich, so behuetet, oft in

stundenlangen Monologen, stunden-
langen Monologen, gleich dem Redner
von Athen, der in die Brandung bruellte,

gleich Demosthenes am Strand des Meeres.

NOISE PROTECTION

Palmstroem likes to wrap himself in noises,
partly to deflect external loudness,
partly to protect himself from listeners.

Thus he has installed in his apartment
water pipes which make a constant uproar
while he launches, safe within this shelter,

by the hour soliloquies upon so-
liloquies, just like the orator of
Athens shouting to the roaring waters,

like Demosthenes upon the seashore.

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

DAS KNIE

Ein Knie geht einsam durch die Welt.
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts!
Es ist kein Baum! Es ist kein Zelt!
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts.

Im Kriege ward einmal ein Mann
erschossen um und um.
Das Knie allein blieb unverletzt -
als waer's ein Heiligtum.

Seitdem geht's einsam durch die Welt.
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts.
Es ist kein Baum, es ist kein Zelt.
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts.

THE KNEE

A knee walks through the world, alone.
A knee, that's all there is!
It's not a tree! It's not a stone!
A knee, that's all there is.

Once in the war a man was shot
to shreds and bits of dirt.
His knee alone, as though it were
a relic, stayed unhurt.

Since then it roams the world, alone.
A knee, that's all there is.
It's not a tree, it's not a stone.
A knee, that's all there is.

DAS WASSER

Ohne Wort, ohne Wort
rinnt das Wasser immerfort;
andernfalls, andernfalls
spraech' es doch nichts andres als:

Bier und Brot, Lieb und Treu, -
und das waere auch nicht neu.
Dieses zeigt, dieses zeigt,
dass das Wasser besser schweigt.

THE WATER

Not a word, not a word
speaks the water, undeterred
on its way, on its way;
otherwise it would just say:

Beer and bread, dear and true, -
and that would be nothing new.
Let's attest, let's attest:
Silence suits the water best.

Fle Juvenal

DIE BEIDEN ESEL

Ein finstrer Esel sprach einmal
zu seinem ehlichen Gemahl:

"Ich bin so dumm, du bist so dumm,
wir wollen sterben gehen, kumm!"

Doch wie es kommt so oefter eben:
Die beiden blieben froehlich leben.

THE TWO ASSES

An ass in a depressive state
spoke thus once to his wedded mate:

"I am so dumb, you are so dumb,
let's go and die together, come!"

But as it happens almost daily:
The two continued living gaily.

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

DER VERGESS

Er war voll Bildungshung, indes,
soviel er las
und Wissen ass,
er blieb zugleich ein Unverbess,
ein Unver, sag ich, als Vergess;
ein Sieb aus Glas,
ein Netz aus Gras,
ein Vielfress -
doch kein Haltefrass.

THE FORGET

His culture crave was great, and yet,
for all the greed
that made him read,
he still remained illit, invet,
invet, I said, as a forget;
a sieve of glass,
a net of grass,
a glut -
but not a holdingfeed.

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THE PIOUS GIANT

Korf meets a giant trained to hold
in his mouth all that his mate
does not care for.

He will therefore,
night and day, whenever she may state
such desire, let his lips unfold

patiently and push without delay
behind his teeth what happens to be in her way.

And there's quite a lot in her way. One could in fact
not possibly say what, to be exact,

from moth to mammoth, in a manner of speaking, meets
with her disapproval. You'll find there entire streets,
whole towns full of people, you'll find gardens and lanes,

rivers and mountains next to wigs, beards and canes,
dishes, dresses and whatnots; to make it short,
a whole world is assembled at aforesaid resort.

Korf is disapproved of and taken religiously
into the giant husband's protective custody.

And only his being a "spirit", as elsewhere explained,
accounts for the fact that he is but briefly detained.

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

PALMSTROEM AN EINE NACHTIGALL,
DIE IHN NICHT SCHLAFEN LIESS

"Moechtest du dich nicht in einen Fisch verwandeln
und gesanglich dementsprechend handeln?
da es sonst unmoeglich ist,
dass mir unternachts des Schlafes Labe
blueht, die ich nun doch notwendig habe!
Tu es, wenn du edel bist!

Deine Frau im Nest wird dich auch so bewundern,
wenn du gaenzlich in der Art der Flundern
auftrittst und im Wipfel wohlig ruhst
oder, eine fliegende Makrele,
sie umflatterst, holde Philomele
(-die du mir gewiss die Liebe tust!)

PALMSTROEM TO A NIGHTINGALE
WHO KEPT HIM FROM SLEEPING

"Would you kindly change into a fish for me
and adapt your song accordingly?
For I see no other way to find
the refreshing gift of sleep at night
which is after all my human right!
Do it, if you are of noble mind!

Your wife's admiration will be just as boundless
if you face her as a flounder, soundless,
resting comfortably in the tree,
or you could, a flying mackarel,
flap around her, lovely Philomel
(who will not deny this little courtesy!)."

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

DIE TRICHTER

Zwei Trichter wandeln durch die Nacht.
Durch ihres Rumpfs verengten Schacht
fliesst weisses Mondlicht
still und heiter
auf ihren
Waldweg
u.s.
w.

THE FUNNELS

Two funnels wander through the night.
Their tapered torsos guide the ~~white~~ ~~light~~
light of the moon
to flow upon
their path
serenely
~~and so~~
on.

serene + beaming
moonlight's course
upon their woodpath

Two funnels wander through the night,
Their tapered torsos guide the white,
serene and beaming
moonlight's course
upon their
woodpath
and so
forth

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

THE MAIL-ORDER HOUSE (DAS WARENHAUS)

Palmstroem finds that life tastes stale
if it lacks
basic food, i.e. his mail.

Three times daily he's all wound
up inside.
Daily there's the same old round:

Rarely does a letter slide
with a plop
down his mailbox deep and wide.

Morbidly he scolds the man
whom we all
trust to do the best he can.

Then, remembering there is
something called:
"Order House for Minor Bliss",

He requests there by the pail
(quasi fresh):
quarterly "Assorted Mail"!

Now he gets continuously
letters of
every kind and quality.

Everyone relates to him
through the mail,
shares his slightest wish and whim.

Palmstroem sees himself thus tied
suddenly
to the world on every side...

And he feels somewhat at sea...
but this is
simply the "O.H.M.B."

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

THE TWO PARALLELS

Two parallels extended
into infinity,
two upright souls, descended
from a decent family.

They firmly had decided
that they would never meet:
thus to remain divided
was their supreme conceit.

When they had come to cover
ten light-years side by side,
each solitary lover
had lost his earthly pride.

Were they still as they started,
unable to unite?
They flowed like two departed
souls through eternal light.

Eternal light dissolved them,
and one became the pair;
eternity engulfed them,
two seraphim, as it were.

There is a ghost
that
who eats handkerchiefs;
he goes with you
on your journey,
he eats from your suitcase,
from your bed,
from your drawer,
like a bird
from your hand
many things, -
yet not all, not all at once.
With eighteen turkeys,
noble sailor,
you ~~took off~~ set out
for foreign shores,
with eight to seven
you return,
~~one to the housewife~~
a housewife woman.

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Und so laesst er sich um seine Zimmer
Wasserroehren legen, welche brausen.
Und ergeht sich, so behuetet, oft in

stundenlangen Monologen, stunden-
langen Monologen, gleich dem Redner
von Athen, der in die Brandung bruellte,

gleich Demosthenes am Strand des Meeres.

NOISE PROTECTION

Palmstroem likes to wrap himself in noises,
partly to deflect external loudness,
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Thus he has installed in his apartment
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while he launches, safe within this shelter,

by the hour soliloquies upon so-
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Athens shouting to the roaring waters,

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And only his being a "spirit", as elsewhere explained,
accounts for the fact that he is but briefly detained.

BIM, BAM, BUM

Ein Glockenton fliegt durch die Nacht,
als haett' er Vogelfluegel,
er fliegt in roemischer Kirchentracht
wohl ueber Tal und Huegel.

Er sucht die Glockentoenin BIM,
die ihm vorausgeflogen;
d.h. die Sache ist sehr schlimm,
sie hat ihn naemlich betrogen.

"O komm," so ruft er, "komm, dein BAM
erwartet dich voll Schmerzen.
Komm wieder, BIM, geliebtes Lamm,
dein BAM liebt dich von Herzen!"

Doch BIM, dass ihr's nur alle wisst,
hat sich dem BUM ergeben;
der ist zwar auch ein guter Christ,
allein das ist es eben.

Der BAM fliegt weiter durch die Nacht
wohl ueber Wald und Lichtung.
Doch, ach, er fliegt umsonst! Das macht,
er fliegt in falscher Richtung.

DIE MITTAGSZEITUNG

Korf erfindet eine Mittagszeitung,
welche, wenn man sie gelesen hat,
ist man satt.
Ganz ohne Zubereitung
irgend einer andern Speise.
Jeder auch nur etwas Weise
haelt das Blatt.

THE LUNCH EDITION

Korf invents a ~~paper, lunch~~ daily noon edition,
~~that, when you have read it fully,~~
~~fills you truly.~~
It provides complete nutrition
without ~~further~~ any other food supplies.
Everyone who's only somewhat wise
gets it duly.

then read by any
fleal, ~~fills duly and~~ and
middle bear,
fills like dear.
offering complete nutrition
Therefore, ~~if everyone is~~ if you're just a little
wise
~~Get~~ order now.

It eliminates nutritious
through all ~~the~~ ~~stroche~~ food supplies.

DAS WASSER

Ohne Wort, ohne Wort
rinnt das Wasser immerfort;
andernfalls, andernfalls
spraech' es doch nichts andres als:

Bier und Brot, Lieb und Treu, -
und das waere auch nicht neu.
Dieses zeigt, dieses zeigt,
dass das Wasser besser schweigt.

THE WATER

Not a word, not a word
speaks the water, undeterred
on its way, on its way;
otherwise it would just say:

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Let's attest, let's attest:
Silence suits the water best.

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Korf invents a ~~paper~~, ~~lunch~~ edition,
that, ~~when you have read it fully,~~
fills ~~you truly.~~
It provides complete nutrition
without further food supplies.
Everyone who is but halfway wise
~~gets it duly.~~

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

THE TWO PARALLELS

Two parallels ~~extended~~ intended
~~into infinity,~~ to reach infinity
two upright souls, descended
~~from a decent family.~~ straight from the
from worthy ancestry.
solitary
They ~~firmly had~~ decided
~~that they would never meet:~~ they'd rather die than
thus ~~to remain divided~~ be ~~was their~~ supreme conceit. disunited meet
staying
became their main
But I'd
When they ~~had~~ come to cover
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Were they still as they started,
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They flowed like two departed
souls through eternal light.

Eternal light dissolved them, is why they became
and one ~~became the pair;~~ and ~~ended their~~ ~~separateness~~ pair
eternity engulfed them,
two seraphim, ~~as it were.~~ ~~unnamed~~ to
~~nameless~~ ~~their name.~~
and ended their ~~separate~~ names
and they became as one

Zephyrs

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

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zu seinem ehlichen Gemahl:

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Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts!
Es ist kein Baum! Es ist kein Zelt!
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts.

Im Kriege ward einmal ein Mann
erschossen um und um.
Das Knie allein blieb unverletzt -
als wärs ein Heiligtum.

Seitdem gehts einsam durch die Welt.
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts.
Es ist kein Baum, es ist kein Zelt.
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts.

THE KNEE

A knee walks throug the world alone.
A knee, that's all there is.
It's not a tree! It's not a stone!
A knee, that's all there is.

Once in the war a man was shot
to shreds and bits of dirt.
His knee alone, as though it were
a relic, stayed unhurt.

THE END OF ENCHANTMENT

The Frog has gone back to his well,
no more to be spurned, debased or reborn
in human form.

The Old King has been dethroned,
his castle burned,
or turned into a boarding school.

The Princess, no longer beautiful,
lives on her own, abandoned,
first by a part-time lover,
then by her son.

There are no more Fairies
or Little Wise Men
offering free advice
on how to convert
dirt into gold
or rags into riches.
Their secrets are now sold
by Marketing Companies.

Even Witches
have graduated
from brooms to shopping carts.
Since they conceal their spells,
like ordinary women,
one may have trouble telling them apart.

The woods have all been cleared
of ancient trees
to fill a growing need for pleasure parks
in areas that attract light industry.
No longer dark, they represent a model
of family friendly cost effectiveness.

But, make no mistake,
even new pleasure parks
may still be full of dangers,
so you are told by people you don't know
who have identified you as a member of
their generation, though one/who clearly lacks
the wisdom of the old.
That's why they warn you to beware of strangers,
~~since~~ even friends and neighbors
cannot be trusted anymore,
and surely, they insist, you must admit
that altogether life has changed
and hardly anything is as it was before

~~today~~ retains the value that it had before.
What can you expect
when even privacy has lost its pride
as a result of either
excessive government control
and/or indecent ~~exposure by the media?~~
And, ~~they go on to ask,~~ whatever happened
to Dignity and Decency,
~~whom~~ our parents taught us to respect?
For all we know, they ~~may be forced~~
~~to end their days~~, tied to their beds
in fraudulent retirement homes.

And what about yourself,
you ask yourself,
appearing here as witness
of ~~these painful and confusing scenes~~,
as though you had no part in ~~them~~ yourself?
~~Do you find~~ anything that ~~is not~~ new
~~that still is meaningful to you?~~
~~I do~~. I ~~remember~~ the fool
~~in~~ his oldfashioned innocence,
~~daring to make mistakes~~.
He is still there, unchanged,
and he will outlast
armies of witches with shoppingcarts
and all the other unspeakable spells.
Forever young,
he remains
true to himself in his pursuit of illusion,
forever in love
with one of the totally
useless arts.

Since then it roams the world alone.
A knee, that's all there is.
It's not a tree, it's not a stone.
A knee, that's all there is.

DAS TELLERHAFTE

Das Tellerhafte naht heran
auf sieben Gäansefüssen.
Das Tellerhafte naht heran,
mein Dasein zu entsüssen.

Es naht sich im gestreckten Lauf
als wie der Gaul dem Futter;
bald liegts als wie ein Fisch ihm auf
und bald wie Brot und Butter.

Ich fühle mich so recht verhext
als wie in alten Mären:-
Ich werde, werde wohl demnext
ein Galgenkind gebären.

THE CHI-NA-WARE-NESS

The chi-na-ware-ness is afoot,
equipped with rhyme and meter.
The chi-na-ware-ness is afoot
my joy-in-life depleter.

It is afoot in full career
like horses drawn to fodder,
now as a fish it will appear
and now as bread and butter.

I feel as though I have been trixed
by ancient fairies, maybe.
I fear, I fear I am pre-fixed
to bear a gallow's baby.

FLY'S-EYE VIEW

When you, my love, had left,
The world became an empty China plate
And I a fly on its periphery.
But would another - real - fly perceive
The painted scenery? And would it peer
Into the precipice beneath the flowered edge?
While it would note the lack of nourishment,
It would not wonder why the world is flat.
And - unlike me - to satisfy its needs
It could take off in search of better worlds.

CHRISTIAN MORGENSTERN

DIE BEIDEN ESEL

Ein finstrer Esel sprach einmal
zu seinem ehlichen Gemahl:

"Ich bin so dumm, du bist so dumm,
wir wollen sterben gehen,kumm!"

Doch wie es kommt so öfter eben:
Die beiden blieben fröhlich leben.

THE TWO ASSES

An ass in a depressive state
spoke thus once to his wedded mate:

"I am so dumb, you are so dumb,
let's go and die together, come!"

But as it happens almost daily,
the two continued living gaily.

LARMSCHUTZ

Palmström liebt, sich in Geräusch zu wickeln,
teils zur Abwehr wider fremde Lärme,
teils um sich vor drittem Ohr zu schirmen.

Und so lässt er sich um seine Zimmer
Wasserröhren legen, welche brausen.
Und ergeht sich, so behütet, oft in

stundenlangen Monologen, stunden-
langen Monologen, gleich dem Redner
von Athen, der in die Brandung brüllte,

gleich Demosthenes am Strand des Meeres.

NOISE PROTECTION

Palmström likes to wrap himself in noises,
partly to deflect external loudness,
partly to protect himself from listeners.

Thus he has installed in his apartment
waterpipes which make a constant uproar
while he launches, safe within this shelter,
by the hour soliloquies upon so-

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Athens shouting to the roaring water,

like Demosthenes upon the seashore.

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Athens shouting to the roaring water,

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THE WATER

Not a word, not a word
speaks the water, undeterred
on its way, on its way;
otherwise it would just say:

Beer and bread, dear and true,
and that would be nothing new.
Let's attest, let's attest:
silence suits the water best.

DAS KNIE

Ein Knie geht einsam durch die Welt.
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts!
Es ist kein Baum! Es ist kein Zelt!
Es ist ein Knie, sonst nichts.

Im Kriege ward einmal ein Mann
erschossen um und um.

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S T R I P T E A S E

Sławomir Mrożek

Translation by Lola Gruenthal

(The stage is bare except for two chairs. Two doors, one on the left and one on the right side, should be in clear view of the audience. When the curtain rises there is no one on stage. One can hear strange rattling and rumbling noises which may sound vaguely familiar but cannot be identified. The door on the left opens and Mr. I comes rushing in. He is middle-aged, neatly but conventionally dressed, and carries a briefcase. Obviously he is not interested in his present environment but rather preoccupied with something that has just happened outside. He should convey the impression that he has not entered the stage of his own will. He finally looks around and adjusts his suit. The door remains slightly ajar. A few moments later Mr. II rushes in through the door on the right. He looks like an exact replica of Mr. I and also carries a briefcase. The second door is not completely closed either.)

