

Fare to Judith

-18-

Now, whenever he wished to bring Adi to his side, Alois would whistle. It was a fine drill of a whistle, ^{and} sharp enough to hurt the ear ^{when} ~~heard up close~~. Nor did he reduce the intensity ^{when} ~~if~~ the boy was within arm's reach. In the tavern, Alois was now fond of saying, "^{while raising} ~~When you raise~~ a boy, ^{do not} ~~never~~ let go of the whip. I speak from experience."

More than once, Alois said to Adi, "^{was wasted} ~~I wasted~~ time and sacrifice on your older brother. You, Adolf, ^{with} ~~had better~~ not waste my time."

~~Lean say that~~ Adi was half-paralyzed with fear. I had to wonder how the final effects of this could serve our purposes. We certainly ^{know how} ~~understand~~ ^{to use} ~~the applications of~~ humiliation and self-abasement ^{as a tool} ~~(upon our clients when~~

Book 5 3/22/05 with jm notes May 05

715

as a tool that) ^{effective}
~~being~~ ~~can prove~~ ~~not~~
~~necessary, and such tools can be applied. They prove effective, for~~

~~example~~, with manic-depressives. If we are looking to drive a client into a
 a series) can get
 violent act, successive bouts of humiliation enable us to get the subject into
 his his
 oscillating faster and faster between the poles of depression and mania.

Soon enough, there is an eruption.

I did not see, however, why we needed anything ^{so} drastic at ^{the} early
~~was~~ ^{was supposed}
 a time in Adi's life. It was obvious to me that the Maestro ~~wished to send a~~
~~to flood my the boy's spirit with a great~~
~~flood of wretchedness into the boy's spirit. While it would not be a full~~
~~wave of despair, nothing so all-consuming and oblitative as that, it~~
~~it~~ ^{and so compliant}
 would amount to a first taste of pure misery, (a fear that times to come might
 well ^{It was obvious to me that Adi was being}
 even be worse, ~~yes~~ already Adi had been given a purview of the heavy,
 anguish that attached itself to an ineradicable melancholia.

These are well-established foundations for producing a suicide. So, I
^{ultimate}
 could not know what purpose the Maestro had in mind. The boy was
 delicate enough for it all to go wrong. What an ^a expensive (Time
~~consuming~~) disaster it would be, and for so little.

Yet, if I knew anything about the Maestro, it was that he ^{often} ~~was~~ lived
~~often~~ ^{surprised us by his moves.}
 with curious contradictions in his nature. He encouraged many a failed

among our clients, for their loss could also prove
 human activity, for that could be laid to exorcism upon the Dummkopf.
 Yet he could tolerate nothing of that sort for himself. Whenever the
 Maestro had to pay for the waste, he detested it in all its forms.
 we had to pay for
 his displeasure.

On the other hand, He was a bold, even an exceptional gambler. I
 and often ready to take
 know that well. Often we would take some extreme chances with the lives
 of our clients. So I knew that the Maestro was gambling now with the boy.

Suicide can be of great value to us when we succeed in picking off some
 potential favorite of the Lord's, but that could hardly be the desired outcome here.

While such an event might destroy Klara as well, that would offer but one
 more sorrow to the Dummkopf, and He was mired in the
 waste of so many particular humans in whom He had placed His Hope.

No, this was a gamble of no mean dimension. Very occasionally,

when the Maestro was entertaining the most ambitious future plans for a
 young client, he would look to encourage this species of close to absolute
 wretchedness in a proud spirit, and this could even become a designed tactic.

He had managed to generate large funds of that same pride. I think
 he saw it as a species of ~~inoculation~~ inoculation.

Naturally, these gambles made for immensely unstable results. We

lose quite a few prospects. Occasionally, they were splendid prospects. So

~~the skills to which we are put on these occasions can be most challenging,~~

For once we have ^{implanted a deep} sweetened a sense of humiliation and abasement in a proud

client, we then look ^{still have} to turn it inside out ^{such a wound into a strength,} (That is even more difficult than

^{convert} trying to ~~metamorphose~~ a coward into a hero. Yet, when we succeed in,

~~accomplishing such reversals~~, when the psychic abysses in a would-be

suicide ^{can develop} are converted instead into promontories of achievement and

personal power, an immense gamble has ^{been} ~~proved~~ successful. The once-

humiliated wretch has now acquired the power to humiliate others, a ^{demonic power, may I say,}

~~During the worst of these whistles which visited again each night in~~

the boy's sleep like the spikes in another Son's palms and ankles ^{picture} (let us not

~~the beginning of a revolt was~~ forget the real possibility that Adi is the Maestro's son) a revolt was

nonetheless in progress. Adi was not reduced to a wretch. Not altogether.

^{Having} The boy, already more than half-accommodated ^{himself} to the notion that he was

the one who had been beaten to insensibility by his father, ^{he} certainly knew

^{how to work} enough not to confront Senior directly, but he brought off some nimble

work upon Klara's feelings.

"Mother," he told her, "my father now looks at me as if I am the one who is guilty."

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~~^{show more power, more T. roots} During the worst of these whistles which ^{pierced} visited again each night in *b*~~

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"Mother," he told her, "my father now looks at me as if I am the one who is guilty."

~~his discomfort,~~
She was hardly unaware of ~~what was going on, particularly since the~~

~~The~~ whistle had become a needle in her own ears.

~~Adi, you~~

"You must never say that your father is wrong," she ~~replied~~ ^{told him, however,}

She would always offer the same speech ~~every time he approached~~

"Yes," she repeated, "you cannot say that your father is wrong."

"But what if he is?" ~~might he?~~

"He does not ^{wish} ~~mean~~ to be wrong. Perhaps he makes a mistake. That could be."

"What if he is very wrong?"

~~"It will not remain that way." She nodded. She did not know if she~~

believed what she said next, but she said it nonetheless. "He is a good father. A good father always realizes sooner or later that he may have been ~~going in the wrong direction~~ ^{going in the wrong direction}." She nodded again as if to oblige herself to believe ~~herself~~ ^{such words}. "There can be a moment," she said, "when the father recognizes that he, too, can be wrong." She put her hand to the boy's face as if to cool the fever in his cheeks. "Yes," she said, "he hears his own words and realizes that they are not correct. So, he changes."

"He does?"

Book 5 3/22/05 with jm notes May 05

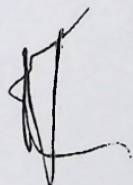
719

"Absolutely. The father changes." She spoke as if this had happened in the past. "He changes," she repeated for the third time, "and now there is order in what he says. Now, it all goes in the best direction. Because he is ready to change. Do you know why?"

"No."

"Because you were able to tell yourself that you would never cause him confusion. You would not do that because he is your father." She held Adi by the waist and looked into his eyes ^{knowing he was lying} as if she could relieve them and ~~then they would not burn any longer~~ ^{given her love} ~~the eyes were like her own. How much alike, she thought, were the eyes of the boy and his mother.~~

Klara had been the first in the family to recognize (and she was still the only one) that Adi could be spoken to as if he were ten or twelve years old. "Yes," she now said, "it is best when there is no confusion made for the father. Since you have never accused him of anything, sooner or later he will be happy about you. So, you must never accuse your father. That would cause him to feel weiblich. For him to feel weak is very bad. You cannot expect him to admit that he has any weakness."



At this point, she ^{began to speak} ~~spoke~~ of ehre-fucht. To honor and to fear. She explained the importance of these words. They had been imparted to her by ^{her mother, Johanna} ~~Johanna~~. Her mother had used them when speaking of Johann Poelzl. He was, her mother all but said to Klara, a hard-working but very unlucky farmer—who in the family did not know that?—and yet her mother had always treated Poelzl with ehre-fucht as if he were an important and successful man. "That is what my mother taught me, and I now tell it to you. The word of the father is the law of the family."

She said this with such solemnity and such certainty that the boy felt it enter him as a source of strength. Yes, some day he would have a family and all who were in it would honor him and they would fear him. At this point, his need to urinate (which always afflicted him in these young years ^{whenever he was on the point of developing} ~~when~~) he held large and magnificent thoughts about himself) now spoke to his crotch. ^{So} in the midst of his mother's peroration, he almost had an accident, but did not—not if he was to be entitled in the future to these emoluments of honor for himself ~~and fear felt by others.~~

"Yes," she said to her son, "the word of the father has to be law. Right or wrong, one must never argue with the father's word. One must

obey him. For the good of the family. So, the father is right. Right or wrong. the father is right. He ^{must} ~~has to~~ be. Otherwise, all is confusion."

Now, she referred to Alois-Junior. "He did not have ehre-fucht," she said. "You must promise me that that will never be said of you. Because, now, you are the oldest brother. You are important. The boy who was your brother is as good as dead."

Adi was wet. His entire body was wet. His perspiration might as well have been illumined by holy light. Just so complete was the importance of this sentiment. I entered his thoughts long enough to tell him, "Your mother is correct. You are now the oldest brother. The younger ones will now honor and respect you."

Yes, Adi understood, and I worked upon his mind, ^{each night} until it became a mental certainty, the equal of ^{one of these} ~~a~~ paved streets ^{always available} in the mind, ~~ready~~ for full

mental traffic. On many a night I told him again that Alois-Junior was ~~totally~~ ^{forever} separated from the family. Alive or dead, it ^{would} ~~did~~ not matter.

Alois-Senior was of no small aid to me ~~here~~. By December, he wrote a new will. It stipulated that in the event of the father's death, the son named Alois was to receive no more of the estate than the minimum

Book 5 3/22/05 with jm notes May 05

722

proscribed by law. "The smaller the better," he added. Since the act of drawing up a will re-engaged all of Senior's long-developed sense of proper ~~contractual and~~ official procedure, he also ^{added;} ~~put in these words:~~ "This is stated in the full recognition of the seriousness of such an act by a father. In my years as a Chief Customs Officer for the Crown, I warrant that I became most familiar with the responsibility that must always be seriously attached to such grave decisions."

Whereupon, having completed the re-writing of his will, he whistled for Adi and read portions aloud to him.

the way to put that
 question a name
 How about
 Schultz? Albrecht Schultz?
 Put that in
 everywhere &
 Kellogg?

-19-

Part of Alois' decision to write a new will had come ~~from the fact that~~ ^{because}

he ~~would be~~ ^{was} able to sell the farm. The buyer had been referred to him by

Albrecht Schultz

~~Mayerhofer~~, the man who ran the local store and had once offered to

purchase their honey. At the beginning of Fall, ~~Mayerhofer~~ ^{Schultz} had even ~~given~~ ^{offered}

his advice to Klara about who might be ~~likely to buy~~ ^{interested}

"Dear Frau Hitler," he had said, "the best way to sell your farm is ~~for~~ ^{because}

~~it looks good.~~ ^{it looks good.}

~~its good looks.~~ Is that not exactly why your husband bought it in the first

place?"

"I will not say that has to be untrue," said Klara. (For her, such a

remark was equal to flirting with Herr ~~Mayerhofer~~ ^{Schultz}.)

"Yes," he said, "it is good you recognize this. I believe you will be able to sell your property to people who are less experienced at farming than yourselves, but—" he held up a finger—"more well-to-do, not so? You must ~~just~~ have the patience to wait. Soon enough, one of these well-off and comfortable people will come along. And when he does, you ~~must~~ send him to me. I will be your friend. I will know how to answer all the questions that come up."

~~I could see that Klara and Meyerhofer were both favored by the~~

~~Cudgels. For indeed, it did come to pass~~ ^{the} wealthy house-hunter

^{did} arrived, inquired first of Meyerhofer, loved the look of the house and the farm, knew even less about the pitfalls than Alois, ^(was sent to talk to Schultz) and so the sale took

place. If the price presented no profit, neither did Alois suffer the loss he feared. The finality of the transfer, however, plus the continuation of a

wholly palpable silence from Alois-Junior, convinced Alois-Senior that the

end of ^{this} his dream that he ^{might} could live his last days on a farm ^{could be paid} might just as well

^{to rest with his} coincide with the termination of any ^{the} last hopes that his oldest son would yet

bring him some reason for pride. No, ¹⁵ was now up to Adi. He was not

nearly so lithe nor so strong as Alois-Junior, not nearly so good-looking, but

as bright, perhaps, and he was so obedient. ~~Even~~ The act of whistling for him had become a pleasure. The response was so quick, so alert.

In his heart, however,

All the same, Alois-Senior did keep the equivalent of an old

photograph ~~in his heart~~. There still were nights when he would sit ~~out~~ on

the oak bench and muse again on the Langstroth box he had built for

himself. He would pat the seat as if to recall the sound of the slap he used

yes, that nice ~~solid~~ and solid slap)

to give that wooden box in the old days, *just to stir up his bees.*

This is all that remains to be said for Hafeld except ~~that~~ ^{to} Angela, was

She was

(pining just a little for Alois-Junior. She knew he would not come back, and

so she could accept him as) fine
so by now she had developed him into her model of a romantic figure. He

of a young man. He

had looked so handsome upon Ulan. Since it was safe, *even* she began to play at

the ~~most modest~~ *of course she was certain* edge of a flirtatious dream. She never let it go too far.

she would allow him to
Once in a while, he would dismount from the horse and kiss her. She soon

learned, however, that the mind, *like* ~~once embarked on a fantasy~~ *looks to* can betray the

explorer. Before long, Angela began to think of all the girls that Alois used

to see. There was even one in her class who was always smiling at her now,

as if she, the girl, knew something special, and maybe Angela did as well.

it would never go to her

By early spring of 1897, after the family moved back to the outskirts of Linz, Angela had a room to herself and there, carefully hidden from everyone else, she kept the photograph that an itinerant photographer had

(by himself in the course of)
taken of young Alois after photographing all the members of the family, and Alois ~~was~~ *was* ~~so~~ *was* pleased with this image of himself ~~together~~.