Mr. I: Extraordinary!

Mr. II: Incredible!

Mr. I: I was ~~just~~ walking, aiming as usual...

Mr. II: ~~As naturally as possible,~~ Not a care in the world...

Mr. I: When suddenly...

Mr. II: ~~And quite unexpectedly...~~ Like a bolt from the sky

Mr. I: (as though just becoming aware of the presence of Mr. II)

How did you get here?

Mr. II: ~~You should rather~~ Why don't you ask, what ~~got me~~ brought here, or ~~how I~~ who brought me ~~was gotten~~ here.

Mr. I: (again following his own thoughts) Outrageous!

Mr. II: (as though slightly mimicking Mr. I) Preposterous!

Mr. I: I was simply walking, or perhaps rather ~~moving ahead~~ hurrying along...

Mr. II: Yes, that's right! You were certainly heading for a ~~definite~~ particular destination goal.

Mr. I: How do you know?

Mr. II: It's ~~axiomax~~ obvious. I ~~am~~ was walking, or rather ~~moving ahead~~ hurrying along, ~~striving to attain a specific goal~~ heading for my destination, too.

Mr. I: You took the words right out of my mouth. As I said, I was heading for this ~~goal~~ destination when suddenly...

Mr. II: And, ~~mind you~~, remember, this was a ~~goal~~ destination that you had set for yourself.

Mr. I: Exactly! And with conscious intent, mind you, with had chosen full conscious intent...

Mr. II: Obeying the dictates of your conscience, motivated by faith and reason.

Mr. I: You're reading my very thoughts. As I was saying, I followed the ~~course~~ path most ~~suitable~~ appropriate for my ~~purpose~~ destination when suddenly...

Mr. II: (confidentially) They beat you?

Mr. I: Oh, no! (also confidentially) And you?

Mr. II: God forbid! I mean, I don't know anything. That's all I can say.

Mr. I: What was it then?

Mr. II: That's hard to ~~define~~ say for sure. It was like a gigantic elephant blocking the street. ~~Or was it~~ Were there riots? First I had the impression of a flood, then of a picnic. But being in such a fog...

Mr. I: That's true! It's so foggy today you can hardly see anything. ~~Nevertheless~~ Still, I was trying to reach my particular destination...

Mr. II: Which you yourself had freely chosen...

Mr. I: That's the ~~exact~~ God's honest truth! ~~There was~~ nothing was left to chance. I had prepared everything to the last detail. My wife and I often spend long hours planning ahead, planning our entire life.

Mr. II: I also had ~~everything~~ it all mapped out in advance. Even ~~as~~ ~~ready~~ as a child...

Mr. I: (confidentially) Did you hear a voice?

Mr. II: I certainly did. There was a voice.

Mr. I: Something like a saw... a persistent sound... no, actually an intermittent one.

Mr. II: A gigantic buzz saw.

Mr. I: But where the hell could a saw come from?

Mr. II: Perhaps it wasn't a saw. Something threw me to the ground.

Mr. I: But what?

Mr. II: The worst ~~of all~~ part is this uncertainty. Was it really to the ground?

Mr. I: Where else, if not to the ground?

✓ Mr. II: But was I really thrown? What a ~~mass~~ jungle of ~~perplexities~~ riddles! I can't even tell ~~whether~~ if this was a ~~being-thrown~~ knock-out in the exact, classical sense, deserving of the name. Though I had the sensation of being thrown down, of lying, it was perhaps...

✓ Mr. I: (~~eagerly~~ tensely) ~~A non-being-thrown?~~ More like thrown than thrown down?

Mr. II: Precisely! And to tell the truth, I really have no complaints. Did you see any people?

Mr. I: Are there any at all?

Mr. II: ~~Presumably~~ I suppose there are, but with all this fog... it doesn't seem likely.

Mr. I: The worst of all is this lack of assurance.

Mr. II: What color was it?

Mr. I: What?

Mr. II: It's so hard to figure out anything. It was ~~a~~x~~a~~r~~k~~ something bright... a sort of rose color ~~interspersed~~ shot through with lead.

Mr. I: Nonsense!

Mr. II: (moving over to Mr. I, after a pause) And still they hit you in the jaw?

Mr. I: Me?

Mr. II: Me too. (Pause)

Mr. I: Well, anyway, now I can't get there any more on time.

Mr. II: How about just walking out? Right now! As though nothing had happened?

Mr. I: No, no!

Mr. II: Are you afraid?

Mr. I: Me? Why should I be? I'm just a little nervous. I just can't see...

Mr. II: That's because of the fog.

Mr. I: Did they say we ~~shouldn't~~ mustn't leave the room?

Mr. II: Who?

Mr. I: Who~~m~~ were you thinking of?

Mr. II: Never mind!

Mr. I: I've decided to stay put. The situation will clear up by itself.

Mr. II: But why? It may be quite possible for us to leave this room, unimpeded, and to continue on our way. After all, we can't really tell what's going on. Perhaps we ourselves ~~went astray~~ lost our way.

Mr. I: Are you blaming yourself? Us? We both knew where we were going, each of us heading for his specific ~~goal~~ destination.

Mr. II: Then it was not our own fault?

Mr. I: No, unless...

Mr. II: Unless?

Mr. I: ~~What~~ How do I know? Let's ~~not talk about it~~ drop the subject! I ~~have definitely decided not to~~ feel most strongly that we should not leave this room for one

Mr. II: If you're so ~~definitely against it~~ sure about it...

Mr. I: Definitely! We have to use sound reasoning in dealing with this matter. (both sit down)

Mr. II: Perhaps you're right. (listens) There's nobody there.

Mr. I: Actually, there's no cause for concern, is there?

Mr. II: No obvious cause, I would say.

Mr. I: Are you implying that there is a cause... an obscure one?

Mr. II: You have a mind of your own.

Mr. I: Let's establish the facts.

Mr. II: All right, go ahead.

Mr. I: Very well, then: Each of us left his house according to plan and walked, or rather headed, as you observed correctly, in the direction of his goal. The morning was brisk, the weather fair, the existence of wife and children an established fact. Each of us knew whatever there was to be known. Of course, we had no exact idea about the kind of molecules, not to speak of atoms, that our bedside tables are composed of, but after all, there are specialists who deal with such matters. Basically everything was perfectly clear. Well shaved, carrying our practical and indispensable briefcases,

we set out purposefully toward our goal. The respective addresses had been thoroughly committed to memory. But to be quite safe we had also noted them down in our ~~date~~ note books. Am I correct?

Mr. II: ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ On every point.

Mr. I: Now listen carefully! At a certain moment, as we were pursuing our course, a course that we had mapped out in all detail and that was, so-to-speak, the end result of all our rational calculations, something happened which... and this is a point I must stress...came entirely from the outside, something separate in itself and independent of us.

Mr. II: With regard to this point, I ~~have to express~~ must register some doubt. Since we are unable to define the exact nature of the occurrence, and since we cannot even agree as to its manifestations... due to the fog or to whatever other causes... we are in no position to state with any degree of certainty that this something came exclusively from the outside or that it was entirely separate in itself and independent of us.

Mr. I: You are discomposing me.

Mr. II: I beg your pardon?

Mr. I: You're ~~bothering me.~~ interrupting my thoughts.

Mr. II: I'm sorry.

Mr. I: Unfortunately, we are not able to determine the exact nature of the phenomenon, and...

Mr. II: That's just what I said.

Mr. I: If you wish to ~~continue~~ go on, ~~please go ahead~~ don't mind me!

Mr. II: The words just slipped out ~~of my mouth~~. It won't happen again.

Mr. I: (continuing) We cannot even determine with any appropriate degree of accuracy what particular elements constituted this something. I beg your pardon?

Mr. II: I didn't say anything.

Mr. I: I, for instance, perceived something that seemed to have the shape of an animal, but still I cannot be absolutely sure that it was not at the same time a mineral. Actually, it seems to me that it involved energy rather than matter. I think all this may be best defined as a phenomenon hovering on the borderline of dimensions and definitions, a connecting link between color, form, smell, weight, length and breadth, shade, light, dark, and so on and so forth.

Mr. II: Do you still feel any pain? Mine is almost all gone.

Mr. I: Please don't ~~be vulgar!~~ reduce everything to its lowest level!

Mr. II: I was just asking.

Mr. I: (continuing his train of thought) This much is certain: We were helpless in the face of the phenomenon, and, partly of our own will, as we were looking for shelter, partly due to external pressure, we happened to find ourselves in these strange quarters which at that critical moment were close at hand. Fortunately we found the doors open. Needless to say, our original intentions have thus been completely upset and, as it were, arrested.

Mr. II: I fully agree. What are your conclusions?

Mr. I: This is just what I was coming to. Our main task now is to preserve our calm and our personal dignity. Thus, it would seem to me, we still remain in control of the situation. Basically, our freedom is in no way limited.

Mr. II: You call this freedom, our sitting here?

Mr. I: But we can walk out at any moment... the doors are open.

Mr. II: Then let's go! We've wasted too much time anyway.

(Again the same strange noise is heard as in the beginning)

Mr. I: What...? What's that?

Mr. II: I told you we should go.

Mr. I: Right now?

Mr. II: Are you afraid?

Mr. I: Not at all.

Mr. II: First you insist on preserving your personal dignity by asserting your freedom, and then you don't even want to leave while there is still time.

Mr. I: If I left right now I would limit the idea of freedom.

Mr. II: What do you mean?

Mr. I: It's quite obvious. What is freedom? It is the capacity of making a choice. As long as I am sitting here, knowing that I can walk out of this door, I am free. But as soon as I get up and walk out, I have already made my choice, I have limited the possible courses of action, I have lost my freedom. I become the slave of my own locomotion.

Mr. II: But your sitting here and not walking out is just another way of making a choice. You simply choose sitting rather than leaving.

Mr. I: Wrong! While I'm sitting, I can still leave. If, however, I do leave I preclude the alternative of sitting.

Mr. II: And this makes you feel comfortable?

Mr. I: Perfectly comfortable. Unlimited inner freedom, that is my answer to these strange happenings. (Mr. II gets up) What are you doing?

Mr. II: I'm leaving. I don't like this.

Mr. I: Are you joking?

Mr. II: I'm not trying to. I believe in external freedom.

Mr. I: And what about me?

Mr. II: Goodbye.

Mr. I: Please wait! Are you crazy? You don't even know what's out there!

(both doors close slowly)

Mr. II: Hey! What's going on now?

Mr. I: Don't close them! Don't close them!

Mr. II: All because of your babbling! We should have made up our minds right away.

Mr. I: You don't have to blame me. If you had sat still, the doors wouldn't have closed. It was your fault.

Mr. II: Now there's no way of finding out.

Mr. I: It's all because of you. Thanks to your behavior we've lost our chance to get out.

(Mr. II goes to one of the doors and tries unsuccessfully to open it)

Mr. II: Hey! Open up right now!

Mr. I: Shh! Be quiet!

Mr. II: Why should I be quiet?

Mr. I: I don't know.

Mr. II: (goes to the other door, knocks and listens) Locked!

Mr. I: Do me a favor and sit down!

Mr. II: Well, where is it now, your precious freedom?

Mr. I: I have nothing to blame myself for. My freedom remains unaffected.

Mr. II: But there's no way to get out now, is there?

Mr. I: The potential of my freedom has remained unchanged. I have not made a choice, I have in no way confined myself. The doors were closed for external reasons. I am the same person that I was before. As you may have noticed, I did not even get up from my chair.

Mr. II: These doors are upsetting me.

Mr. I: My dear sir, while we are unable to influence external events, we must make every effort to preserve our dignity and our inner balance. And with regard to those we command an unlimited field, even though the infinite variety of choices has been reduced to two alternatives. These, of course, exist only as long as we do not choose either of them.

Mr. II: What else could happen?

Mr. I: Do you think it may get worse?

Mr. II: I'll try to knock on the wall... perhaps somebody is there.

Mr. I: It is regretable that you have no regard for the inviolable nature of your personal freedom. I too could

knock on the wall, but I won't. If I did, I would preclude other possibilities, such as reading the papers I have in my briefcase or concentrating on last year's horse races.

(Mr. II knocks on the wall several times and listens; he repeats this for a while. Then he takes off one shoe and bangs with it against the wall. One of the doors opens slowly, and in comes a Hand of supernatural size. It resembles the old-fashioned printer's symbol: Hand with pointing index finger and attached cuff. The palm should be brightly colored to make it stand out clearly against the scenery. With bent index finger the Hand makes a monotonously repeated gesture in the direction of Mr. II, beckoning to him.)

Mr. I: (has been the first to notice the Hand) Pssst!

Mr. II: (has not yet seen the Hand, keeps banging with his shoe and listening)

Mr. I: Pssst! Stop it, please! Don't you see what's going on?

(Mr. II turns around. Mr. I points to the Big Hand)

Mr. II: Something new again!

(The Hand continues beckoning to him. Mr. II walks over to it. The Hand points to the shoe he is holding, then it reaches out in an ambiguous gesture that may be either begging or demanding. Hesitantly, Mr. II puts his shoe into the Big Hand. The Hand disappears and returns immediately without the shoe. Mr. II takes off his other shoe and gives it to the Hand. The Hand leaves the room, returns and repeatedly touches Mr. II's stomach with its index finger. Guessing what this means, Mr. II takes off his belt and hands it over. The Hand withdraws, returns without the belt and begins to beckon to Mr. I)

Mr. I: Me?

(He slowly walks over to the Hand, stopping at every other step. While he is talking, the Hand continually beckons to him)

But I didn't knock... There must be a misunderstanding... I didn't make a choice... no choice whatsoever... I did not knock, though I must admit that when my colleague

knocked I was hoping that someone might hear it and come in, that the situation might be cleared up and that we would be allowed to leave. This much I admit, but I didn't do any knocking. (the Hand points to his shoes) I protest. I repeat once more: the knocking was not done by me. I don't understand why I should hand over my shoes. (bends down to untie the laces) I value my inner freedom. A little patience, please! Can't the Hand see that there's a knot here? ... Personally I don't hold anything against the Hand, because my own conscience is clear. I am determined to save my inner freedom, even at the cost of my external freedom... quite the opposite to my colleague here. But I'm not holding anything against him either, because, after all, what he does is his own business. I request only that we be treated as individuals, each according to his own views. Just a moment, I'm getting it. There's no fire, is there? (giving the Hand his shoes) Glad to oblige! (the Hand points to his stomach) I'm not wearing a belt... I prefer suspenders. All right, I'll give up the suspenders too, if necessary. (takes off his jacket and unbuttons his suspenders) Peculiar methods they have here! All ~~ready~~ *right*, here they are. Somebody's fingernails could use a good cleaning, if I may venture an opinion. (the Hand disappears, the door closes slowly) At least I'm wearing a fresh pair of socks. I'm glad about that.

Mr. II: Bootlicker!

Mr. I: Leave me alone! I'm not bothering you.

Mr. II: What can I use now to knock with?

Mr. I: That's your problem. I'm going to sit down. (returns to his chair)

Mr. II: You're in good shape now with your inner freedom. You're losing your pants.

Mr. I: What about yours? They won't stay up either without a belt.

Mr. II: Well, what do you make of all this?

Mr. I: I can only repeat what I said before: First the Dear Little Hand interfered with my free movement in space and then with my ability to wear trousers. This is true, and this I'm willing to admit. But what does it matter? All these are externals. Inwardly I have remained free. I have not become engaged in any action, I have not made any gesture. I haven't even moved a finger. Just sitting here I am still free to do whatever lies in the realm of possibility. Not you, though. You did something... you made a choice... you knocked against the wall and made a fool of yourself. Slave!

Mr. II: I could slap your face, but there are more important things to be done.

Mr. I: Right. But why do they deal with us like this?

Mr. II: It's always the first thing they do: take away your shoe laces, belts and suspenders.

~~Mr. I: So you can't hang yourself.~~

Mr. I: What for?

Mr. II: So you can't hang yourself.

Mr. I: You must be joking! If I'm not even getting up from my chair, how can I hang myself? Of course, I could if I wanted to, but I won't. You know my views.

Mr. II: I'm sick and tired of your views.

Mr. I: That's your problem. But listen to this: if the Dear Little Hand doesn't want us to hang ourselves, this means that it wants to keep us alive. That's a good sign!

Mr. II: This is just what bothers me. It means that the Little Hand thinks of us in terms of categories... Life and the other... what's it called?

Mr. I: Death?

Mr. II: You said it. (pause)

Mr. I: I am calm.

Mr. II: Tell me, what could you do now, if you felt like doing something? Of course, taking into account the fact that you had to relinquish your shoes and suspenders.

Mr. I: Oh, quite a few things. I could, for instance, put on my jacket inside out, roll up the legs of my trousers and pretend to be a fisherman.

Mr. II: And what else?

Mr. I: I could sing.

Mr. II: That's enough. (turns up the legs of his trousers, puts on his jacket inside out and takes off his socks)

Mr. I: Are you crazy? What are you trying to do?