Angela had stolen ~~this~~ *the* picture from her brother as punishment for all ~~ways of~~ *that had been her* teasing Alois back ~~for~~ *for* all the teasing ~~the ways he had teased her for being reluctant to mount Ulan. Then, she had~~ *sworn to him on a stack of bibles (which didn't exist for one moment in her mind) that she had no idea what had happened to *she didn't care that he was* picture of himself. ~~(He was suffering as completely as if he had lost a large gold watch.)~~*

Alois
Angela could not have been more secretive about ~~her~~ *this* new hiding place if the photo had been an early pornographic print. I mention this small breath of the carnal that she bestowed on the fading brown portrait of Alois only because three decades later, in 1927, her daughter, Geli Raubal, a young and nicely buxom blond beauty, would be entertained publicly by Adolf Hitler on many a night in Munich in one or another of the fine *but most carnal, even perverse* restaurants he was beginning to attend. While the intimate facts are yet to

be related, it was not long before Adolf commenced to have an affair with his niece. By the time it terminated four years later on the day of her death (by murder or suicide was never quite established) he, Adolf Hitler, now a serious leader of a Nazi party much to be reckoned with, had to go through some of the worst ^{horrors, Geli Raubal} weeks of his life. She had been the love of his life.

That is far down the road. History ^{for} those who have lived in it ^{as} ~~as long as myself and in as many places~~ many places as myself, is not always recalled as all-fascinating. Sometimes, ~~It is such a bed of lies! That is to~~ the history through which I pass can seem no more than the length of the ~~only reason I could~~ road ~~(no longer know whether I am ready to~~ recommend the life of a devil ~~to~~ ^{not} any would-be aspirants. But then I think ~~we~~ ³ we know so much about how

it happens, how it really happens. Who could ever wish to lose such riches?

Yet it is not inconceivable that this is exactly what I have done. Let it

~~End of Book V~~

never be said that the perversity of our natures ~~about~~ ^{about} bears no relation to ^{the} human nature from which, ^{after all,} ~~we~~ have ostensibly departed. That perversity human nature which pushes its way into existence to the full accompaniment of wine and excitement yet dreams each night of a ~~104~~ ¹⁰⁴ life.

End

Book V

-1-

There were ^{some} ~~a few~~ matters waiting for me on the return to Hafeld, and as it turned out, the ^(most pressing) first was the least routine. I had to convince Der Alte to burn one of his hives. ^{This instruction was my direct} ~~This instruction, imparted to his sleep, was my direct~~ response to a puzzling accident. He had been stung severely by his bees, so severely that I found him in bed with a cruelly swollen face! Several of the stings had come dangerously close to his eyes. Given Der Alte's skills, he could not comprehend how so embarrassing an event had occurred, nor could I. And all in the course of looking into one of his better hives! While attempting to replace the queen—she was showing the first unmistakable signs of final fatigue—he was attacked by her escort. Der

Alte had to subdue this revolt with his cigar which he happened to be smoking at the time (a gross procedure as far as he was concerned, worthy of amateurs like Alois Hitler) and then he proceeded to bury himself under his sheets, taking care not to lay the dirty linen over his ravaged face. So drastic a revolt of his creatures had not visited him in years. It aroused my paranoia—always there in full supply. You cannot be an effective devil without it since the Maestro will not put up with poor powers of anticipation. I had to assume, therefore, that the onslaught could have been a gift of the Cudgels, and since a question is equal to an answer in matters like this, I decided that Der Alte had to get rid of the offending hive.

(which I passed to him while he slept)
Upon receiving my order, ~~he~~ *that* did not fulfill the job at once. A few *Rarely had he failed* days went by. *It* was not like him ~~to fail~~ to cater to me quickly. So, I alerted

the Maestro. I did not want to—I knew he ~~preferred to devote~~ his attention

(was on exploiting) to the aftermath of Khodynka, but I made a decision, nonetheless, to file a

report. One ~~didn't~~ *did not* want to ignore inexplicable events no matter how minor

they might appear. Indeed, word came back *and* quickly. Yes, I was told, *he must* burn

the hive. Again, I fixed this thought into Der Alte's sleep, but now with harsh enough emphasis for him to know it was imperative, and so could not

be construed as some cruel vagary of a dream. All the same, our old fellow was full of dismay. He hesitated for another day. "Do it," I repeated in his sleep, "it will be good for you. Tomorrow is Sunday. That will double the good effect. But do not employ a sulphur bomb. Too many of the recalcitrants could survive. Instead, soak the entire hive. Then proceed to light it, and burn it, box and all."

He groaned in his sleep. "I cannot do that," said Der Alte. "The Langstroth cost me dearly."

"Burn it. That will make things better."

I was only following the instructions I had received. To lose the Langstroth box did seem excessive. It was, after all, a decent piece of cabinet-work. No matter—I did as I was told, and Der Alte obeyed me. He had to. At his age, he knew how deeply we were ^{Cx R. (traded into)} invested in him. ~~As the~~
~~It had~~ ^{consequence,} he had to live with intermittent terrors that were as real to his flesh as an ulcer. Death was close to his thoughts, sometimes as close as a caged beast in the next room. His fears, however, left me indifferent. It is hard not to feel contempt for old clients. They are so submissive. Of course, he did it. What facilitated the act is that a good part of him was

enraged at his bees for upsetting his sense of the given. At his age, that ^{is} ~~particular~~ ^{one} set of habits ^{which} can afford few shocks, ^{One's sense of} and is prone to surprising ~~the given is valuable in one's old age, when~~ ~~rages.~~ ^{violated, one is prone to surprising rage}

Sunday morning, he laid the hive on the ground and doused it with kerosene. Staring into the commotion that seethed up in its flames, he did begin to feel better. I was on the mark. It had been good for him. He was perspiring like a horse, ^{After all,} he was full of woe at the incineration itself—that did violate his professional instincts. He could have wept for his lost hive and ~~for~~ those fine golden bees—all those innocents ^{who were scorched} scorched to ash ^{into extinction} (with the guilty—but to his surprise, a rare sweetness returned to his loins. This was the first such sugaring of his body he had felt in years. Like many an old man, his lust had been confined to his head. It had been a long time since the physical accompaniment to a libidinous thought had been any more agreeable than a ^{twinge} ~~nasty cramp~~ for his groin.