Mr. II: I'm pretending to be a fisherman, and I'm going to sing too. In contrast to you, I want to explore all the possibilities of action. Maybe the Little Hand is partial to fishermen and lets them return to freedom. Who knows? One should not neglect any possibility. I've asked you because you have more imagination than I. For instance, I could never have thought up all those things about inner freedom.

Mr. I: It's all right with me. But please remember that I'm not moving from this chair.

Mr. II: You don't have to. (climbs on the chair and sings the song of "The Trout." One of the doors slowly opens)

Mr. I: (who has been anxiously watching the door) Now you've done it! (The Hand appears)

Mr. II: How do you know? Perhaps I'll be allowed to go and you'll keep sitting. (the Hand beckons to him) I'm coming, I'm coming. What's it all about? (the Hand indicates that it wants his jacket) But I was just... Is there a law against fishing? (the Hand repeats its gesture) I was just pretending. I'm not really a fisherman. (gives the Hand his jacket. The Hand disappears, comes back and now obviously requests his trousers) No, the trousers I won't give up! (the Hand forms a fist and slowly rises) All right. (takes off his trousers)

Mr. I: (getting up) Me too? (after waiting for an answer, which he does not receive, Mr. I voluntarily removes his jacket. Meanwhile Mr. II has given the Hand his trousers,

and he now stands there in striped knee-length underpants. The Hand carries the trousers backstage, returns immediately and beckons to Mr. I)

Mr. I: All ready, here it is. I'm not resisting, and I beg the Hand to take this into consideration.

(gives his jacket to the Hand which takes it out and returns immediately)

I'm always willing to oblige... may I keep my trousers in return? (the Hand makes a negative gesture) All right, I won't protest.

(takes off his trousers and stands now in underpants, identical to those of Mr. II. The Hand disappears, the door closes)

Mr. I: You can go to hell with your idea about fishermen.

Mr. II: It seems to me that it was your idea.

Mr. I: But you carried it out. It's cold in here.

Mr. II: It's quite possible that we might have been ordered to hand over our clothes anyway, idea or no idea.

Mr. I: NO! I'm convinced it was you who got us both into this predicament with your idiotic masquerade. It was you who attracted the Hand's attention to our clothing. If at least you had not rolled up your trousers, they would not have caught its eye.

Mr. II: But fishermen always roll up their trousers.

Mr. I: What good does that do you now?

Mr. II: You cannot (ignore keep us) the fact that we differ in our views. You do nothing so that you can feel free to do anything, of course, within the range of what is permitted, - while I try to do everything I am permitted to do. But apparently wearing trousers is not permitted.

Mr. I: You yourself have brought this down on your head.

Mr. II: An anatomical inaccuracy! Besides, let me repeat this once more: we don't know whether the removal of our clothes was provoked by my action or whether it was part of a predetermined plan.

Mr. I: At least now you should realize that my basic attitude is superior to yours. Don't you see: I didn't knock, I didn't sing, I didn't roll up my trousers, and still, here I am, looking just like you. Even our stripes are the same.

Mr. II: Where is your superiority then?

Mr. I: No waste of energy, - same results. Plus, of course, my sense of inner freedom which...

Mr. II: One more word about inner freedom, and that will be the end of you.

Mr. I: (backing up) You're unfair! After all, everyone has a right to choose the philosophy that suits him best.

Mr. II: Never Mind! I can't stand this any more!

Mr. I: I'm warning you: I won't defend ~~mxfx~~ myself. Defending oneself involves making a choice, and for me this is out, in the name of...

Mr. II: What? Go on! In the name of what?

Mr. I: (hesitantly) In the name of inner free...

(Mr. II throws himself at him. Mr. I runs all over the stage)

Keep your hands off!

(the door opens and the Hand reappears, beckoning to both. Mr. I and Mr. II come to a sudden halt)

Mr. II: Me?

Mr. I: Or me?

Mr. II: Maybe it's you...

Mr. I: You started this fight. Now you'll get your just deserts.

Mr. II: Why me? Do you still believe that your idiotic theory is better?

Mr. I: And you believe that your vulgar pragmatism, this lack of any theory, will stand up to such a test?

(the Hand beckons to both)

Mr. II: We better ~~move~~ go over! It wants something again.

Mr. I: All right, let's go! We'll soon find out who is right.

(They go over to the Hand which links them together with a pair of handcuffs. The Hand disappears and the door closes. Mr. II drags Mr. I along with him by the chain of the handcuffs and collapses on his chair. Silence.)

Mr. I: What does this mean? (anxiously) Aren't you feeling well? Do you believe that this time it's serious? Say something, please!

Mr. II: I'm afraid...

Mr. I : Of what?

Mr. II: So far the Hand has limited only our freedom of movement in space. But what assurance is there that soon we won't be limited in something even more essential?

Mr. I: In what?

Mr. II: In time. In our own duration. (Pause)

Mr. I: I don't know either. (pedantically) You, of course, being an activist, will exhaust your energies more rapidly. I, on the other hand, conserve mine...

Mr. II: (imploringly) Not again!

Mr. I: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. Do you have any plan?

Mr. II: There is only one thing we can do now.

Mr. I: What?

Mr. II: Apologize to the Hand.

Mr. I: Apologize?! But what for? We haven't done anything to the Hand. On the contrary, it should...

Mr. II: This is completely irrelevant. We have to apologize all the same... in general, for no reason. To save ourselves... for whatever good it may do.

Mr. I: No, I can't do that. I don't suppose I have to explain my reasons.

Mr. II: You're right, I know them by heart. To apologize to the Hand would mean to make a choice, which again would limit your freedom, and so on and so forth.

Mr. I: Yes, that's how it is.

Mr. II: Do as you please! In any case, I am going to apologize. One has to abase oneself. Perhaps that is what it expects us to do.

Mr. I: I would like to join you, but my principles...

Mr. II: I have nothing more to say.

Mr. I: I think I can see a way out. You're going to force me to apologize with you. In that case there is no question of choice on my part. I'm simply going to be forced.

Mr. II: All right, consider yourself forced. (the door opens)

Mr. I: I think it's coming. (the Hand appears) If only we had some flowers! (whispering) You start!

(both run over to the Hand. Mr. II clears his throat in preparation for his apology)

Mr. II: Dear Hand! I mean, Dear and Most Honorable Hand! Although well aware of the fact that the Hand is not here to listen to us, we still beg permission to speak to the Hand from the heart... I mean, we would like to hand the Hand a confession: ~~we~~ although somewhat belated, nevertheless with full conscious awareness, we sincerely beg to apologize for... for... (whispering to Mr. I) for what?

Mr. I: For walking, for going ahead, for everything in general.

Mr. II: For walking, for going ahead, for...I'm expressing myself poorly, but I simply wish to apologize in general for having been... for being... begging forgiveness from the depth of my heart for whatever the Honorable Hand knows that we don't know... for how are we to know what there is to be known? Therefore, whatever the case may be, I humbly apologize, I beg the Hand's forgiveness, I kiss the Hand. (he ceremonially kisses the Hand)

Mr. I: I wish to join my colleague, though only in a certain sense, having been forced... The Hand knows my principles... Therefore, though being forced, I nevertheless sincerely apologize to the Hand on principle.

(ceremonially kisses the Hand. Meanwhile the other door opens and through it appears a Second Hand, completely covered by a red glove. It beckons to both. Mr. II notices it first. Both turn their backs to the First Hand)

Mr. II: There! Look!

Mr. I: Another one!

Mr. II: There are always two.

Mr. I: It's calling us.

Mr. II: Should we go?

(the First Hand covers his head with a conical cardboard hood)

I can't see anything!

Mr. I: It's calling us.

Mr. I: It's calling us.

(the Hand covers his head with an identical hood)

It's dark.

Mr. II: When you're called, you have to go.

(Handcuffed to each other and blinded by the hoods, they move toward stage center. Constantly stumbling and swerving, they gradually come closer to the Second Hand)

Mr. I: The briefcases! We forgot our briefcases!

Mr. II: Right! My briefcase! Where's my briefcase?

(they grope blindly for their briefcases, left standing next to the chairs, then pick them up and follow the Second Hand through the door. Blackout)

POLAND

SLAWOMIR MROZEK, born 1930 in the old Polish capital of Cracow, started his literary career after the "Polish October," benefitting from the relaxation of censorship. He first published a volume of satirical short stories, *The Elephant* (1957), and has recently published another such volume, *The Rain* (1962). He is best known, however, for his satirical comedies. His *Policemen* (1958) was first produced in Warsaw in June, 1958 and has been played on major stages in Western Europe, as well as in New York. Other one-act plays include *The Martyrdom of Piotz Ohey, The Turkey* and *On the Open Sea.* The latter two and the present play, *Striptease,* appeared in three successive issues of the magazine *Dialog* in 1961. Mrozek is obviously well acquainted with the so-called "Theater of the Absurd." *Striptease* shows echoes of Genet, besides being a skit on Sartre's drama and his philosophical concerns.

STRIPTEASE

Slawomir Mrozek

Translation by I. A. Langnas and Robert O'Brien

A room with bare walls, doors right and left, and two chairs. No one is on stage when the curtain rises. A strange sound, somewhere between a racket and a rattle, can be heard. At times it seems almost familiar; at others weird and indeterminate. Suddenly, the door on the left opens and in rushes the FIRST GENTLEMAN. *He is middle-aged and carries a briefcase. His clothes are nondescript. As he plunges on stage, he is obviously unaware of his surroundings, for his dismayed attention is riveted on what has just happened to him off stage. He seems to have been propelled through the door by force. After a moment or two he begins to become aware of his surroundings. He looks around and adjusts his clothes. Just then, a* SECOND GENTLEMAN *plunges through the door on the right. He is almost exactly like the* FIRST GENTLEMAN *and he, too, carries a briefcase. His reactions are similar to those of the* FIRST GENTLEMAN *and he, too, leaves the door open.*

FIRST GENTLEMAN: It's completely unheard of!

SECOND GENTLEMAN: It's incredible!

FIRST: I was just walking along normally . . .

SECOND: As normally as possible . . .

FIRST: When suddenly . . .

SECOND: Quite suddenly . . .

FIRST: (*as if he had just noticed the presence of the* SECOND GENTLEMAN) How did you get here?

SECOND: Perhaps you should ask: "How did *I* get here?" or "How was I gotten here?"

FIRST: *(returning to his own thoughts)* Disgusting!

SECOND: *(as if mimicking him)* Quite disgusting!

FIRST: I was simply walking . . . no! simply moving . . .

SECOND: Oh, that's a much better way of putting it! Because you were simply moving toward some particular objective.

FIRST: How do you know?

SECOND: It's quite obvious. For I, too, was walking or, to put it more precisely, moving . . . toward. I was moving toward.

FIRST: You've taken the very words out of my mouth. I was moving toward a particular objective when suddenly . . .

SECOND: Absolutely! A particular objective determined by our own particular personality.

FIRST: Absolutely! And fully aware, remember that! Fully aware . . .

SECOND: To the best of your own particular knowledge and conviction. Your faith and reason . . .

FIRST: My very thoughts, precisely! I was moving in this particular direction which I, myself, had chosen, when suddenly . . .

SECOND: *(confidentially)* They beat you?

FIRST: Oh, no! *(equally confidentially)* And you?

SECOND: Heaven forbid! I mean, I don't know. That's all I can say.

FIRST: What was it?

SECOND: It's hard to say precisely. For a moment it seemed as if a gigantic elephant was blocking the street. Though, of course, according to my first impression, it was more like a flood. But there was such a fog . . .

FIRST: Precisely! It's quite foggy today. It's impossible to see clearly. But, nevertheless, I was on my way to this particular address . . .

SECOND: One which you yourself had selected.

FIRST: That's the truth, I swear it! This was no random decision. My wife and I are quite precise about this. Each hour of the day is carefully planned. In fact our whole life is.

SECOND: Precisely! I've always planned everything down to the smallest detail, even as a mere child.

FIRST: *(confidentially)* Did you hear the voice?

SECOND: Of course! There certainly was a voice.

FIRST: Something like a saw, my friend . . . a long droning sound . . . But, no, it was really intermittent . . .

SECOND: Like a gigantic buzz-saw.

FIRST: But where the devil did the saw come from?

SECOND: Well, perhaps it wasn't a saw. Something threw me to the ground.

FIRST: But what?

SECOND: That's the worst of it . . . this uncertainty! And did it really throw me to the *ground?*

FIRST: And if not . . . where?

SECOND: And is *threw* the correct word? This is an absolute morrass of uncertainties! I wasn't *thrown* (in the classical sense) but I felt thrown . . . prone, if you know what I mean . . . yet, still, I was somehow . . .

FIRST: *(tensely) Not quite thrown?*

SECOND: Precisely! And, to be quite frank, I can't really complain on that score. Did you see anyone?

FIRST: Was there anyone?

SECOND: I suppose there must have been. And yet, with all this fog, it doesn't seem very likely.

FIRST: This uncertainty! That's the worst of it!

SECOND: What color would you say it was?

FIRST: What was?

SECOND: That's hard to say. It seemed to have a certain brightness . . . a pink riddled with lead.

FIRST: Nonsense!

SECOND: *(moving over to him and after a pause)* And yet you were slapped?

FIRST: I?

SECOND: Me, too. (*pause*)

FIRST: Oh, well. I don't suppose I'll get there on time anyhow.

SECOND: Suppose we went out together? Right now! As if nothing had happened.

FIRST: No! Absolutely not!

SECOND: Are you afraid?

FIRST: Of course not. It's just that my nerves are on edge. Everything is so mysterious.

SECOND: It's the fog . . .

FIRST: Did they say we shouldn't go out?

SECOND: They?

FIRST: Well, just who have *you* got in mind?

SECOND: All right, all right.

FIRST: I have definitely decided to stay right here. The situation is bound to clear up.

SECOND: Why? There is the distinct possibility that we could leave this moment, undisturbed, and pursue our own particular objectives. After all, we have no definite knowledge of what this is all about.

SECOND: Perhaps we merely lost our way?

FIRST: Are you blaming yourself? Us? We both knew where we were going, and were moving toward certain precise objectives.

SECOND: Then it's not our fault.

FIRST: Certainly not. But perhaps . . .

SECOND: Perhaps?

FIRST: Well, how do I know! It's best not to talk about it. But I, for one, am definitely not going out.

SECOND: Well, if you're definitely set against it . . .

FIRST: Definitely! We must consider this thing calmly and rationally. *(They sit down).*

SECOND: Perhaps you're right. (*listens*). There's no one there.

FIRST: Consequently, there's no reason to be afraid, is there?

SECOND: No definite reason.

FIRST: Do you mean to imply that there is some . . . *indefinite* reason?

SECOND: You have a mind of your own.

FIRST: Now. Let's get the facts straight, shall we?

SECOND: Fine. Let's.

FIRST: Good. First, we both left our homes according to our own particular schedule and started to go . . . or rather to *move,* as you so precisely corrected me, ... Now, the morning was brisk, the weather clear, the wife and children could be, as it were, verified. Each of us knew quite well what he was about. Although, we must undoubtedly admit that we, that is to say you and I, did not have absolutely precise information about the particular molecular composition (to say nothing of the atomic structure) of, let us say, the bedside tables in our own particular residences. But, then, what do we have specialists for, eh? Thus we can safely say that everything was well determined and settled. Now then, each of us, cleanshaven and carrying our necessary and indispensable briefcases, set out, quite purposefully, toward our particular objectives. We had the address firmly in mind and, even if we hadn't, it was carefully inscribed in our address books. Am I correct so far?

SECOND: On every point.

FIRST: Now then . . . pay careful attention. At a certain moment, when we were following a well-marked and well-established course . . . the result of intelligent calculation, in fact, the one and only possible course . . . something happened which . . . and I cannot emphasize this too strongly . . . was motivated entirely from the outside, something entirely separate and independent of us.

SECOND: I'm not entirely convinced of your last point. Since we have not yet been able to determine the exact nature of the occurrence and, in fact, cannot even agree upon its particular manifestations, we cannot definitely state that it was actually independent of us. Or that it was external and separate.

FIRST: You're upsetting me!

SECOND: What's that?

FIRST: You disturb me.

SECOND: Sorry.

FIRST: Unfortunately, at the moment, we cannot make a precise estimate of the nature of that phenomenon which . . .

SECOND: Isn't that what I just said?

FIRST: Well, if you insist on talking . . .

SECOND: I lost my head. It won't happen again.

FIRST: (*resuming*) As I said, we cannot determine, with any decent degree of certainty, the individual elements of . . . What did you say?

SECOND: Not a thing.

FIRST: For example, I saw something which, from its shape, I took to be an animal. But, actually, I cannot be sure that it did not belong more properly to the mineral kingdom. In fact, we may be dealing with something which may be more profitably considered as energy rather than matter. It may even be best defined as a phenomenon which exists at the boundary of dimension and definition, at the very nexus of color, shape, smell, weight, length, breadth, contour, shade, light, darkness, and so on and so forth.

SECOND: Do you still have a pain? Mine seems to be almost gone.

FIRST: Please don't be vulgar!

SECOND: I just asked.

FIRST: (*resuming his argument*) Now, we are, as it were, helpless in the face of this phenomenon and, partly owing to our own free will under which we have sought shelter and partly owing to a certain compulsion, we have found ourselves in a strange room, which happened to be close at hand. Needless to say, our former course has been completely disturbed and, shall we say, arrested.

SECOND: I agree completely. But what are your conclusions?

FIRST: I'm coming to them. Our primary task is to keep calm and to maintain our personal dignity. In my opinion, we have the situation well in hand. Our freedom remains basically unaffected.

SECOND: Do you consider this freedom, when we're still sitting here?

FIRST: But we can leave any time we wish to. The doors are still open.

SECOND: Well then, let's go. We've lost enough time as it is. (*The strange, confused noises are heard again, as in the beginning*).

FIRST: What's that? What? What is it?

SECOND: I say let's go.

FIRST: Just like that?

SECOND: You're afraid?

FIRST: Certainly not!

SECOND: First you talk about keeping our personal dignity and then you refuse to leave when there is still time.

FIRST: *But* if I were to leave now I would limit my idea of freedom.

SECOND: What do you mean?

FIRST: It's quite clear. What, after all, is freedom? It is the freedom to make a choice. So long as I remain here, firm in the knowledge that I can leave by either door, I remain free. However, the moment I actually get up and go out, I make a choice . . . thereby limiting my possible courses of action and thus losing my freedom. I become the slave of my own departure.

SECOND: But if you continue to sit here without leaving you also make a choice. You choose sitting rather than leaving.

FIRST: Not at all. I may sit but I can still leave. If I leave, I preclude the possibility of sitting.

SECOND: You feel perfectly comfortable in all this?

FIRST: Perfectly. The full measure of internal freedom . . . that's my answer to all this mystery. (*The* SECOND GENTLEMAN *rises*). What are you doing?

SECOND: I'm leaving. I don't like all this.

FIRST: You're joking?

SECOND: Not at all. I'm for external freedom.

FIRST: But what about me?

SECOND: Goodbye.

FIRST: Now just a minute! Have you lost your mind? You haven't the faintest idea of what's out there. (*both doors close slowly*).

SECOND: Hey! What's that?

FIRST: No, don't shut it! Don't shut it!

SECOND: You and all your talk. We should've made up our minds right away.

FIRST: It's not my fault. If you had just sat quietly, the doors wouldn't have closed. This is your fault.

SECOND: We'll never know.

FIRST: It's all your fault. Because of you and your ideas, our only avenue of escape has been cut off.

(*The* SECOND GENTLEMAN *goes up to the door and tries to open it—without success*)

SECOND: Hey! Open this door at once!

FIRST: Shhh! Quiet . . .

SECOND: Why should I be quiet?

FIRST: I don't know.

SECOND: *(going up to the other door and listening)* It's shut tight.

FIRST: Sit down. Please.

SECOND: Well, now what do you think of your freedom?

FIRST: I have nothing to reproach myself for. My own personal freedom remains unimpaired.

SECOND: But we can't even leave now?

FIRST: My potential freedom remains just as it was . . . undisturbed. I made no choices. I limited myself in no way. The doors were shut for external reasons. While I have remained the very same person I was before. You yourself are witness to the fact that I never once stirred from my chair.

SECOND: Those doors disturb me.

FIRST: My dear sir, we cannot hope to influence external occurrences. The most we can do is to preserve our internal dignity and freedom. And in the exercise of this freedom, we'll always have unlimited opportunities . . . even if we are given only two alternatives out of an infinite number of possibilities . . . with the condition of course that we choose neither.

SECOND: You think it can happen?

FIRST: You think it'll get worse?

SECOND: I'll knock on the wall. There may be someone behind it.

FIRST: I can only regret your disregard for the inviolability of the range of your own personal freedom. I, too, could knock on the wall . . . but I won't! For, in so doing, I would preclude, for example, the possibility of reading the newspaper I have in my briefcase, or of concentrating my attention on last year's racing results.

(The SECOND GENTLEMAN *knocks on the wall several times, knocking and listening by turns. Then he takes off a shoe and begins to pound the wall with it. One of the doors opens slowly. A Hand of supernatural size appears. This Hand, stretching out of its sleeve, has a pointing finger similar to the old-fashioned printer's symbol. The palm is brightly colored and stands out clearly against the scenery. The Hand points to the* SECOND GENTLEMAN, *crooks its forefinger and begins to beckon to him.)*

FIRST: *(the first to notice the Hand)* Psssst!

SECOND: *(who still hasn't seen the Hand, continues to beat the wall with his shoe while listening at intervals.)*

FIRST: Psssst! Stop it, please! Don't you see what's happening?

(The SECOND GENTLEMAN *turns around. The* FIRST GENTLEMAN *indicates the Great Hand.)*

SECOND: Something new. (*The Hand still beckons to him. The* SECOND GENTLEMAN *moves over to it and the Hand points to the shoe he is holding and makes a gesture of request. Hesitantly, the* SECOND GENTLEMAN *puts the shoe in the Great Hand, which then disappears to return empty a moment later. The* SECOND GENTLEMAN *takes off his other shoe and gives it to the Hand. The Hand disappears, returns and begins to prod the* SECOND GENTLEMAN'S *stomach with its forefinger. Guessing what it wants, the* SECOND GENTLEMAN *takes off his belt and gives it to the Hand which again disappears to return a moment later. The Hand begins to beckon to the* FIRST GENTLEMAN.)

FIRST: *Me? (He walks toward the Hand, stopping every step or two to talk to himself. The Hand beckons continually.)* But I didn't knock. . . . I didn't make a choice . . . no choice at all. . . . I didn't knock . . . though I'll admit that while my friend here was knocking, I did hope that someone might hear it and come . . . and that we might get an explanation . . . and maybe get out of here. . . . Yes, I admit this . . . but I didn't knock. *(The Hand points to his shoes.)* I protest. I repeat: I was not the one who knocked! I see no reason whatever to give you my shoes *(bends over and begins to untie the laces.)* I place a great value on my inner freedom. Right away! I'm going as fast as I can! Can't the Hand see that I've got a knot in my laces? Now, personally I have no grievance against the Hand, none whatsoever. Since I am at peace with my-

self, I am determined to preserve my inner freedom even at the cost of my external freedom . . . an entirely opposite position from that of my friend here. Not that I have any grievance against him either. What he does is his business. I'm merely requesting that we be treated as individuals, according to our own particular personal views. Right away! Right away! There's no fire, is there? *(hands the shoe to the Hand, which points to his stomach.)* Please . . . you see . . . I don't wear a belt, I wear suspenders. *(takes off his jacket and unbuttons his suspenders.)* My word, what methods! Please, here are the suspenders. And if you don't mind my saying so, your fingernails could use a good cleaning. *(The Hand disappears. The door closes slowly).* Well, anyhow, I have a clean pair of socks on. That's a bit of luck.

SECOND: Bootlicker!

FIRST: Don't bother me. I'm not in your way.

SECOND: And what am I going to knock on the wall with?

FIRST: That's no concern of mine. I'm going to sit down. *(sits down once more on the chair)*

SECOND: You're a fine sight . . . you and your inner freedom. Your pants are falling off.

FIRST: And what about you? Your pants won't stay up without a belt.

SECOND: Well, what do you think of all this?

FIRST: Only what I've said already. The Little Hand has curtailed my activity in two ways: it has precluded the possibility of my being able to move freely in space and it has eliminated my ability to wear trousers. That's quite true. I freely admit it! But what of it! These are mere externals. Internally, I remain as free as ever. I have not done one thing, not an action, not a gesture. I haven't so much as lifted my little finger. Here I sit with the ability to do anything that still remains within my range of possibilities. But you can't. You only did one thing. But you chose. You knocked and you made a fool of yourself. Slave!

SECOND: I could knock you down! But there are more important things to do.

FIRST: Right. By the way, why did they do this to us?

SECOND: They always do. They take away your belt, shoelaces and suspenders first thing.

FIRST: Why?

SECOND: So you can't hang yourself.

FIRST: You must be joking! How can I hang myself if I don't even budge from this chair? I suppose I could, of course, but I don't want to. You know my views.

SECOND: I'm up to here with your views.

FIRST: Well, that's up to you. You know, if you're correct and the Dear Little Hand doesn't want us to hang ourselves, then it must want to keep us alive. That's a good sign.

SECOND: No, that's what bothers me. It means that it thinks of us in terms of two categories . . . Life and Whatchamacallit? . . .

FIRST: Death?

SECOND: You said it. *(pause)*

FIRST: I am calm.

SECOND: Tell me, just what could *you* do now, that is, if you felt like it? Bearing in mind, of course, the fact that they've taken your shoes and your suspenders.

FIRST: Oh, any number of things! For example: I could turn my jacket inside out, roll up my trousers and pretend that I was a fisherman.

SECOND: Anything else?

FIRST: I could sing.

SECOND: That's enough. *(rolls up his trousers, turns his coat inside out and takes off his socks)*

FIRST: Have you gone mad? What are you trying to do?

SECOND: I'm pretending that I'm a fisherman . . . and I'm going to sing in a moment. I want to explore all the possibilities of action. Exactly the opposite of you. Who knows? Maybe the Little Hand likes fishermen and sets them free? I asked you because you have more imagination than I do. For example, *I* could never have come up with anything like that inner freedom business.

FIRST: All right! All right! But remember that I'm not moving from my chair.

SECOND: I'm not asking you to. *(stands up on the chair and begins to sing the well-known song of "The Trout". The door slowly opens.)*

FIRST: *(who has been watching the door intently)* Well! Now you've done it! *(The Hand appears.)*

SECOND: How do you know? *(The Hand beckons to him.)* I'm coming. I'm coming. Now what's the problem here? *(The Hand indicates that his jacket is the problem.)* But I was only . . . is it a crime to fish? *(The Hand repeats the gesture.)* I was just pretending . . . I'm not really a fisherman, you know. *(hands his jacket to the Hand which disappears, returns and indicates his pants)* No. Not the pants. I won't give you the pants! *(The Hand rises and becomes a fist.)* Oh, all right! The pants! *(takes off his pants)*

FIRST: *(rising from his chair)* Me, too? *(waits for a reply, receives none, and immediately starts to take off his jacket. Meanwhile, the* SECOND GENTLEMAN *has removed his pants and given them to the Hand which disappears. He stands there in his knee-length striped underpants. The Hand reappears and beckons to the* FIRST GENTLEMAN.*)*

FIRST: Please! It's all ready. You see, I'm not resisting . . . and I hope the Hand will bear that in mind. *(gives his jacket to the Hand which disappears and returns.)* I'm always ready to oblige but, all the same, couldn't I just keep my trousers? *(The Hand indicates that he cannot.)* All right, I won't protest. *(takes off his pants and gives them to the Hand, which withdraws as the door closes. He stands there in a pair of underpants identical to those worn by the* SECOND GENTLEMAN.*)*

FIRST: You and your bright ideas! Fishermen!

SECOND: I believe it was *your* idea!

FIRST: But you're the one who carried it out. It's cold in here.

SECOND: You know it's possible that he might have ordered us to give him our clothes in any case.

FIRST: No, it was you . . . you and your idiotic masquerade, putting us both in danger. You drew the Hand's attention to our clothes. If only you hadn't rolled up your trousers. Then, maybe he wouldn't have noticed our pants.

SECOND: I couldn't help it. Fishermen always roll up their trousers.

FIRST: But why did *you* do it?

SECOND: You must have noticed by now that we are men of quite different views. You don't do anything so that you can do every-

thing . . . within the limits of what is permitted, of course . . . while I try to do everything I am permitted to do. It seems, however, that we are not permitted to walk around in trousers.

FIRST: You brought it on your own head.

SECOND: That is an anatomical inexactitude! I repeat once more: We don't know whether we were stripped of our clothes because of something I did or because it happened to be in the plan.

FIRST: Well, at least you can see now that my attitude is superior. To wit: I didn't knock; I didn't sing; I didn't roll up my trousers and yet I look exactly like you, down to the same striped underpants.

SECOND: So where is your superiority?

FIRST: In achieving the same result with a smaller outlay of energy. Then, of course, I have this feeling of inner freedom which . . .

SECOND: You say "inner freedom" just once more and I'm going to knock you down.

FIRST: *(retreating)* You're not being fair. Anybody can choose any philosophy that suits him.

SECOND: Nevertheless, I can't stand it any more.

FIRST: Well, I'm warning you . . . I won't defend myself. To defend oneself is to make a choice. I can't permit that. In the name of . . .

SECOND: You can't? Why not? In the name of *what?*

FIRST: *(hesitantly)* In the name of inner free . . . *(The* SECOND GENTLEMAN *attacks the* FIRST GENTLEMAN *who tries to escape along the wall.)* Keep away! Keep your hands to yourself! *(The door opens and the Hand reappears, beckoning to both of them. The* FIRST *and* SECOND GENTLEMEN *stop short.)*

SECOND: Is it me?

FIRST: Or me?

SECOND: Maybe it's you . . .

FIRST: You started it. Obviously justice demands that you . . .

SECOND: Justice? You still think that your idiotic theory is superior?

FIRST: And *you* still think that your . . . your lack of any theory at all . . . that your vulgar pragmatism, will stand up to this test? *(The Hand beckons to them.)*

SECOND: All right, let's go. It wants something again.

FIRST: Very well. We'll soon see who's superior. *(They approach the*

Hand which links them together with a pair of handcuffs. The Hand disappears and the door closes. Dragging the FIRST GENTLEMAN *after him, the* SECOND GENTLEMAN *moves over to the chairs. They sit down heavily and lapse into silence.)*

FIRST: What happened? *(worried)* Are you all right? Do you think it was something serious this time? Well, say something! Please!

SECOND: I'm afraid . . .

FIRST: Of what?

SECOND: So far the Hand has only limited the possibilities of our motion in space. But who can guarantee that next time it won't limit us in something more essential?

FIRST: In what?

SECOND: In time. In our own . . . duration.

FIRST: I don't think so. You would, of course, because, as an advocate of external action, you naturally wear out more quickly. I, on the other hand, retain . . .

SECOND: Not again!

FIRST: Sorry. I didn't mean to irritate you. Do you have a plan?

SECOND: There's only one thing to do.

FIRST: What?

SECOND: Apologize to the Hand.

FIRST: Apologize! What for? We didn't do anything to the Hand. On the contrary, it should . . .

SECOND: That's not important. We still must apologize . . . in general, for no reason at all. To save ourselves, if that'll be any help at all.

FIRST: I can't do it. I needn't give you my reasons for . . .

SECOND: Yes, yes. I know it by heart. By apologizing to the Hand you would be making a choice, a choice would mean limitation, and so on.

FIRST: Yes, that's right.

SECOND: Do as you please. But, in any case, *I* am going to apologize. We must humble ourselves. Perhaps it expects us to.

FIRST: I'd like to, I really would, but you can understand that my principles . . .

SECOND: I've said all I'm going to say.

FIRST: I have it! I've found a way! You see, you'll force me to apologize at the same time you do. That way there won't be any choice on my part. It'll be a simple matter of force.

SECOND: Very well. Consider yourself forced. *(The door opens.)*

FIRST: I think it's coming. *(The Hand appears.)* I wish we had some flowers. *(whispering)* You first. *(They both run up to the Hand. The* SECOND GENTLEMAN *clears his throat in preparation for his apology.)*

SECOND: Dear Hand! I mean, Dear and Most Honorable Hand! We're aware of the fact that the Hand is not here to listen to the likes of us but, nevertheless, we'd like the Hand's permission to address a few words of affection . . . I mean, we'd like to confess to the Hand, somewhat belatedly we realize, but nonetheless sincerely, that we are fully aware of what we're doing and that we deeply apologize for . . . for . . . *(whispering to the* FIRST GENTLEMAN*)* For what?

FIRST: For walking, for moving . . . for everything!

SECOND: For walking, for moving, for . . . I'm expressing myself poorly . . . we deeply apologize for . . . everything . . . that we were . . . that we are . . . that we most heartily . . . for everything . . . for the Hand knows what and we don't . . . because what can we know? . . . what do we know . . . in any case . . . anywhere. Well, if there is anything, anything at all, I most humbly . . . I most emphatically apologize. I kiss the Hand. *(He gives the Hand a ceremonial kiss.)*

FIRST: I'd like to join my friend, though, of course, only in a certain sense, having been forced by my friend. . . . My principles, the Hand knows . . . But though forced, I apologize sincerely, I apologize to the Hand on principle. *(He kisses the Hand. Meanwhile, the door on the other side opens and a Second Hand appears in it. The Second Hand is completely covered by a red glove. It beckons to them. The* SECOND GENTLEMAN *sees it first. Both turn their backs on the First Hand.)*

SECOND: Look! There!

FIRST: Another one!

SECOND: There're always two.

FIRST: It's calling us.

SECOND: Should we go? *(The First Hand covers the head of the* SECOND GENTLEMAN *with a conical hood made of stiff paper.)*

SECOND: I can't see a thing!

FIRST: It's calling us. *(The Second Hand covers the head of the* FIRST GENTLEMAN *with a similar hood.)*

FIRST: It's so dark.

SECOND: When it calls us, we must go. *(stumbling, linked by the handcuffs, they move to center stage. Shuffling and swerving, they move toward the Second Hand.)*

FIRST: The briefcase! We forgot our briefcases!

SECOND: Yes! Yes! The briefcase! Where's my briefcase!

(They stumble blindly toward the chairs, groping for their briefcases. When they finally locate them, they pick them up and move toward the Second Hand. Blackout.)

Two on the Aisle

By RICHARD WATTS Jr.