I will mention in passing that Adi happened to be present at the burning. He, too, had been given a message in his sleep which he had no difficulty in accepting. So, he slipped away from Klara and Angela even as they were preparing to go to church. His sly escape did not bother Klara

exceptionally. It had happened several times already. Moreover, she enjoyed sitting in church a good deal more on those rare occasions when it came down to just Angela and herself. Adolf was no joy to bring along. If not squirming in his seat, he would be in a contest with his step-sister to see who could best succeed in pinching the other. On the sneak.

Yes, to be alone with Angela on Sunday morning allowed her to feel a little closer to her step-daughter. If the truth be witnessed, Klara was also content not to bring Edmund along, nor to be obliged to hold Paula at her breast through the service, hoping all the while she did not wail. Today, Alois had said he would remain with the two little ones. Klara could hardly believe such sudden generosity. Was he softening? Was that possible? It was certainly one more question I had to explore. But, first, let me dispose of Adolf's relation to this burning of the bees. His toes tingled, his heart shook in its chamber, he did not know whether to scream or to roar with laughter—for him, it was a royal, thoroughgoing auto-da-fe, and he kept shrieking out of that unique junction of terror and delight that only a young boy can ~~begin to know~~ ^{entertain at once}. For now, I will say no more. Release from the high excitement of living in Russia had left me a touch indolent. I did not,

as yet, feel eager to re-enter the complexities of this particular six-year-old. My morale was, as I have said, in fine shape, but I did not want to put it to work too intensely so soon.

I have not mentioned this before, but during my first week in Moscow, I had been put in association with long-term resident Germans (half-Russian by now, or, at least, half-Muscovite) who worked for the Governor-General. They were well-positioned in Sergei Alexandrovitch's hierarchy of police officers, and were a great help to us at Khodynka. They had what was for them an unshakable (and most German) view of the Russian peasants who had bivouacked during Coronation week at the railroad stations. "They are animals," I was told, "the most suspicious people in the world, and the greediest. Or, that is, they would be the greediest, except they have nothing. So their greed is like fire. It leaves nothing behind. Any one of these fellows, if he is big enough and strong enough, has a secret belief. He thinks that should it come to it, he could kill a bear with his bare hands. He would certainly try."

Yes, ~~existence was easier~~ *my existence would be simpler,* on my return to these modest duties in the Linz region of Austria, ~~(Nor did I feel that the work would be without interest. Hafeld could offer its own small revelations and they might yet~~ *and at this* ~~prove fascinating (even as a minor key can suggest a rare resonance).)~~ *point, perhaps* ~~Moreover, it was to my taste to feel an increase in understanding by way of the subtlety of the task. On most occasions, that can prove more agreeable than arriving at one's new knowledge by way of the moil of a rough contest.~~ *gain each* ~~through~~

So I found myself growing more ready each day to go back to these simpler themes. Already I could witness a few small changes in Alois' spirit, and they did engage me.

For one thing, Klara—no surprise!—was mistaken. Alois was not softening, not exactly. The moment he was alone on this particular Sunday with Edmund and Paula, he put the sleeping infant, not half a year old, in her trundle bed, and told Edmund to stay with her and make certain she did not wake up. Alois had the ability to transfix a two-year-old boy into *several*

hours of) ~~(obedience by one quick look. Yes, his son was now ready to do the impossible. Edmund would will the infant not to awaken. Be it said, that is also a function of the will, and it can even work with some infants once they~~ *transfixing 50, 429)*

are left in the care of polarized two-year-olds. Will! (It is almost as great a mystery as Time!)

So Alois did not mind staying alone at the farm with Edmund and Paula on this Sunday. Truth, he was looking forward to being alone. **He** ^{upon} ~~wanted to meditate on~~ ^{that was so curious.} ~~Der Alte's little mishap.~~ **It had left him feeling** ~~cozy.~~ **(A dire expectation for himself seemed to have vanished.**

~~He~~ ^{had} All through May, as the weather ^{recurring} ~~turned~~ warm, Alois' ~~recurring if~~ ^{family} ~~distastefully~~ fear was of losing his colonies. His dreams kept returning a vivid picture to him of himself up there, high in a tree. There he was, much too high, trying to charm a maddened swarm of bees back to the ground and into their hive. The sad fact was that, having eaten well through the winter, he was now overweight. Indeed, he felt as over-stuffed as a man who has crammed 250 pounds into a 200-pound body. Where was his balance? It was as if he was being asked to walk a tight-rope. The fall could come at any moment.

^{Small surprise, then, if} Yes, ^{Let his face} (this Sunday, he needed to be alone. He required time to unbend, in such a way that his lips could go slack, his stomach rumble, his sphincter break a little wind. There had been too many weeks through the winter and

now even into the spring when he became convinced—not for the first time in his life, but these days, so vividly—that he was going to fail in a serious activity, and this ~~failure~~ would wipe out some important part of him. Such an end had once seemed impossible ~~to him~~. His vanity forbade it, that so-useful vanity which he had constructed from boyhood, put together piece by piece, episode by good episode, each attached to the previous good memory, and, of course, he had fortified the whole of such a progression by the promotions of his career. (Not to mention his fornications!) But now? Where was the confidence? He had not gone to church on this Sunday, no more than any other. Of course not, not if he could help it. But now he did not know how long he could keep away. On this particular Sunday, he had even thought of going, yes, with Klara. First time since they had moved to Hafeld, yes.

The thought was anathema. To sit in a pew through the drivel! Such an act could wipe out his sense of himself as a man who refuses to live in fear of disaster—a man who does not shiver as others do. But these bees had scared the hell out of him all year. Had they taken away the keystone of

his pride? No one else he knew had ever been as ready to thumb his nose at bad omens. Certainly not anyone born like himself as a peasant.

Yet, just a week ago, his hands had begun to shake. Involuntarily. He could not hold his newspaper. That was because he had read a story in it about the death of a beekeeper. The man had not recovered from a crazy outbreak in his own hive.

In an effort to allay such fears, Alois had even paid Der Alte a visit at just the time when the old man was in his bed and at his weakest. Indeed, Der Alte actually burst into tears while describing his mishap. It left Alois with the same sense of cockeyed virtue that a younger brother can feel when he sees the older one cry—so often he has been abused by him!

Afterward, Alois was relieved of his fear for a few days. Air no longer entered his lungs ^{like the} ~~with the sense of~~ oncoming trouble that sits in the ozone for the few minutes before a thunderstorm. It was as if the bolt had struck ~~already~~. Finally! Except that it was Der Alte who had been hit, not himself. Relief ^{than} ~~now~~ replaced confusion. ~~Yes,~~ ^{That} that had been true for a few

days. But now on this Sunday, he felt as if he was ready to fall back into confusion.