Avant-Garde Comedy From Poland

The Polish Slawomir Mrozek looks bitterly at the totalitarian state and finds it unworthy of the dignity of tragedy. Avant-garde satire is the proper mood in which to capture its sleazy spirit. So he has written a lunatic farce he calls "Tango," which is about a mad family that might by a long stretch of the imagination be compared to the one Kaufman and Hart wrote of in "You Can't Take It With You," and it opened Saturday night at the off-Broadway Pocket Theater.

Even in the more brilliant production the Royal Shakespeare Company put on in London several years ago, "Tango" wasn't a completely satisfactory play. It sprawls and grows obscure and occasionally seems to become silly just for the sake of silliness. Yet it has a savagely sardonic "black" humor that is almost always bitingly alive and it succeeds in presenting a sense of doomed hopelessness in provocative terms of defiant and blistering scorn.

The Rebel

The family is living in a world that has thrown off all bourgeois conventions, illusions and romanticisms, and yet life remains bleak. Only the son of the household thinks of rebellion, and it will be a revolt to do away with the new conventions and conformities and restore the old ones. As his opening gesture, he wants to bring back the institution of romantic love, courtship and formal marriage, but the girl he has in mind for it is puzzled by the whole idea.

The boy has one ally in an ancient and doddering uncle, who is of scant help. And the youth is a liberal intellectual, which here means that he sees both sides and also develops his own dream of power. His counter-revolution is soon crushed, his philosophical grandmother goes over quietly to her coffin and dies, and the house is taken over by the hitherto meek retainer who rises in his power and seizes the place in the name of ruthless brute force.

The Dance

At the end, the ex-retainer and the ancient uncle are dancing the tango, but I admit I'm not sure where the symbolism of the title comes in. Indeed, there is quite a bit about the strange play concerning which I'm not certain. But it does seem to me that amid the often amusing antics of the theater of the absurd there is a lot of pointed satire amid the pretensions and disillusionments of the totalitarian state, while there is something fascinating in watching the Polish dramatist use this Aesopian method of commenting on conditions in his own country.

"Tango" is competently if not sparkingly acted. Best, I thought, were Stefan Schnabel, as a father who is very complaisant about his wife's amours, and Clifford A. Pellow as the realistic servant. Memories of Ian Helm as the young rebel in the London production rather got in the way of my impression of David Margulies in the role here, but he is reasonably effective, and there is helpful work by Muriel Kirkland, Elizabeth Swain, Lilyan Wilder and Arthur Ed Forman. This is a disturbing play that commands respect.

'Tango'

A comedy by Slawomir Mrozek. Translated from the Polish. Presented by Cantor, Karlweis, Rubin and Kolitz. Directed by Heinz Engels. Setting by Jason Philips. Cast: Muriel Kirkland, David Margulies, Stefan Schnabel, Arthur Ed Forman, Clifford A. Pellow, Elizabeth Swain and Lilyan Wilder.

Opening Tonight . . .

COCK-A - DOODLE - DANDY at the Lyceum. Comedy by Sean O'Casey. Presented by APA Phoenix. Directed by Jack O'Brien and Donald Moffat. Features Patricia Conolly, Keene Curtis, Richard Easton, Donald Moffat, Christine Pickles, Frances Sternhagen, Sydney Walker, Ellis Rabb. Curtain at 7:30.

Lambs Return With 'Foxes'

The Lambs Theater will offer a three-day revival of Lillian Hellman's "Little Foxes" Feb. 13-15 as the second production of the club's season.

Polish Writer Reflects on Living as a Nonperson

By LLOYD GARRISON
Special to The New York Times

PARIS, Jan. 20—There is little about Slawomir Mrozek's manner to suggest a man of European literary fame. He has pride, but is devoid of intellectual pretensions. He has courage, but it is submerged in his insistence that others are far more courageous.

Deliberately, and acutely aware of the consequences, Mr. Mrozek sat at his desk in his Paris flat early last September and wrote letters to the editors of major European newspapers, denouncing his native Poland for its part in the August invasion of Czechoslovakia.

With this stroke of his pen, he committed himself to exile and the status of a stateless person. In Poland, his passport was canceled, his novels, short stories and plays banned from publication and withdrawn from every bookshop and library in the country.

As far as the Polish Government is concerned, Slawomir Mrozek, the writer, no longer exists. And Mrozek the man, yesterday's literary hero, today is vilified in his homeland as Poland's "most infamous traitor."

The first Mrozek play to appear outside Poland since the Czechoslovak affair was staged Saturday at the Pocket Theater, 100 Third Avenue.

The play, called "Tango," is an allegory in three acts that has already deeply moved audiences in Germany, England and France. Clive Barnes, writing in Monday's New York Times, said it was a play "not only to enjoy, but also to ponder on."

Legal No-Man's Land

Much as he would have liked to attend his American premiere, he currently finds himself stranded in a kind of legal no-man's land. He has a temporary French visitor's permit, but can't travel abroad.

"I'm still waiting for an international refugee passport," he said over drinks in his two-room Montmartre flat. "It takes three months and I doubt if it will come through in time."

Mr. Mrozek speaks English, Italian and a little French, and when he talks, even in Polish, he chooses each word with painstaking care. He never raises his voice, he rarely smiles, but when something pleases him his dark eyes twinkle and he unclasps his hands and appears to uncoil, as if momentarily released from the grip of some deep inner tension.

"I left Poland five years ago," he said. "Several of my books had already been banned and I could see the way the situation was evolving. I was right, as it turns out. I didn't say anything about the regime when I left. I took my wife, Maria, to Italy, and we moved to Paris last year for a change.

Like many playwrights, the 38-year-old bearded Pole was reluctant to talk about either the plot or meaning of his works, "Tango" included.

"Let us say it is a bit of a paradox," he said, "about the will to revolt in a permissive society which ends in dictatorship. It is a mixture of the grotesque and the serious and the sad."

The son of a postmaster in a small village outside Cracow, Mr. Mrozek learned his English in school, where he devoured American as well as English literature. But he would not say which American authors he liked most.

"I began with Mark Twain and worked up to the modern writers," he said. "I cannot discuss literature. It is my great weakness."

He was raised a Roman Catholic, but when asked whether he believed in God he replied:

"Let's put it in other words, in terms of a feeling of holiness of life, which is rather vague, I know. My Catholic education was very stiff, with no questioning. I don't think religion is a static theology, it is a pilgrimage, it cannot be absorbed all at once, it cannot be taught, it is an internal experience with a lot of work to it. I am not very advanced in my pilgrimage."

After secondary school, Mr. Mrozek studied architecture, fine arts and painting, then dropped out of university for good because he was "bored."

"Then I started doing cartoons for our leading humor magazine, and wrote on the side," he said. His first volume of short stories, "The Elephant," came out in 1957.

There followed several novels, numerous short stories and 13 plays, most of them one-acters dealing with lonely people up against an overwhelming system.

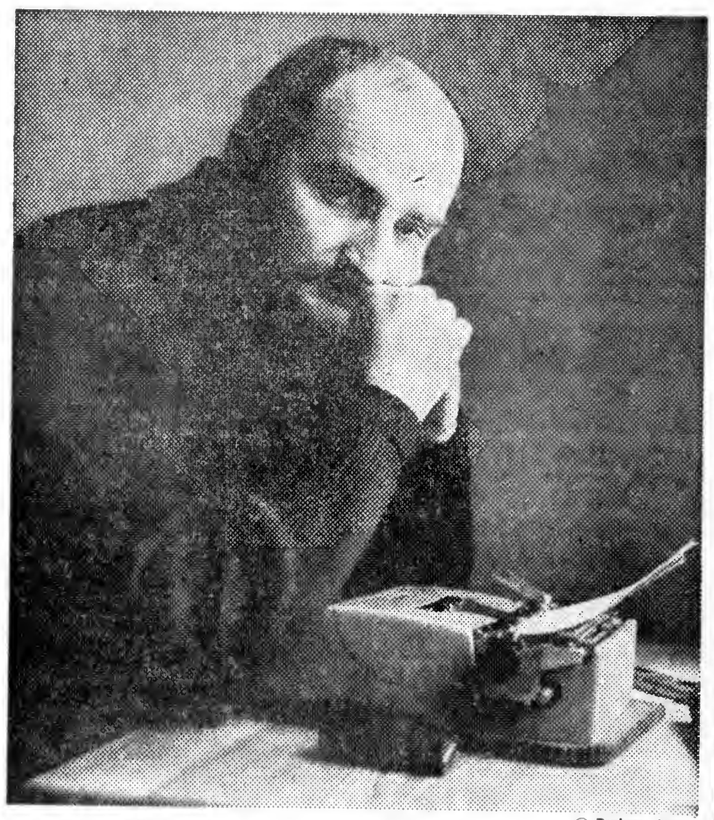
"I will never forget my first visit to the United States" he said. "I was invited to a summer seminar at Harvard in 1959, and spent a month afterwards in New York.

"I liked the city very much but at the same time I have too weak nerves for New York. I used to stand and watch those new buildings going up in the center of Manhattan. It was beautiful. But the noise, I hate noise.

"What draws me to the U.S. is the feeling that your country is at a sort of Shakespearean crossroads. People are ready to kill a Negro—or be killed for a Negro. Whereas in Europe, everyone shakes hands with the Negro, but racism is concealed and the anti-racists just make loud noises.

"The U.S. is still young, still open, with many possibilities and with an elasticity that appeals very much to me. Maybe, some day I will live there. It would have to be New York. But it would be very hard on the nerves."

He concluded with a question as he opened the door to say good-by. "Tell me," he said, "is there anywhere in New York where one can find a quiet place?"



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Slawomir Mrozek, whose play opened here, at desk in Paris

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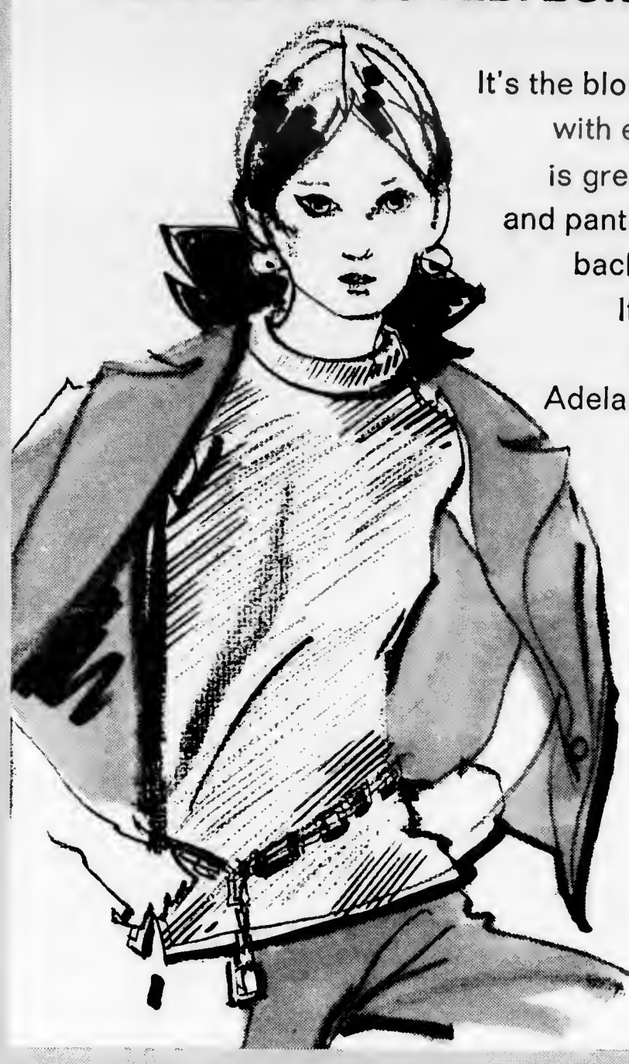

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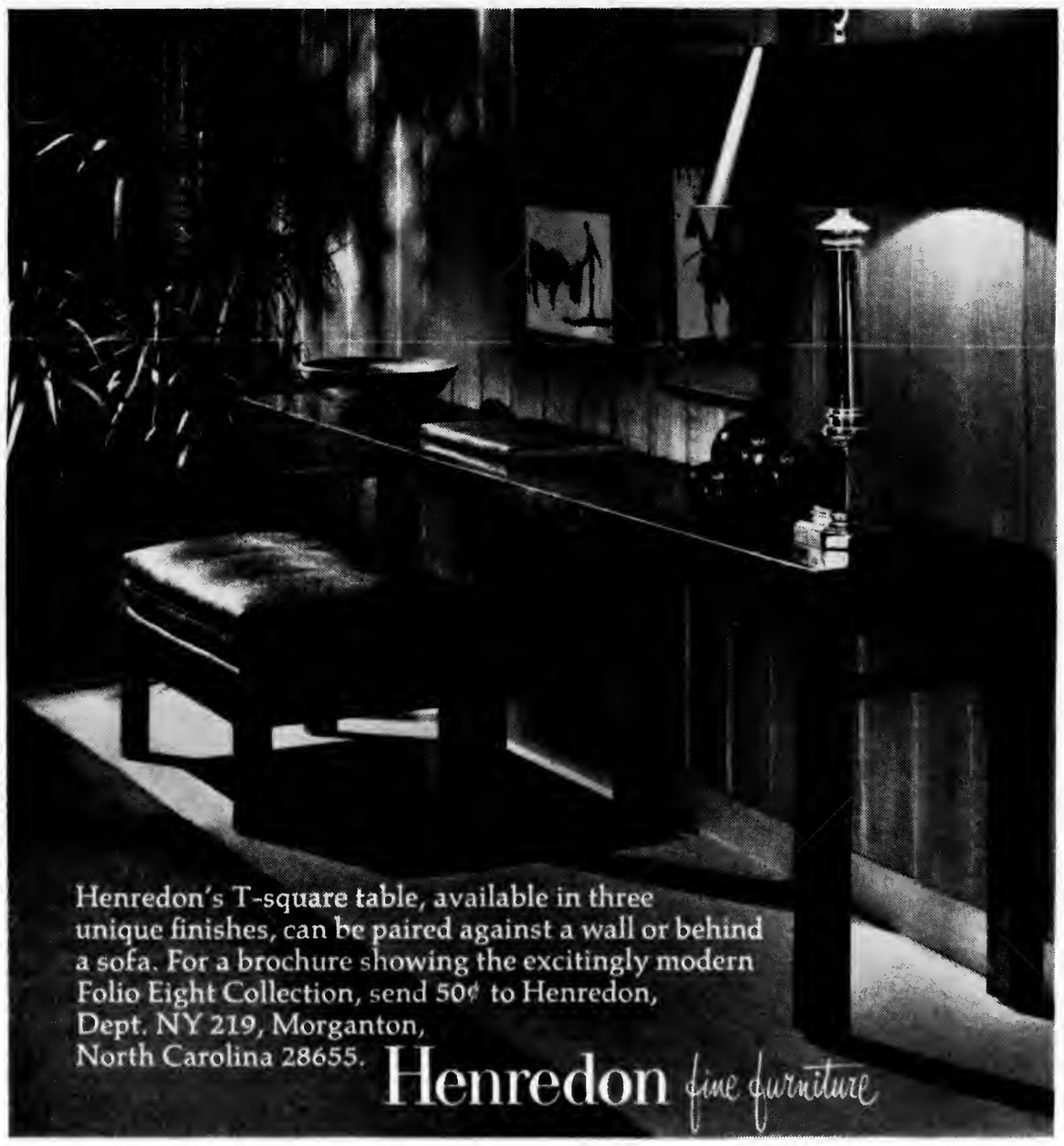

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was saying a couple of weeks ago, in connection with Brecht's "The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui," that making fun of the Hitlers of this world is not, on the evidence, a useful way of reducing their roles in history. Evil is stronger than art, and I am afraid that even if "Red, White, and Maddox" were ten times as devastating as it is, Governor Maddox would feel it as the merest momentary irritating pinprick. Politicians are not laughed out of office; they are voted out. Still, it takes courage to voice one's loathing for the possessors of power, especially when that power may be exercised against one by indirect and legal-seeming means. I salute the Theatre Atlanta company not so much for the quality of its howling as for daring to howl at all.