For certain. ^{It is} ~~The~~ dread was going to ^{return.} ~~come back~~. And he knew why.

It was Alois-Junior. He had not felt right since the boy had ^{come back} ~~returned~~.

~~Yes,~~ Something was in the air. He could not be such a fool, he told himself, as to have been afraid of his bees ^{just} because he was feeling ^{thus} ~~uneasy~~ with his son.

Yet, that might ~~even~~ be the truth! Human beings are full of subterfuge. He knew. He had certainly learned as much at ^{each} ~~his~~ Customs post¹. The tricks that some tried! He remembered a woman who had wrapped her gifts in the folds of her black lingerie. A good looking woman. When caught by Alois, she was brassy enough to smile, and say, "You are so smart. The other officers were afraid to touch my private things."

"That," he told her, "is because most of my associates go to church. You did not have good luck this morning."

She laughed. He was tempted to let her off. Let her defray the cost of the fine by smuggling him into her thighs. But he hadn't allowed himself. A few rules he would not disregard.

All the same, this recollection kept him brooding about the nature of subterfuge. Back in the days when he could still enjoy a ride on a horse, there had usually been one or another steed who could rob some of his confidence, something in their gait—as if, should they choose, you would find what felt like five legs under you, not four. You wouldn't know a damned thing about how to control that kind of spirit in the animal.

Yes, that was Alois-Junior. One could not feel total confidence in the boy.

On the other hand! To be a father who made so severe a judgment on a son, and might later be proved wrong? That could feel shameful. The immediate truth, and Klara kept talking about it all the time as if she did not know whether to believe her words or not, was that Junior did not seem to be the same boy who had gone away to work for Johann Poelzl. Her parents must have been good for him. His manners were nicer. He did not seem to be judging you all the time. Before, that was the worst thing about him, Klara said. He was like a friend who was warm to your face but would say something ugly so soon as you left. Klara had no proof, but she would swear that was how ^{he} ~~it~~ used to be. Now, ^{maybe there was (in him.)} ~~something nicer,~~ Maybe. Before, if

he had a fault, it was that he spent too much time riding Ulan. Of course, Klara announced, she was ready to put up with that. Better to ride over the hill than to start flirting with his own sister.

"What would you ever know about that?" Alois asked.

"I don't know about such things," said Klara. "But when I was young, I saw things. In certain families. It was not anything to talk about."

She was, at least, honest enough to flush a little as she spoke. Yet, what brought the blood to her face was that ^{she and Alois} ~~they~~ were cousins. That was a little embarrassing, ~~perhaps,~~ ^{But} not ~~so~~ terribly wrong. The other possibility did not even exist for her. Nor, did it, for Alois. He never thought of her as his daughter.

This ability to wall up the most unpalatable facts about oneself can always elicit my admiration. I do not know if the inner construction of such a barrier is equal in complexity, let us say, to scaling the Alps, or, to the contrary, one is dealing with labyrinths ~~of camouflage~~. Either way, the credit must go to the Dummkopf. He created the ban against incest—we certainly didn't—and so it became His task to protect His humans from themselves.

I know that we lose certain advantages thereby. One truism about most men and women is that they are incapable of facing unpleasant truths about themselves. Their ability to invent earth-moving machines may be an offshoot of their desire to ^{cover over} ~~bury~~ unseemly personal data. ^(often fail when look to make a) We, on the contrary, ~~could put a useful (to us)~~ breach into the impenetrable ego of certain powerful people, ^{They} ~~if only they did not have this~~ ^{what} ~~can only be a~~ God-given ability to conceal themselves from themselves. So here we are with Klara and Alois ^{fall of worry over how to} ~~doing their best~~ in this case, their hopeful best ~~to~~ cope with Alois-Junior when, in fact, it is Adolf who ^{is yet to become} ~~will be the dire~~ ^{the exceptional} ^(matrimonial) product of their closely-related loins.

-2-

All the same, I, too, had been pondering the changes in Alois-Junior. On the face of it, he had improved. If manners were a guide, then he had become a reasonable imitation of a trustworthy youth.

My lesser devils—the ones I left behind—were now pleased to tell me that they had succeeded in making a copy of a short letter Johann Poelzl had sent back with Alois-Junior. It gave a definite and most decent opinion of the lad.

I wasn't certain about the validity of the letter, however. For one thing, it was only a copy. That voided one of my talents—I can obtain a good deal of insight by way of the strokes and bends of a person's

handwriting. Many an undisclosed recess of the soul is to be found in the pinched turn of a curved letter. Falsities stand out with the clarity of acne.

As I have already indicated, these were lesser devils I had left behind in Hafeld, and so they were ~~only~~ able to lift Johann's letter from Klara's sewing basket long enough to copy it, ~~and were not skillful~~ *only) make the copy with more skill they could have forged* ~~enough to forge a facsimile we might leave in its stead.~~ *keep the original letter and boy*

Bereft of the calligraphy, I had to content myself with the words.

Esteemed daughter,

This I give to the boy. He will give it to you. Your mother says he is good boy. She will cry for missing him when he goes. That is what she says.

Tell your esteemed husband I can agree. Alois Junior is good. Very hard worker. Very good.

Your father,
Johann Poelzl

I was not ready to act upon my doubts. I could have put in a request for one of our nocturnals in Spital to pass through Johann's mind on a milk-

run, but decided to wait. Such a request would end up on one's record—
 everything did—and could be seen as dilatory, particularly if the results
 were inconclusive. Given ^{so devout} a church-goer ^{as} like Johann Poelzl, there might
 even be some ^{mean old} resident old Cudgel to face. (Not all of the
~~excessively devout~~ ^{were our clients!})

Besides, I could learn as much as I needed about Alois-Junior now
 that I was back in Hafeld. ~~The task would be comfortable.~~ ^{had} If I had to leave
 behind the ~~more accomplished~~ ^{did not know} devils I had taken to Russia, and hardly
 knew how long the Maestro might ^{hold} keep them while extracting further
~~returns from Khodynka~~ ^{The devils left}, still, I had compensation. Here, my devils had, to
~~behind had to~~ ^{a bit} my surprise, improved on their own. The greater responsibility ~~accorded to~~
~~them in my absence~~ ^{by} seemed to have worked out well. They were picking up
~~more of our trade,~~ ^{might} better details on their milk runs. One of them was even ready ^{for}
~~introduced to~~ the first techniques of dream etching.