—Brendan Gill

OFF BROADWAY

Turkey Trot

"Tango," by the Polish dramatist Slawomir Mrozek, opened in Warsaw in 1965, after having been done in a couple of theatres in Yugoslavia and elsewhere in Poland, and since then it has been a hit in Paris, London, Düsseldorf, Genoa, and Helsinki. Last week, it opened here, at the little Pocket Theatre, on Third Avenue, in a dim production that at best merely indicates the play without really doing it. "Tango" is a domestic tragi-farce whose political and moral implications are so strong that it must inescapably be considered an allegory, even by those of us who would go miles out of our way not to consider anything an allegory. The story concerns a young man named Arthur who comes home from medical school to find his aristocratic family living a life of self-indulgent bohemianism. His grandmother (in a long evening gown, sneakers, and a red deerstalker cap) spends most of her time at the card table with his granduncle and the butler. His mother, carrying a long cigarette holder and dressed as a flapper of the twenties, vaguely drifts in and out, and sleeps with the butler at night. His father, who wanders around in pajama bottoms that are loosely pinned together, tends to summon the family abruptly to original Punch and Judy shows that are rife with symbols and end in pistol shots, and to give unsolicited orations on Art and Freedom. The girl whom Arthur loves slouches about in tights and a floppy shirt. The action has that capricious quality—a cagey, arbitrary playfulness—that has little to do with humor, and is so often

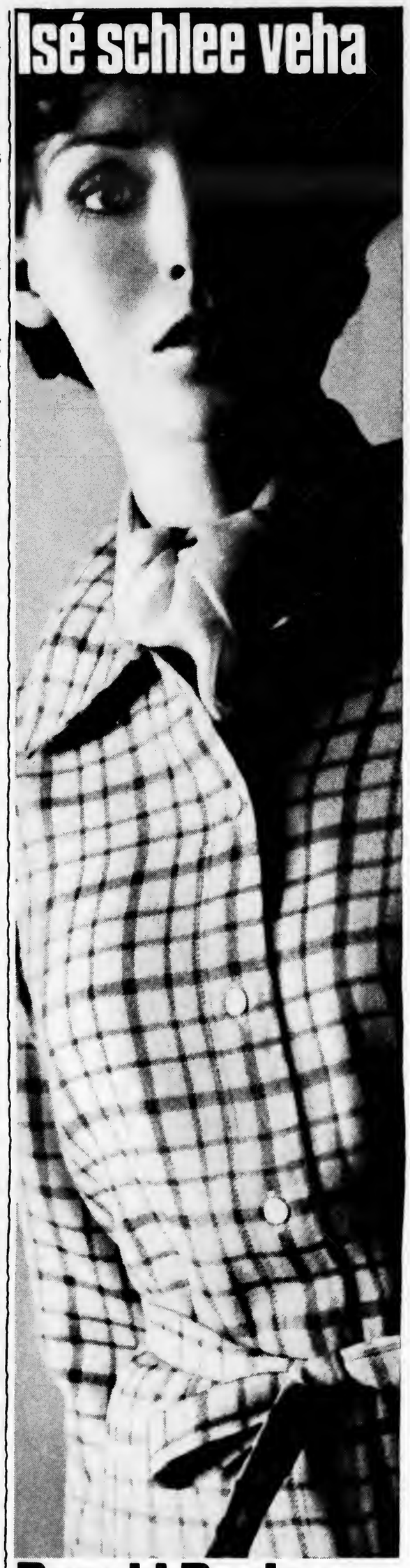
smoke, and whiskey change color, to say nothing of turning a pretty girl into a top hat.

ONE of the pleasantest of the many pleasant things about the new musical "Celebration," at the Ambassador, is that it *is* new—it hasn't been lifted from a novel, play, movie, biography, comic strip, memoir, or any other non-theatrical source. It is also new in pretending to be antediluvianly old; it wishes us to perceive that the most original thing about it is that it contains nothing original. With a fierceness of intention that nearly always keeps it safe from the hazards of Camp and cuteness, it strives to achieve the grand, irrational simplicities of myth. It is a sort of smiling ghost story about the contest between youth and age, love and death, and the bare bones of the plot it unfolds surely antedate Gilgamesh: A penniless orphan boy falls in love with a pretty girl who is sorely tempted by the luxuries that will be hers if, forgetting the boy, she consents to surrender her body to a senilely lascivious moneybags. Which of them will she finally choose? For how many millennia now has that proved a question worth our waiting to learn the answer to?

The opening scene sets the eerie, timeless tone of the evening by seeming to take place somewhere far back in the misty reaches of prehistory—a prehistory that uncannily contains internal-combustion engines, iron wrecking balls, corsets, and artificial flowers. Lithe, masked creatures, bizarrely decked out in costumes of furs and rags, perform a ritual dance on and under a crudely fashioned wooden platform, which, hung with lank curtains, provides the single setting for the musical. A mountebank sings the title song, "Celebration;" what we are urged to celebrate turns out to be not a particular event but life itself. A sufficiently square message, as mythic messages are apt to be, and there are squarer ones to come—there is even a spirited attack on the theory that God is dead and a no less spirited defense of the preposterous theory that money cannot buy happiness. An odd work for the likes of 1969, but a welcomely merry, tuneful, and imaginative one, and I give my best thanks to Harvey Schmidt, who wrote the music, and Tom Jones, who wrote the book and lyrics and took charge of the direction. They are an exceedingly gifted pair (they are the begetters of "The Fantasticks," which is soon to start its tenth year downtown), and this makes all the more deplorable their occasional lapses into gratuitous vulgarity. There are a couple of lines and a couple of sight gags in "Celebration" that they ought to be thoroughly ashamed of and that I suspect them of being alone in the world in thinking funny.

"Celebration" is fortunate in having at the head of its large company four attractive performers—Susan Watson, Ted Thurston, Keith Charles, and Michael Glenn-Smith, the last of whom was, within the year, a stock boy at Best's. It is also fortunate in having had Ed Wittstein design the setting, costumes, and lighting. I don't know whether he has ever visited Lascaux; it's plain that he would be perfectly at home there.

"RED, WHITE, AND MADDOX," at the Cort, is a loud, brash, and, for half its length, harshly funny musical satire, aimed with rage and contempt straight at Lester Maddox, former proprietor of the Pickrick Restaurant in Atlanta and the present Governor of Georgia. The authors of this impetuous broadside, which they modestly define as "A Thing with Music," are Don Tucker and Jay Broad, respectively the resident composer and the artistic director of the Theatre Atlanta company, and the leading role is played by Jay Garner, who warmed up for it last year by playing the lead in the company's successful production of "MacBird!" The first act of "Red, White, and Maddox" traces Maddox's rise from humble, happy bigotry at the Pickrick to the moment when, having, with the help of his crony God, been elected to the governorship, he anticipates assuming the Presidency and so winning the country back from the Niggah-lovin' Commies in Washington. The second act purports to depict the consequences of having a Lester Maddox in the White House, and here the authors' bump of invention has failed them. We are in the by now overly familiar Strangelove country, and Mr. Garner's capering, doll-faced, squeaky-voiced Maddox is neither mad enough nor Snopes enough to hold our interest. I



Donald Davies of Dublin.

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found in the work of Middle European writers, and it deals with Arthur's fierce and ultimately disastrous attempts to impose some order on his disorderly relatives, starting out with a conventional wedding for himself. (The girl sees no reason on earth to bother marrying him.) He also forces his father to confront, with a gun, the mother and the butler, although his father prefers to sidestep the issue and romanticizes the butler as "the natural man." The hero's deadly enemy is the butler, and his only ally is his granduncle, a conspiratorial reactionary. There is a struggle for power. By the time the play is over, the grandmother has just lain down and died, and the hero is dead, too. As the curtain falls, the butler, now the surly boss of the place, is dancing a tango over his body, hand in hand with the granduncle.

"Tango," as you can see, is a play about such abstractions as liberty, responsibility, morality, order, force, violence, and, ultimately, totalitarianism, but it is inventive and theatrical—the kind of play that offers endless possibilities for style and brilliance to the actors, who must supply the flesh and blood and emotion. There is no general style of performance in the production at the Pocket, and for this sad fact the director must be blamed (though not necessarily named). Among the actors, Muriel Kirkland, as the fey grandmother, and Stefan Schnabel, as the artist father, certainly make slapdash bohemianism attractive—so attractive that there is no contest and, consequently, no play. Perhaps they are meant to be grotesques, but, rightly or wrongly, they come over as human and entertaining (a couple of strays from "You Can't Take It With You"), and they throw the whole play out of whack—mercifully, in this instance. It would be interesting to see it in whack, though. Mr. Mrozek is indeed a dramatist, and "Tango" is a real play and perhaps an important one—whether you like that kind of thing or not. The question then arises: Is it better to see an important play poorly done or to skip it, on the chance that someday it will be done right? My own choice would be to skip it.

—Edith Oliver

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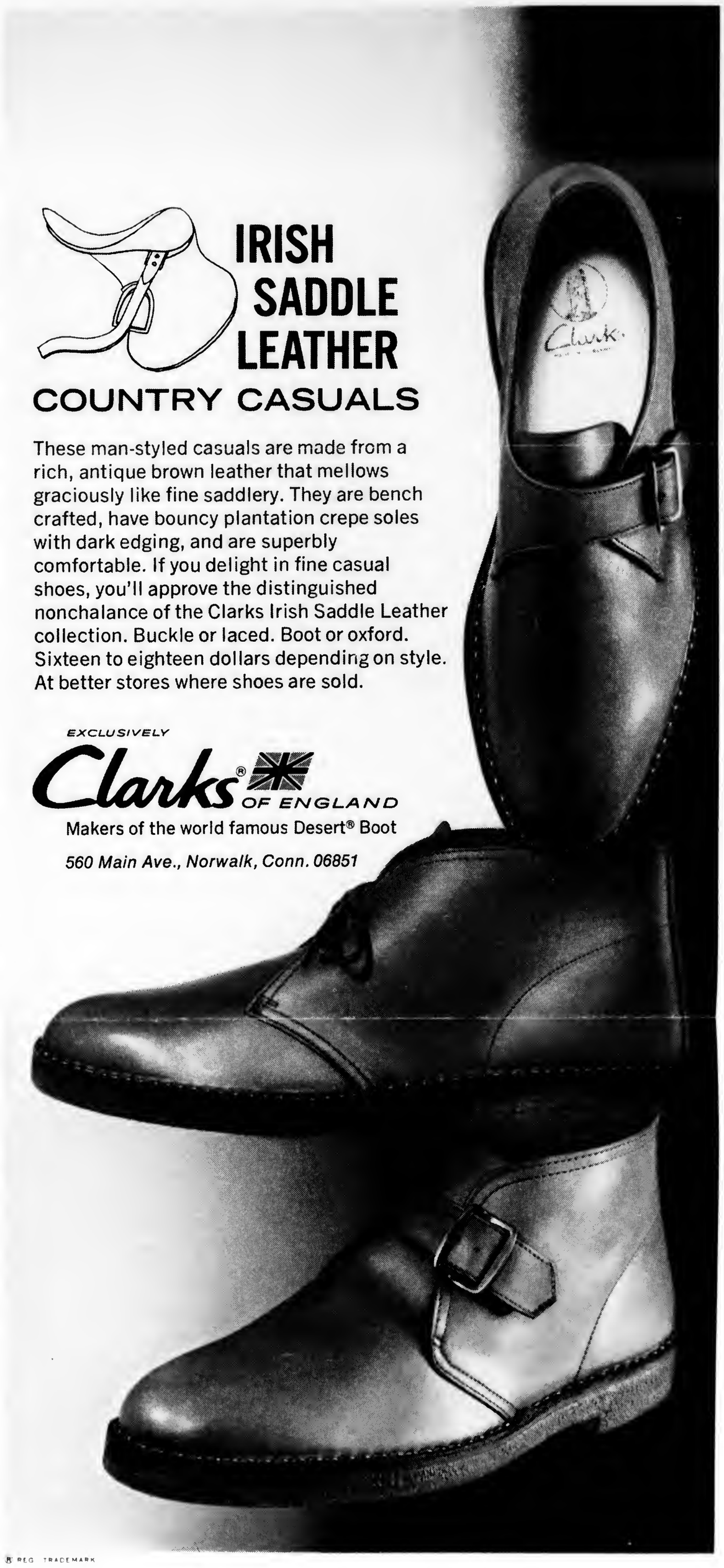
Vienna, Jan. 3 (AP)—"Where is the Sigmund Freud monumeent?" thhe pretty American co-ed asked. "Who is Freuf?" the puzzled Viennese replied.

A new Freul Society wants to change all this.—*Philadelphia Inquirer.*

Not a bad idea.



POLISH ALLEGORY COMING TO STAGE

'Tango' Will Be Presented Here and in St. Paul

By SAM ZOLOTOW

"Tango," an avant-garde allegorical comedy by Slawomir Mrozek, will be presented here in November. The new St. Paul branch of the Tyrone Guthrie Repertory Company of Minneapolis will also perform the work by the young Polish dramatist who was educated at Harvard University. That production is scheduled for December.

The sponsors here, Arthur Cantor, Ninon Tallon Karlweis and Martin Rubin, lessees of Off Broadway's Pocket and Gramercy Art Theaters, have not decided where it will be staged or how it will be cast.

"Tango" was first produced in Warsaw in 1965. The Poles likened it to the history of their troubled country since the nineteen-thirties. However, the Communist Government did not view it as a political commentary. The plot concerns a ne'er-do-well family and an ambitious young son who strives to improve conditions.

The production has been put on in Düsseldorf and Zurich and in London by the Royal Shakespeare Company. A French version is running in Paris, and a German presentation will open there next week. Mr. Cantor plans to leave for Paris next week to see both. He has seen the London production.

That translation, by Nicholas Bethell and Tom Stoppard, will not be used here. A new one is being written by Ralph Mannheim. Off Broadway previously saw two of Mr. Mrozek's short plays, "The Policeman" and "At Sea."

Stage: Mrozek's 'Tango' Opens at Pocket Theater

East European Comedy Is Play to Ponder

By CLIVE BARNES

SLAWOMIR MROZEK'S comedy "Tango" opened at the Pocket Theater on Saturday night. It should be around for a long time because it is one of the most rewarding plays to come out of Eastern Europe in many years. Mr. Mrozek is Polish, but he has lived in Genoa and Paris in recent years and last year, after the Czechoslovak crisis, his Polish passport was withdrawn following his denunciation of the part played by Poland in the occupation of Czechoslovakia.

The play has been seen all over Europe, and last season was given by the Minnesota Theater Company in St. Paul. This present production has been staged by a German director, Heinz Engels, and is based upon the original Warsaw staging directed by Erwin Axer.

In such circumstances it may seem almost churlish to complain about a production that clearly has—if only at second-hand—the approval of the author. Yet in some ways the play did not seem so well acted here as in St. Paul. It is still, however, a most amusing and most engrossing work, and one that should certainly be seen.

●

To one of his earlier plays, "The Police," Mr. Mrozek appended a note that said, in part: "This play does not contain anything except what it actually contains. This means it is not an allusion to anything, it is not a metaphor, and it should be read as such." Whether "Tango" should be read in such a literal fashion—as some maintain — is doubtful. Yet I think we should also beware of reading too specific a significance into the play's action.

The play is concerned with the uses of force and the rise of totalitarianism. A family—at first glance a little like the household of "You Can't Take It With You"—is seen in its decline and fall.

The family is headed, after a fashion, by Eleanor and Stomil, two aging Bohemians who can still remember the days when they made love in the first row at a performance of "Tannhäuser" by way of a social protest. But the days of protest are now past and Stomil, a slob of a man with dreams of past glories, and Eleanor, who is having a love affair with the brutish but goodnatured manservant, Eddie, seem social castaways.

Their son, Arthur, is a rebel who naturally rebels in the only way he can in such an anarchistically permissive society—by being ultraconservative, aggressively conventional. Soon Arthur, sickened by the permissiveness he sees around him, seizes control of the household by force. But his is an intellectual rebellion, even though it does have the backing of his uncle, a fanatic supporter of the old way of life, who is desperately reactionary in his desire to see the clock set back.

In the end it is not Arthur who triumphs, but Eddie, the brutish, "natural" man who, when the right time comes, breaks Arthur like a man killing a rabbit and at the end of the play, caught in some danse macabre, is to be seen dancing a tango with the old, autocratic uncle.

This parable of permissiveness leading to decadence and decadence leading to violence and authoritarianism is perhaps particularly apt for us today. But the parable is wrapped up in a play of surprising richness of texture.

Mr. Mrozek makes allusions here to plays as diverse as "Hamlet," "The Seagull" and "The Cherry Orchard," and it is part of the play's unusual quality that it has this very special flavor, which is also affected by many theater-of-the-absurd devices. The resulting play is strange but fascinating, full of dramatic surprises and even more full of ingenious ideas and concepts. It is a play not only to enjoy but also—and this is surely rarer—to ponder on.

●

Mr. Engel's staging uses the original Polish designs by Eva Starowieska in American adaptations, and the results are very handsome. More perhaps than any American production I can think of, it has caught exactly the faded grandeur of Eastern Europe.

Mr. Engel's direction was clear and unfussy, but although David Margulies did well as the paranoid Arthur, the rest of the acting did not have quite the distinction that the play—idiomatically translated by Teresa Dzeduszycka and Ralph Manheim—really deserved in its New York debut.

Even with reservations about the performances, I can still recommend it wholeheartedly.

Elizabeth Swain, David Margulies and Lilyan Wilder

Original Polish Staging Is Followed Here

The Cast

TANGO, a play by Slawomir Mrozek, translated by Teresa Dzeduszycka and Ralph Manheim. Staged by Heinz Engels, based on the original staging by Erwin Axer. Setting by Jason Phillips; costumes by John E. Hirsch; lighting by Paul Holland, based on the original production designed by Eva Starowieska. Dance arranged by Jon Devlin. Presented by Arthur Cantor, Ninon Karlweis and Martin Rubin, in association with Zvi Kolitz. At the Pocket Theater, 100 Third Avenue.

Eugenia ..... Muriel Kirkland
Eddie ..... Clifford A. Pellow
Eugene ..... Arthur Ed Forman
Arthur ..... David Margulies
Eleanor ..... Lilyan Wilder
Stomil ..... Stefan Schnabel
Ala ..... Elizabeth Swain

NEW YORK'S MOST ACCLAIMED MUSICAL!

Sorry, Wrong Rumba

KINGSTON, R. I.