I will not, however, ^{bother to describe them further.} go into further detail about ~~this little contest~~. At
~~present, in the time of this writing,~~ ^{given} a century and more has passed, and as I
~~have already related,~~ ^{needless} we are not encouraged to store unnecessary details.
 Our working capacity has to be ready ~~always~~ for intense exertions of
 immediate short-term memory should that prove necessary to fulfill ~~our~~ ^{on}

~~immediate tasks, large or small. (Card counting at blackjack tables is one quick if superficial example of the latter.)~~

Besides, one's lesser devils ~~usually~~ offer no more to the pleasure of memory than ~~lame phrases in~~ mediocre songs. Indeed, ~~their quirks are more~~ worthy of notice than their personalities. A quirk, after all, can ~~create~~ ^(initiate) a malfunction in a project, whereas ~~the~~ demon's personality is without specific human significance. ^{(sp) ~~unique~~} While a man or woman's ~~inner~~ ^{often} presence is closely related to their body, and ~~thereby~~ we gather our insights into a person by acquaintance ~~often~~ with their flesh, we devils are without bodies (except on those special occasions when it is necessary to inhabit ~~a person~~ ^{and someone} for a period.) So, our personalities, whenever we are obliged to take ~~such~~ ^{human} form, are no more than temporary choices, available palettes, ~~a shift in presence~~ that bears more relation to changing a garment than altering a habit or a passion.

I find it more congenial, therefore, not to discuss ~~any of my devils'~~ ^{our situation} varieties of character other than to say that our happiest terrain ~~is~~ ^{we find} in the land of the dream where—if we ~~are ready for~~ ^{can afford} the expenditure—we become

~~Some of such~~ are even
 anyone we wish, ~~and so our improvisations can be~~ adroit, talented, ~~often~~
 brilliant.

Indeed, if dreams dictated as much of human history as we desired,
~~the Maestro would become the Master of God. The Dummkopf would~~ soon
 become ~~the~~ ^{our} servant.

But we were not near to such a point ^{not} in 1896. God was still the Lord
 of our immediate universe. Humans, animals, and plants continued ~~in the~~
~~main~~ to be His Creation. Nature, imperfect as it ^{was}, and on occasion,
 cataclysmic (because of imperfections in His design) ^{remained} ~~was~~ still within His
~~disturbed~~ befuddled command. Only the depths of night belonged in good part to us,
~~and as yet, that was not enough.~~

The Maestro was ^{all too} ~~so~~ aware of this. He frowned upon ^{those} ~~any~~ ecstasies of
 self-approration with which irresponsible devils ^{would} ~~might~~ congratulate
 themselves for ^{had} ~~any~~ ^{by way of} ~~terrors they initiated through~~ a nightmare. The Maestro
 was rarely impressed ^{with such success,} ~~by such success.~~ ("It is never enough," he tells us.

"Dreams are evanescent. Such ~~partial control of men or women in as open~~
~~to future loss as to profit.~~ True control ^{of events} ~~is the~~ ^{prime} ~~only~~ aim."

I was in accord. I ~~looked to bring a touch of art to the researches,~~
~~discoveries, and assessments I gave of my clients, and this was not only to~~
~~please the Maestro~~ ^{to} ~~be a Prince of Elegance~~ but to satisfy myself. If,
~~even after Moscow,~~ ^{maintain} the Maestro continued to keep up this exceptional
 interest in the Hitlers of Hafeld, I looked ^{then} to comprehend his motives. ~~It was~~ ^{There}
 apparent that his high hopes for ~~this six-year-old~~ ^{on} this Adolf Hitler, ~~must be~~ ^{took}
~~comparable to the Dummkopf's exceptional (and to me, still inexplicable)~~ ^{on then more} ~~immense~~ ^{for me}
 interest in Nicholas II of Russia

~~I continued to feel~~ ^{what seemed to be}
 I felt (honored to be the Maestro's trusted lieutenant on so important a
~~venture, or did,~~ ^{to hand} until I realized that I ~~could~~ ^{might} be engaging in my own orgy of
 self-congratulation. I knew so little, finally, of the reaches, outposts, and
 centralities of the Maestro's domain ~~that for all I could attest,~~ ^{our special} ~~the six-year-~~
~~old assigned to me (whose future development I could not yet discern),~~ ^{predicator}

^{old} might be one of a hundred or a thousand prospects whom the Maestro was
~~overseeing on the remote likelihood that they would yet become~~ ^{no more than one or another} ~~putative~~ ^{most}
~~leaders of future projects.~~ ^{useful engines for him} Ergo, the notion that my task might be of major
~~importance~~ ^{their} ~~value could hardly be maintained with constant confidence in the weeks, the~~ ^{ups and downs, not only in}

(immediate seasons ahead)
months, and over the years ahead (but for a full eighteen
years until August 1914) the next twelve years, indeed, worse, the
next eighteen years, (and then I had to take care of him through World War I.
By then there was ^{no} time to take
care of anyone else. The Maestro
made it clear. I was there to keep
him alive through the immediate
battles ahead. Well to me it
I failed.

-3-

I have not described, and do not feel any intention to list the numerous other activities, undertakings, and small explorations that the devils under my authority were engaged in through those parts of the Upper Danube province of Austria (which includes Linz and the Waldviertel). By now, they are of no great interest.

History has, however, underlined the perspicacity of the Maestro's projections into the future, and so as I take leave of my present situation in America to ~~go back to~~ ^{return in my understanding} the summer of 1896, it is with the added strength of motive that comes from the knowledge that one's work has been of

significance
 significant importance and every detail that is now recalled can be *(not only)*
 registered with newly polished perspicacity, *but, indeed should be.*

I can assert, therefore, that Alois-Junior was demonstrating his considerable talent to charm whoever was in his immediate surroundings, and thus even succeeded in leavening the heavy suspicion that came off Alois-Senior in the first days after his son came back. Senior's suspicion remained all but equal to a wall of approaching bad weather, a numbing, unstirring affect he had often used at Customs while confronting a dubious tourist. Yet, such was the boy's charm—a nice combination of youth, health, intelligence, a touch of wit, and apparent good will—that Alois could not maintain such a psychic front for more than a few days. Indeed, Alois-Junior was showing fine interest in the bees. He had so many good questions to ask.

Before long, Alois (quite despite himself!) was beginning to feel a rare happiness—he so seldom liked his children. Now, he did. One of them at any rate. He even began to give Alois a few explanations of beekeeping, and they soon developed into lectures. Before long, he had repeated all of his earlier speeches to Klara and Angela and Adi, plus his original

monologues at the Linz taverns, as well as the newer ones at Fischlham where he had played the resident expert from Hafeld. The boy picked it up so quickly that Alois had to dip into more advanced knowledge of the sort he had ingested from reading apiary journals. Finally, he was even presenting a few of Der Alte's finer insights. The near-humanity of the bee! The delicacy and high inspiration of their lives. The boy kept taking it in. Moreover, Junior was deft when it came to working at the hives. Senior began to dream of a future where father and son might add colony to colony. This might become a true business.