FOR THE PAST two years, the University of Rhode Island Summer Theatre Festival has been the summer home of the Theatre Company of Boston. The latter has, in a few seasons of operation, established itself as an enterprising group undertaking many original plays and giving American premieres to such outstanding new works from abroad as Ann Jellicoe's *The Knack*, John Arden's *Armstrong's Last Goodnight*, and *Live Like Pigs*, a production the Theatre Company of Boston successfully presented for a whole summer at an off-Broadway playhouse.

Now at the Festival, this company is offering the first American showing of *Tango*, a much-heralded new play by thirty-seven-year-old Polish playwright, Slawomir Mrozek. It is, as it turns out, a most difficult task, for *Tango*, in Ralph Manheim's translation, emerges as a disorderly play about disorder. It is also a most timely work, however, dealing with a truly contemporary situation.

The situation is simply that a frustrated representative of today's youth, Arthur, finds himself unable to act in a household where his parents practice a kind of laissez-faire liberalism in which they embrace present fads but at the same time refuse to throw out the relics of the past. Furthermore, the pretty girl he would like to marry is not at all interested in such formality or responsibility. Instead, she, too, has accepted the modern attitude of seeking only sexually gratifying experience for its own sake.

Arthur decides that his only salvation is a return to the values of the past. Fiercely he sets about it, enlisting the help of his aged uncle. He stops the adultery between a servant, who is treated as one of the family, and his mother; demands that his father at least

button up his mod pajamas; insists that his grandmother change from a swinger into a gray-haired little old lady; and puts the servant back in livery. As for his treatment of the girl, he fights down his carnal instincts and persuades her to agree to an old-fashioned wedding in virginal white.

All this seems to be poking fun at the sort of modern behavior many Americans have to some degree adopted, and also we see as ridiculous the notion that a nominal return to the traditions of the past could be a permanent, satisfactory solution to the present tendency to nihilism and chaos. Unfortunately, we get the idea much too quickly, and the comic manifestations that follow are only as effective as the inventiveness of the actors and director David Wheeler can make them.

One of the best moments comes in a scene in which, after unsuccessfully tempting Arthur with her near-nudity, Lisa Richards—as the sensuous girl—throws an old blanket over her head, on top of which she perches a derby hat, and proceeds to seduce Arthur. It is amusing proof that the idea of sex can be more appealing than an anatomical banquet. Similarly, Paul Benedict uses basic comic technique to make hilarious the cuckolded father's refusal to take the called-for action.

But the play's long third act changes in tone, with the author failing to show us the process whereby Arthur comes to a realization that his plan won't work. Instead, he merely appears disillusioned and drunk, and his conversion to a world governed by power exercised for its own sake is unconvincing. Perhaps in postwar Poland this appears as a reflection of native political conditions, and therefore requires no justification. Here, however, the play has until this point seemed less related to politics than to social conventions, and while we do not ask the playwright to solve Arthur's dilemma, we do want to comprehend and believe the absurd consequences of his logical and passionate endeavors.

Nevertheless, *Tango* is a play worth wrestling with, and one would hope that Mr. Mrozek might be encouraged to revise it before its scheduled New York presentation this winter.

* * *

STRATFORD, CONN.

THE production by the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre of *The Merchant of Venice* is the most gently merry version of what in our day has become a darker work than Shakespeare ever intended. Under Michael Kahn's direction, Morris Carnovsky has dropped much of the bitterness out of his greatest of all modern Shylocks to bring the role more in balance with the comic dimensions of the other characters. And Ed Wittstein has designed silver and gold Venetian elements to keep the proceedings fanciful.

The best scene is the one in which Bassanio chooses the right casket, thanks to the prompting of singers who chant "knell, knell" as an admonishing "no, no" when he is about to pick the wrong box. Barbara Baxley is amusingly wicked and furtive as Portia and entertainingly mocks the too familiar melodrama of the trial scene by waiting longer than one would in real life to stop the knife-poised villain with "Tarry, a little." One suspects that this style could have been used to advantage throughout, but Shakespeare aficionados might have objected. As it stands, the compromise is at least a sunny and leisurely pleasant performance of this comedy.

—HENRY HEWES.

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highly lucid discussion of U.S. foreign policy in Vietnam from 1941-1966, he underscores what he calls "the illusion of American omnipotence," and goes on to catalogue the unreality of seeking an "American solution" to world dilemmas. It's an unsettling and important evaluation of the U.S. role in Southeast Asia by one who sees events in terms of the historical continuum rather than as day-to-day happenings. Whereas Schlesinger favors de-escalating the war, Howard Zinn in *Vietnam: The Logic of Withdrawal* (Beacon, $1.25) calls for unilateral action, in which our troops are promptly recalled. He defends his own arguments by tackling such often presented opposing theories as the comparison with Munich or the dominoes strategy idea. A different viewpoint is that of Chester A. Bain, USIA official in Vietnam and author of *Vietnam: The Roots of Conflict* (Spectrum, $1.95). Bain refutes the Viet Cong as a people's popular uprising, seeing it instead as a part of international Communism adapted to that country's particular needs and attitudes.

One of the most engrossing if disheartening books about Vietnam is *The Other Side* (Signet, 95¢), in which Staughton Lynd and Thomas Hayden report on their much publicized 1965 trip to North Vietnam. A chilling interview with a captured U.S. airman, the fervor of a teen-aged girl who tells how she plans to shoot down American planes, the widespread belief that the United States commits wartime atrocities all serve to illustrate the vast gulf preventing international harmony.

Also noted: A new, enlarged edition of *Peace in Vietnam* (Hill & Wang, $1.25), the American Friends Service Committee report on "another year of escalation," in which the conflict "has become very largely an American war." This updated report concludes that "the course of the war is leading toward American occupation of a devastated South Vietnam for an indefinite number of years where guerrilla activity and terrorism will continue unless repressed by totalitarian methods." The most cheerful note is struck by a minor book written in a major key, *Lucky-Lucky* (Crest, 60¢), a gentle story by nurse Marva Hasselblad, with Dorothy Brandon, about the people she came to know in a rural South Vietnam hospital.

Summertime

S. A. Robbins goes a long way toward proving that old saw about the best things in life. Her new handbook, *See America Free* (Bantam, $1), lures the spirited traveler through fifty states and hundreds of activities that adults and youngsters might enjoy viewing. Iron digging at the Mesabi Range, horse-breeding farms in Kentucky, general stores in New Hampshire, and wine-tasting sprees in California are only a few of the sights awaiting the pennywise and curious. For the more adventurous vacationer, *The Sierra Club Wilderness Handbook* (Ballantine, 75¢) really puts it on the line: complete information about ways to follow the rugged road, on a burro or with knapsack. Just around the corner from the picnic parks lies a primeval forest waiting to be trafficked by the hale and hearty.

Peter L. Dixon's *Men and Waves* (Ballantine, 75¢) calls upon such experts as James Michener and the late Eugene Burdick to explain the mystique of surfing. An energetic anthology by and for enthusiasts. There's no more salty book than Robert Manry's *Tinkerbelle* (Dell, 75¢). It's all about the kind of courage needed to sail a sixteen-foot sloop across the Atlantic alone, by one who achieved the trick.

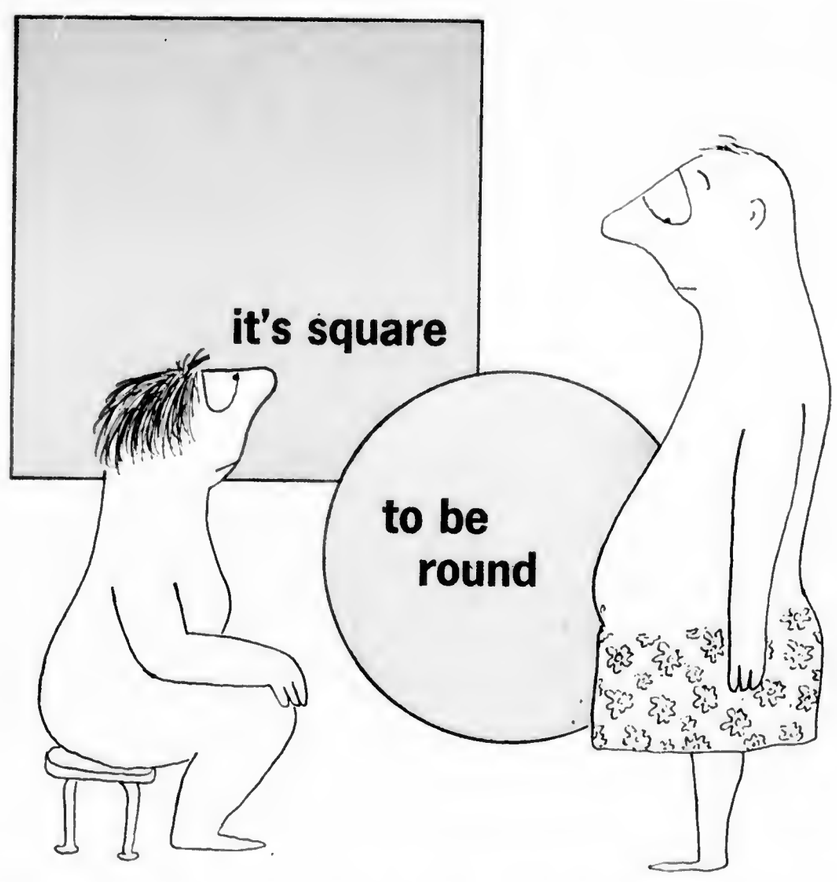
Mark and Roberta Ames's *Barbecues* (Paperback Library, 50¢) offers those who don't plan to stir from their backyard fresh ideas for the same old cookouts, including tasty fruit-and-meat kabobs and a recipe for fiery hot frankfurts.

Literary Lives

Some of the world's nastiest literary biographies have been written by the late lamented's kinfolk. A perfect example of the waspish recollection is Robin Maugham's account of his famous uncle in *Somerset and All the Maughams* (Signet, 95¢). Nephew Robin spares no detail of Uncle Willie's egocentricity, his aversion to women, his callousness, as when learning of his divorced wife's death he stopped his card game just long enough to sing, "'Tra la la, no more alimony, tra la la." Still, this was the witty and engaging man of the world who noted in farewell that "Dying is a very dull, dreary affair. And my advice to you is to have nothing whatever to do with it."

An altogether admiring reminiscence is *My Brother, Ernest Hemingway* (Premier, 75¢), in which Leicester Hemingway recalls growing up in an atmosphere both middle class and Midwestern. From boyhood outings on Lake Michigan to the frenzy of wartime Madrid, Leicester seemed always aware of something unique about his older brother, and his acceptance of the difference between them is often most touching.

Robert Frost, the controversial poet is the subject of an informative, one-volume biography. In *Robert Frost: The Aim Was Song* (Apollo, $1.95), Jean Gould reviews the highlights of a long lifetime, emphasizing always the seemingly simple writer's essential sophistication and intellectuality.



"It's In to Be Thin, It's Out to Be Stout" is the leitmotif of *It's Square to Be Round* (Pacific Coast Publishers/Menlo Park, Calif., $1.95). Written by the anonymous Dr. G. and whimsically illustrated with Sandy Heckinger's upbeat line drawings, this new "textbook on fatsology" dispels all fads and crash diets in favor of a 1,000-calorie-per-day regime. Funny, even corny, it's a genuinely cheerful guidebook of tips, advice, and pure solace to weight-watching America.

TIME LISTINGS

TELEVISION

Wednesday, February 5

HALLMARK HALL OF FAME (NBC, 7:30-9 p.m.).* David McCallum, Ossie Davis and George Grizzard star in *Teacher, Teacher,* an original drama by Allan Sloane, about the struggle to teach a mentally retarded teen-ager played by Billy Schulman.

TURN-ON (ABC, 8:30-9 p.m.). A computer hosts and Tim Conway guest stars in the première of a new series that promises to be "a visual-comedic assault on the people who watch it." Whether it also gets charged for battery remains to be seen.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MOVIE (ABC, 9-11 p.m.). Peter Ustinov, Kirk Douglas, Jean Simmons, Laurence Olivier, and Charles Laughton star in the film about pagan Rome, *Spartacus* (1960). The second half is shown on *Sunday Night Movie.*

Thursday, February 6

THAT GIRL (ABC, 8-8:30 p.m.). Family night. Marlo is joined by three other Thomases: her sister Terre, brother Tony and daddy Danny.

NET PLAYHOUSE (NET, 8-9 p.m.). A French-made dramatized documentary, *The Boss's Son,* deals with the predictable demise of the romance between a textile magnate's son and one of his father's factory girls.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, WORLD? (ABC, 9-10 p.m.). Dean Jones hosts the première of a weekly satirical review that takes pokes at people, places, times, trends and morals. *Mission Impossible's* Martin Landau and Barbara Bain are guest stars.

Friday, February 7

THIS IS TOM JONES! (ABC, 7:30-8:30 p.m.). Tom Jones hosts the première of his own weekly variety hour, with guests Peter Sellers, Joey Heatherton, Mary Hopkin, Richie Pryor and The Moody Blues.

GENERATION GAP (ABC, 8:30-9 p.m.). For some reason, the producers claim to have invented a new game: people over 30 match wits with those under, as they try to determine how much they really know about each others' cultures.

NBC EXPERIMENT IN TELEVISION (NBC, 10-11 p.m.). "This is Sholom Aleichem" stars Jack Gilford as the noted Jewish writer and Nancy Walker and David Burns as several of his characters in this exploration of the life, work and personality of the writer.

Saturday, February 8

THE BOB HOPE DESERT CLASSIC (NBC, 6-7 p.m.). The fourth round of the annual golf tournament, live from Indian Wells Country Club in Palm Springs, Calif. Final round on Sunday, 4:30-6 p.m.

Sunday, February 9

CBS CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL (CBS, 1:30-2:30 p.m.). *The Lupinek Case,* a Czechoslovak film about some missing puppets and their savior.

THE 21ST CENTURY (CBS, 6-6:30 p.m.). "Stranger Than Science" shows what science fiction once predicted and how much of it came true.

MAN AND HIS UNIVERSE (ABC, 7-8 p.m.). "The View from Space" depicts how man's view of the earth has expanded via space exploration and how science interprets what man now sees.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (CBS, 9-11:15 p.m.). The Royal Shakespeare Company makes the dream come true for television audiences.

FRED ASTAIRE SHOW (NBC, 10-11 p.m.). A delightful hour with the man who is "Top Hat, White Tie and Tails." Repeat.

Monday, February 10

NET JOURNAL (NET, 9-10 p.m.). "The Sixth Paul" examines the Pope and his stand on birth control through the eyes of bishops, priests and laymen.

HEART ATTACK (ABC, 10-11 p.m.). This ABC News Special on the nation's heart-attack victims explores their relationships with doctors, adjustments with their families and the road to recovery.

Tuesday, February 11

N.Y.P.D. (ABC, 9:30-10 p.m.). James Earl Jones guests in "Candy Man," Part 1, as the director of a narcotics-rehabilitation center in a residential neighborhood that becomes aroused when the patients are suspected of a series of robberies.

* All times E.S.T.

THEATER

On Broadway

CELEBRATION, by Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt, the co-creators of *The Fantasticks,* is a charmer for sophisticates who have never quite forsaken the magic realm of childhood. Potemkin, a master of ceremonies winningly played by Keith Charles, presides over a land of enchantment peopled by a handsome blond Orphan, a crestfallen Angel, a bored and impotent Mr. Rich and a group of Revelers. With a straight melodic line and the unpretentiously apt lyrics of the songs, the play is one of those good things that come in small packages.

COCK-A-DOODLE DANDY is a Sean O'Casey play that, with its zany unconcern with sequiturs, probabilities or dramatic *p*s and *q*s, has rarely been staged during the 20 years since it was written. The players of the APA Repertory Company make this blast at what O'Casey felt was wrong with Ireland into a rollicking, rumbustious piece of theater.

HADRIAN VII is a dramatization of Frederick William Rolfe's novel, *Hadrian the Seventh.* Playwright Peter Luke makes Rolfe the hero of his own story; he is an eccentric misfit who, after being rejected twice for the priesthood, develops the fantasy that he becomes Pope. In a stunning performance that is a paradigm of the elegant best in English acting style, Alec McCowen manages to evoke for Rolfe a sense of pity and affection.

PROMISES, PROMISES is a slick, amiable and derivative musical based on the film *The Apartment.* Jerry Orbach is splendid as the tall, gangling anti-hero, but the rhythms of Burt Bacharach's score sound rather like sporadic rifle fire.

JIMMY SHINE. Playwright Murray Schisgal has created a totally transparent character; to see him once is to know him totally. What makes Jimmy more winning than his fate is Dustin Hoffman's bravura performance as the luckless adventurer.

FORTY CARATS is precisely the sort of show that people always say they want to see in order to forget the trials and tribulations of the day. The comedy stars Julie Harris as a half-smitten, half-reluctant lady, ardently wooed by Marco St. John, a lad almost half her age.

Off Broadway

TANGO, by Polish playwright Slawomir Mrozek, has David Margulies as a young man eager to exercise the sacred right of youth to rebel; but he finds that his totally permissive home life leaves him nothing to rebel against. Despite stilted direction and a somewhat awkward translation, the play is one of those rare and engrossing dramas that pay an evening-long courtesy call on the playgoer's mind.