One day, he was feeling so proud of Alois-Junior that he brought him along on a visit to Der Alte. He had hesitated before deciding on such a move—he certainly did not wish to be replaced as the expert in Junior's estimation. On the other hand, he was also proud of his association with Der Alte, so learned a man, and yet so ready to treat him as an equal—that, too, might impress the boy.

The truth is that he was no longer ^{all that} so uneasy about facing the bee-keeper's superiorities. He had been enriched by that hour when Der Alte had virtually wept in his arms. Now, he could face him as an equal.

Besides, he had once again a practical need to see him. Alois' hives were ready, they were full of honey, and he had studied his manuals on the technique of honey-gathering, but, he did not feel ready. In the old days, back at Passau and Linz, he had made a botch of it. The honey he gathered was ridden with too much wax, and ^{no matter his} veil, gloves, and all—he had still received a few nasty bites where the cloth gaped on his neck and wrists.

Now, it would be closer to a major effort. He looked to sell the better part of ^{the} his harvest, and he could hardly do ^{so} that if his product was full of wax, ~~and~~ detritus. Even one dead fly would be a disaster, ~~yes, he remembered a~~ ~~dead fly from one unhappy taste at Passau.~~

So, here he was seeking for advice again from that old ~~piss-smelly~~ goat, but, now he could feel tolerant. It was amazing to Alois how little he was offended on this occasion by the ^{aroma of} ~~permeations of urine in~~ the hut—hell, Der Alte might know more about bees, but he, Alois, knew how to be a man and not burst into tears when all went wrong.

He took Alois-Junior with him, therefore, and Der Alte responded with warmth and brilliance to the visit. He was happy not to be alone. His convalescence had been full of acute pain to his idea of himself, painful as a

sharp light in the eye. He had drooped within under the weight of contemplating all that was missing in his life. Hermits cannot undergo ^{too much} ~~such~~ self-examination. Not often. It hardly matters whether they are hermits protected by the Cudgels, or in service to us, or, very occasionally, unaffiliated—although this last is virtually a feat considering the loneliness!—but in any event, such clients usually have to be taken at least once a year through a cleaning of many ^{near-dead} ~~dead or rotting~~ old moods. For this last week, I had had to spend time on Der Alte. His spirit had all but collapsed with the knowledge that he could not see himself in any way as a social leader (which had been the most intense of his early ambitions.) He had no mate, no heirs, no real money. And his memory kept reminding him constantly of men or women who had done him injuries, and he had failed to pay them back as they deserved. Under it all, was the heavy disappointment that he had not arrived at any of the powers and distinctions to which his intelligence should have entitled him. As is so often true of the depression that follows an unexpected accident, he saw this affliction as a judgment on himself.

I made a point of being present during Alois' visit, then, for I wanted to improve Der Alte's mood. ~~As devils, we have that power at our discretion.~~ If a client's thoughts are usually darkened by us in order to drive them into our desired direction, so we also have the ability to absorb ^{black} their dark thoughts, ^{We can} lift a man out of his depression for an hour, even—if it comes to it—provide him with some joy. Usually, it is to our advantage to keep our humans reasonably well and alive ^{in order that} so that they ~~can~~ continue to serve us. ^{Indeed, there is a loss if they expire too soon.} (Very few ~~of them~~ ^{then} can be transformed into strong devils ^{once they} ~~are no longer alive~~ ^{Given} (unless they die young and in a true rage.) ^{On dying,} ^{major matter,} most of our old clients either cease to exist, or are picked up by the Dummkopf (who does not like to give up on any of His creatures, large or small, wise or foolish—which is one reason the world ^{becomes more} ~~is such a mess, yes,~~ ^{and more} ~~much too~~ empowered by human mediocrity.)

This situation is, of course, not simple, since we, too, have to look to take what profit we can from mediocre arts, products, and trivial people, ^{no,} ~~but, to repeat, it is no simple matter.~~

All this may help to explain why I was looking to improve Der Alte's mood when Junior and Senior came to visit. Indeed, I was able to give him

relief from his ^{unhappiest} darkest thoughts, ^(E) even returned ^(b) to him the notion that he was an attractive man. (Vanity is the human ^{sentiment} emotion which comes closest to ^{illusions or} approaching infinity!) As a direct result, he felt powerfully attracted to Alois-Junior. It was the first time in ten or fifteen years that he had so desired to make love to an adolescent.

"Honey-gathering! Of course!" Der Alte all but grunted when, after the introductions and the formal query about his health—"Couldn't feel better!"—they began to discuss the procedure.

In full form, intensely aware of the boy, and—provided with these fresh seedings of vanity, keen to how the boy might be aware of him—~~yes~~ ^{reduce} I had even taken pains to neutralize the kidney reek in these quarters—
~~Interestingly, the odor of ammonia or of vinegar is a shared domain~~
~~we can call on such odors or ask for their withdrawal as quickly as~~
~~might the D.K. on His Cudgels~~. Der Alte ~~may, thereby, have~~ felt more than ready to launch into ^{an} a full exposition on the lesser-known aspects of honey-gathering.

"Yes," said my rejuvenated old fellow, "honey-gathering is an art in itself. I am so glad you two have come together on this day because, truly,

skilled as your father has become in his short period here at Hafeld—a brilliant man, your father!—nonetheless, the best of bee-keepers have to learn what is virtually a new vocation when, after the long winter and a kindly, warm spring that fulfills our hopes, the brood combs, having been well fed their supply of honey by the good workers assigned to them, are now hatched. That, if I may say, is a most pregnant moment in our vocation. The hives are teeming. The old bees are out on flights and the youngsters are assigned to the innumerable tasks of housekeeping, one of which, for example, is to fill the empty wax combs with honey and cap them with a fine thin layer of wax. Specialists among the bees are assigned to do all that. Young Alois, it is like a miracle. Some of these young workers are newly-born, ten days old, but ~~craftsmen already~~ ^{we may think of them as craftsmen} The layer of wax that covers each tiny comb is no more thick than good stout paper."

Alois restrained himself from saying, "I know that already," and winked instead at Junior. In advance, he had told the boy to be prepared to listen. "When it comes to his bees, Der Alte can only speak in full paragraphs, no, I would say rather in full pages. All you need do is nod. I

know. I know in advance nine parts in ten of what he will say, but it is like fishing. Be patient, and you will get what you came looking for."

"So, yes," Der Alte now said, "the honey-gathering, if not done properly and in the time appropriate to it, can be a rude interruption of a sort to disable the work of the bees, a ^{disruption} failure of tempo, you might say, ^{can the} ~~in a~~ ^{assembly line in a} factory. The first question to ask oneself, therefore, is whether you can be aware of what will be the best time to remove your honey from the hives." He held up a hand as if to police his own course of exposition. "It is the late morning," said Der Alte. "That is most definitely the best time. The hives are warm but not yet too hot. The worker bees are somnolent. I would go so far as to say that your little creatures might be taking a siesta at this time. They are, after all," and he laughed, "Italian bees."