LITTLE MURDERS is a revival of Cartoonist Jules Feiffer's first full-length play. Though it still seems a series of animated cartoons spliced together, Director Alan Arkin gives it a breath-catchingly funny air, a surrealistic style and an incredibly fast pace.

TO BE YOUNG, GIFTED AND BLACK is something of a milestone in the current black-white confrontation. In a tribute to the late Lorraine Hansberry, put together from her own writings, the able interracial cast puts on a performance that reflects her hot anger at indignity and injustice as well as her concern for humanity.

DAMES AT SEA. Bernadette Peters, aided by an engaging cast, is naive little Ruby who comes to the Broadway "jungle," determined to "tap her way to stardom" in this friendly parody of the movie-musicals of the '30s.

CINEMA

RED BEARD. Japan's Akira Kurosawa is one of the world's greatest film makers, and in this deceptively simple story about the spiritual growth of a young doctor he has made one of his greatest films. Kurosawa's techniques are impeccable, and his actors—especially the justly famed Toshiro Mifune—are among the most accomplished ever to appear on screen.

GRAZIE ZIA is a flashy first film by young (25) Italian Film Maker Salvatore Samperi. His theme is moral and spiritual decadence and his style is already accomplished, but the film is too repetitious and vague to be entirely satisfying.

THE SHAME. Ingmar Bergman examines war and the artistic conscience in his 29th film. The visual imagery is brilliantly desolate, and the performances—by Max von Sydow, Gunnar Björnstrand and Liv Ullman—are perfectly orchestrated.

THE FIXER is actually a 20th century Job, who becomes, to his own surprise, something of a hero. John Frankenheimer directs this adaptation of Bernard Malamud's novel with impressive force, while such actors as Alan Bates (in the title role), Dirk Bogarde and Ian Holm play difficult parts with vigorous dedication.

FACES. The purgatory of modern, middle-aged marriage is depicted by Writer-Director John Cassavetes with an obsessive eye for surface realism. His film has an air of grainy honesty, but his characters are so obsessed with themselves that they leave little room for audience empathy.

THE NIGHT THEY RAIDED MINSKY'S is a sassy valedictory valentine to oldtime burlesque. The tone of the film is predominantly affectionate, and excellent performances by Jason Robards, Norman Wisdom, Britt Ekland, Harry Andrews and Joseph Wiseman contribute to the revelry.

THE FIREMEN'S BALL. What looks at first to be a simple, funny little anecdote about a group of firemen planning a party for

ACT Fields Two New Plays By Polish Writer

by Florence Ekstrand

Slawomir Mrozek is a Polish writer who writes short stories that read like plays and plays that sound like fables.

Last night A Contemporary Theatre at First Ave. W. and W. Roy St. premiered two of his one-act plays, one of them for the first time in the United States. They are funny, satirical and, like every fable, they leave the theater-goer reading into them exactly what he sees at the point where he is.

Since this is just as true of the powers-that-be behind the Iron Curtain, it's amazing that Mrozek has been able to write his deliciously funny satires with zest and liveliness.

And with restraint. For "Out at Sea" especially is one that could have been carried away by the zany and sometimes grisly conversation. But the fable comes through, loud and clear.

(Slawomir Mrozek won the 1957 Literary Prize of the Polish State Cultural Review for a collection of ironical sketches. One of his funniest short stories pokes fun at the "rehabilitation" of many victims of old-time political purges in Russia and the satellite countries. It tells the story of the lion in the Roman arena who munched a carrot instead of eating Christians because "some day Constantine might make a deal with the Christians and then everyone will remember I was eating a carrot." The New York Times, reprinting that story, remarked that the climate had changed when a Pole dared write a satire on the subject and a Moscow magazine printed it.")

But back to A Contemporary Theatre which is, by the way, in a pleasantly air-conditioned building and has a modified thrust stage, a feeling of intimacy, and appreciative crowds—4100 saw "Luv," the opening of the series, and "The Deputy" broke all ACT's records.

The two pla... through July 22 are "Out at Sea" and "The Strip Tease." In the first, three castaways, one fat, one medium, and one thin, are marooned on a raft at sea. Since the food supply is gone, someone will have to be eaten.

"Strip Tease" has only two characters and comes a little nearer to the world of a bad dream. Both men have encountered something "out there." What it is they're not sure. They have no idea what it wants. But when the Hand begins to make demands (like their belts, suspenders, trousers), it becomes a question of freedom.

"Inwardly I have remained free," says one. "I have not become engaged in any action. I haven't even moved a finger... Not you though. You did something . . .you made a choice.... you knocked against the wall and made a fool of yourself. Slave!"

Last night's audience was a responsive one, generous with applause and laughter. K. Lype O'Dell, who scored as The Cardinal in "The Deputy," played the Fat Castaway well as did Robert Milton the Thin Castaway. John Scanlan, winner of the Best Actor Off Broadway award, played a scant role beautifully as the Medium Castaway in "Out at Sea."

David Vaughan, in his second season with ACT, showed his versatility as The Postman, and Ben Tone played The Butler.

"Strip Tease" was a gem of irony, exquisitely performed by Jerome Raphel and Richard Kuss.

965

POLISH PLAYWRIGHT

ACT Presents Mrozek Plays

By WAYNE JOHNSON
The Times' Art and Entertainment Editor

Two short plays that deal with timeless problems in the ironic language and style of our times were presented last night at A Contemporary Theater.

"Out at Sea" and "Strip Tease" were written by Slawomir Mrozek, a young Polish writer whose plays are just becoming known in the United States. Last night's performance of "Strip Tease" was, in fact, an American premiere.

The double-bill production is the third in ACT's third season. The two previous productions set attendance records. This one might set another.

In ACT's well-crafted and excellently acted production, the two Mrozek plays provide an eminently enjoyable evening of theater. The plays are pointed and pertinent, saucy and spirited, funny and touching—and just a little kooky.

They are clearly expressions of our times, and that is what A CONTEMPORARY Theater is all about.

BOTH PLAYS DEAL with serious, important questions — the nature of free will, choice, individual freedom, etc. — but they aren't in the slightest stuffy or pretentious about their importance. In fact, the ironic, equivocal, tangential language pokes fun at the problems at the same time it analyzes them.

Both plays also utilize techniques from the so-called Theater of the Absurd, but again, neither is self-conscious nor aggressive about its style. The absurdist techniques are clearly used for fun and not for an attempt at some cosmic (and usually unintelligible) revelation.

"Out at Sea" puts three men on a raft in the middle of the ocean. The situation is hardly realistic: the men are sitting on three straight-backed chairs on the raft which also carries a large chest and, in a corner, an old - fashioned shower; the men are impeccably dressed, except that they have no shoes or socks.

They are hungry — starved, in fact. It quickly becomes clear that, if they are to eat, they will have to eat not something but someone. The rest of the play is devoted to singling out the one who is to provide the feast.

This could be grisly business, but Mrozek plays it for laughs and for commentary on man's lot. In trying to select the victim from among them, the three men have an election (complete with campaign speeches), but this method is ruled out when (somehow) four votes are cast.

THEN TWO OF THE MEN join forces against the third, contending that since they are orphans, they deserve special treatment and he, the only non-orphan, should be eaten. This method of selection also fails when a telegram is delivered (on a raft in mid-sea, yet) announcing that the third man's mother has died.

The pitch that finally is effective involves an appeal to man's selflessness and his martyr-potential, his willingness to sacrifice himself for others.

Along the way to the final selection, Mrozek puts the needle deftly and often into contemporary man, his idealisms and his frauds. The play occasionally seems a little pat and contrived, as if Mrozek were reaching hard to explore the silliest ways of selecting the victim. There are a few moments when the action—actually the dialogue, which substitutes for action—drags, but generally the play is wacky and fun.

The play has crisp direction by Gregory A. Falls, and interesting, detailed [illegible] by K. Lype O'Dell, John Scanlan and Robert Miller [illegible] men on the raft.

THE ACTING IN [illegible] is good, and the play itself is more humorous and more effective than "Out at Sea." The two characters in "Strip Tease" Man One and Man Two (those are their names and that should tell you something about the style of the play)—are played superbly by veterans Raphael and Richard Kuss.

The two are in a bare room with two doors. There is equivocal, suggestive discussion about how they got to the room and why, and the questions are never ironed out. The [illegible] suggestion is that the room is a sort of conte[illegible] to somewhere, the spot into which [illegible] person just before it pulls the plug on h[illegible].

Again, this could [illegible] long-faced, I-know-more-than-you-do-and-[illegible] treatment. But again Mroze[illegible] for wit and humor, [illegible] sense of humor to la[illegible].

Man Two describes [illegible] to Man One, "do not [illegible] anything—of course, within the range of what is permitted—while I try everything I am permitted to do."

MROZEK TOYS entertainingly with the tension between these different concepts of freedom. His conclusion is probably that it doesn't make much difference whether you try nothing or everything, because the end is the same for everyone. But he isn't stuffy about it, and in this play the ironical medium is indeed the message.

As the two men argue about whether to leave the room or not, the doors suddenly slam shut, and a giant hand, which resembles the old-fashioned printer's pointing symbol, pushes in through the door, points at Man One's shoes and belt, and inarticulately but unequivocally demands that he take them off and hand them to the Hand.

This is the beginning of the strip tease, which soon divests both men of their shoes, belts, coats, and pants. Without these—and without dignity and hope—they walk off through another door as the play ends. This ending is grim but the rest is cheering and fascinating, thanks not only to Mrozek's script but also to the fine work of Raphael and Kuss.

The Seattle Times
Arts and ENTERTAINMENT
Wednesday, July 12, 1967 37

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POLISH PLAYWRIGHT

ACT Presents Mrozek Plays

By WAYNE JOHNSON
The Times' Arts and Entertainment Editor

Two short plays that deal with timeless prob-
lems in the ironic language and style of our time
were presented last night at A Contemporary The-
ater.

"Out at Sea" and "Strip Tease" were written
by Slawomir Mrozek, a young Polish writer whose
plays are just becoming known in the United States.
Last night's performance of "Strip Tease" was, in
fact, an American premiere.

The double-bill production is the third in ACT's third
season. The two previous productions set attendance rec-
ords. This one might set another.

**In ACT's well-crafted and excellently acted produc-
tion, the two Mrozek plays provide an eminently enjoy-
able evening of theater. The plays are pointed and per-
tinent, saucy and spirited, funny and touching—and just
a little kooky.**

They are clearly expressions of our times, and that is
what A CONTEMPORARY Theater is all about.

BOTH PLAYS DEAL with serious, important ques-
tions — the nature of free will, choice, individual free-
dom, etc. — but they aren't in the slightest stuffy or pre-
tentious about their importance. In fact, the ironic, un-
equivocal, tangential language pokes fun at the prob-
lems at the same time it analyzes them.

Both plays also utilize techniques from the so-called
Theater of the Absurd, but again, neither is self-conscious
nor aggressive about its style. The absurdist techniques
are clearly used for fun and not for an attempt at some
cosmic (and usually unintelligible) revelation.

"Out at Sea" puts three men on a raft in the mid-
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a telegram is delivered (on a raft in mid-sea, yet) an-
nouncing that the third man's mother has died.

The pitch that finally is effective involves an appeal
to man's selflessness and his martyr-potential, his willing-
ness to sacrifice himself for others.

**Along the way to the final selection, Mrozek puts
the needle deftly and often into contemporary man, his
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a little pat and contrived, as if Mrozek were reaching
hard to explore the silliest ways of selecting the victim.
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the dialogue, which substitutes for action—drags, but
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and interesting, detailed [illegible] by K. Lype O'Dell, Judy
Scanlan and Robert Milton [illegible] men on the**

THE ACTING IN "STRIP TEASE is very good, and the play itself is more fascinating and more effective than "Out at Sea." The two characters in "Strip Tease" Man One and Man Two (those are their names and that should tell you something about the style of the play)—are played superbly by Jerome Raphael and Richard Kuss.

The two are in a bare room with two doors. There is equivocal, suggestive discussion about how they got to the room and why, but the precise reasons are never spelled out. The rather menacing suggestion is that the room is a sort of contemporary halfway house to nowhere, the spot into which society thrusts a person just before it pulls the plug on him.

Again, this could be given the long-faced, I-know-more-than-you-do-and-isn't-it-a-sad-fact treatment. But again, Mrozek has used the situation as a launching pad for wit and humor, although it would take a cosmic sense of humor to laugh at the play's conclusion.

Man Two describes their situation as "hopeless," he says to Man One, "do nothing and [illegible] are free to do anything—of course, within the range of what is permitted—while I try everything I am permitted to do."

MROZEK TOYS entertainingly with the tension between these different concepts of freedom. His conclusion is probably that it doesn't make much difference whether you try nothing or everything, because the end is the same for everyone. But he isn't stuffy about it, and in this play the ironical medium is indeed the message.

As the two men argue about whether to leave the room or not, the doors suddenly slam shut, and a giant hand, which resembles the old-fashioned printer's pointing symbol, pushes in through the door, points at Man One's shoes and belt, and inarticulately but unequivocally demands that he take them off and hand them to the hand.

This is the beginning of the strip tease, which soon divests both men of their shoes, belts, coats, and pants. Without these—and without dignity and hope—they walk off through another door as the play ends. This ending is grim but the rest is cheering and fascinating, thanks not only to Mrozek's script but also to the fine work of Raphael and Kuss.

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Rio de Janeiro • São Paulo • Coimbra • [illegible]

OUT AT SEA
and
STRIP TEASE
(American Premiere)
One Act Plays
by Slawomir Mrozek
Reservations AT 4-7392
Curtain 8:30 709 1st West

TWO - N - PRODUCTIONS

in association with MERRY ENTERPRISES THEATRE, INC.

Presents the American Premiere of

THE PROPHETS
by Slawomir Mrożek

Directed by
Paul Czolczynski

Production Stage Manager
Rodd Berro

Set Design by
Janusz Kapusta
& Karol Popek

Lights by
Ed Mathews

CAST

Vernon Morris*
Jack McLaughlin *
Sara March*

Richard Litt*
Nicholas Neubauer
Erik Avari
Nicholas Haylett*

Timothy Lewis *
Captain Haggerty *
Anthony John Lizzul*

* courtesy of Actors' Equity

At THE NO SMOKING PLAYHOUSE
354 West 45th Street

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JUNE 20, 27 at 3:00 & 7:00 p.m.

Tickets : $4.00

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Lola Gruenthal

GROVE PRESS, INC.
80 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003
YUKON 9-6400

Jan 16, 1968

TITLE

STRIPTEASE

DESCRIPTION

advance against royalties

AMOUNT

Received from Actors Theatre of Louisville - $75.00

retain 10% Grove- $7.50

of remaining 90% - $67.50 pay 2/3 Mrozek - $45.00
pay 1/3 Gruenthal - $22.50

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE RIGHTS

Subsidiary Income

PAY TO:

Slawomir Mrozek
Lola Gruenthal

GROVE PRESS, INC.
80 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003
YUKON 9-6400

August 15, 1967

TITLE

STRIP TEASE

DESCRIPTION

12 performances, Seattle, Washington

AMOUNT

Received from A.C.T., A Contemporary Theatre, Inc. $225.00

retain for Grove 10% - $22.50

of remaining 90% $202.50 - pay 2/3 Mrozek - $135.00
pay 1/3 Gruenthal - $67.50

Subsidiary Income

PAY TO:

Slawomir Grunberg
Lola Gruenthal

TITLE

SURRENDER

AMOUNT

Received from Compensation Account-$15.00

retain 10% Grove - $1.50
of remaining 90% - $13.50 - pay 2/3 Grunberg - $9.00
2/3 Gruenthal - $4.50

GROVE PRESS, INC.
80 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003
YUKON 9-6400

Dec 28, 1965

DESCRIPTION

1 performance no admission charged
along with 2 other ums each place
(Amateur)

Subsidiary Income

PAY TO:

Slawomir Grunberg
Lola Gruenthal

TITLE

SURRENDER

AMOUNT

received from "The Battle" (Collingwood - Tecumseh) $15.00

retain 10% Grove $1.50

of remaining 90% - $13.50 - pay 2/3 Grunberg - $9.00
2/3 Gruenthal - $4.50

GROVE PRESS, INC.
80 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003
YUKON 9-6400

March 5, 1966

DESCRIPTION

one performance at Speech and
Drama Dept, Stanford - no admission
charged

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS

Subsidiary Income

PAY TO:

Slawomir Mrozek
Lola Gruenthal

GROVE PRESS, INC.
80 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003
YUKON 9-6400

May 13, 1968

TITLE STRIPTEASE

DESCRIPTION

one performance at Drew University, Madison, N.J.

AMOUNT

received from Drew University - $15.00

retain 10% Grove - $1.50

remaining 90% - $13.50 - pay 2/3 Mrozek - $9.00
pay 1/3 Gruenthal - $4.50

PAY NOW PERFORMANCE RIGHTS

Subsidiary Income

PAY TO:

Slawomir Morzek
Lola Gruenthal

GROVE PRESS, INC.
80 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003
YUKON 9-6400

October 6, 1967

TITLE

STRIP TEASE

DESCRIPTION

4 perfroances Luther College, Iowa

AMOUNT

Received from Luther College $40.00

retain for Grove 10% - $4.00

of remaining 90% - $36.00

pay 2/3 Morzek — $24.00
1/3 Gruenthal — $12.00

Evergreen Showcard

TANGO