To be courteous, Alois smiled. So did Junior.

"Well, then," said Der Alte, "we take the great step. For that, I will have to lend you an empty hive body."

"Is that because we have to transfer all the bees who are in the honey chamber?" asked Alois-Junior.

"Exactly," said Der Alte. "Your sense of anticipation is excellent. Your imagination is closely focused, I can see, on the particularities of this situation. Dear boy, you are in possession of an excellent attribute."

"Yes," said Alois-Senior "he is a bright boy, but if I may venture my opinion, there is no way to separate honey-chamber bees from the honey unless one brings up a separator board."

"Of course," said Der Alte, "and so the first move, then. . .?"

"Locate the Queen," said Senior. "That's one thing you taught me." He turned to Junior. "Yes, bees panic when they do not know where their Queen is. To move them from one box to another, you move her."

"Exactly," said Der Alte. "I have shown your father how to locate the Queen in the first place. You must introduce a queen-cage"—he took a little box from his pocket the size of a deck of cards. "With this cage ready, you then use a queen-catching glass."

"Yes, my father has shown this to me. He even let me blow one of the queens from the catching glass into the cage."

"That is a nice skill," said Der Alte. "In a year or so, when you become as highly accomplished as I expect, you will dispense with the cage. You will be able to pick up the queen with your fingers."

"Yes," said Alois-Senior " but don't try it in a hurry," and he made a gesture of slapping frantically at invisible bees as if to remind Der Alte how this bold procedure could invite a disaster.

"Just yesterday," said Der Alte, "I moved three of my queens into three separate hives. With my fingers. I could have used the catching-glass. Undeniably, it is as your father suggests, a wise and more cautious procedure. But I am like an acrobat who has taken a serious fall. There is no solution but to get up on the tightrope again."

Der Alte was telling a lie. He had gone back to the catching-glass and the queen cage for these transfers, but as an experienced client, he was able to offer whole assurance on any subject, even when completely separated from the facts. His desire to approach a little nearer to Junior's admiration was all the truth he needed.

"Whether one uses one's digital sensitivities or resorts to the catching-glass, the heart of the matter, nonetheless," he now said, "is that by means of

the one-way exit in the separator board, your bees will look to escape from the honey chamber into the brood chamber for there you have relocated the Queen. How they will struggle with one another in their haste to use the exit and reunite with their lady. It is the kind of passion that reminds me of my youth."

He turned to Alois-Junior. "Ah, to be young again and on the hunt for a young woman. In the old days, nothing could stop me. Would you say there is anything that might stop you?"

"Yes. My father," said Alois-Junior. All three laughed.

"You must listen to your father."

"I am prepared to," said the youth. He smiled warmly at Der Alte as if to separate out one concrete instant when they could feel connected to each other. Before the air between them could take on such emphasis, however, Alois-Junior made a point of adding, "I think you have confused me. Aren't all these bees little women?"

"Yes," said Der Alte, "in the technical sense, if we speak of their gender they are female, but, of course, they are not queens, so their generative organs are not developed. Consequently, they act like men.

Some become guards. They defend all the gates in the hive. Some are warriors. Most of them are loyal, determined, hard-working. In that case, yes, they are like women, too. They live for the good of the hive. But they are like men in the manner that they worship the Queen."

"This is all wonderful to hear," said Alois-Senior "but I am still waiting to get my honey out of the hive."

"In that case," said Der Alte, "I will give you the secret key."

"Timing," said Alois-Senior. "You told us that already."

"Not quite. That was a general rule of thumb. The real secret is to wait until you hear an unmistakable sound of happiness rising from the hive. Yes. When the honey comb is full, and the bees know they have made good honey, why, they are ready to act like women again. They sing to each other in joy. You must come to recognize this sound. On the morning after you have heard this chorus of contentment, you are ready to lead all these good bees through the exit in the separator board into the chamber where you have moved the queen, and so the honey left behind will now be ready for extraction. Come, I, in turn, will lead you outside. One of my hives is now singing this song of contentment."

I, too, went with them to hear it. I do not know if I would have interpreted the hum that entered my ears in just those words. The sound was unmistakably strong. It offered the intent ongoing sound of the dynamos in an electrical plant, that elevating yet fearsome hum ^{which} ~~that~~ comes into human ears whenever one form of energy is converted to another. So much is taking place ^{told} ~~at such a moment~~. A dominion is being ~~seized~~ ^{told} to enter another dominion. It is the sound common to all motors. "How much we have done," these motors could be murmuring, "but where ^{does it go now?} ~~will it all go?~~"

Der Alte's last injunction was to place the honey-chamber into a sealed box so soon as it was free of its bees. "Then you must take it indoors for the extraction. Into a good sealed room. That is because you must not attract any bees who may be out foraging. I cannot emphasize this enough," he said directly to Alois-Junior. "As you may not yet know, these divine creatures have two natures: total loyalty to their Queen, but whole greed for the honey itself. They will gorge on it anywhere they can find it, from any and all hives."

-4-

Once given her instructions, Klara went to some pains to close all the entrances to their kitchen, by way of every rag and used towel at her disposal. She wore a white blouse and white apron for the occasion, and so did Angela. Alois-Senior even gave up his cigar. That was, indeed, an event for the family. But Der Alte had warned him, "Cigar smoke is able to pacify your bees. But when it comes to the honey, beware. ^{Such a} The ~~smell~~ can insinuate itself into also paralyze the taste."

^{Luther was}
The dog, of course, ~~was~~ banished from the kitchen. So were Adi, Edmund, and Paula, even if this occasioned a series of trips by Klara ~~or~~ ^{Angela} to the children's bedroom, each time removing the cloths piled up

against the kitchen sills, then replacing them on their return. Perhaps they were protecting everything too much—I do not think there was one bee in the house. Of course, you could not always be certain of this. Klara could not bake a cake without sifting the batter to make certain no unseemly foragers had drowned.

Otherwise, the task went well. As each frame was taken out of the hive-box, Alois-Senior proceeded with all the pride of a surgeon. He pared the wax caps from the tops of the honey cells by way of his separator knife (not so thick as a chisel nor so flat as a spatula) but a tool designed specifically to lift off the thin top layer of wax covering each cell in the frame. Since there were more than two thousand cells on each frame (20,000 cells for the ten frames in each Langstroth box) and each hexagonal cell was no wider in diameter than the fingernail of a child, one could hardly uncap one cell at a time. That might have taken a week. Instead, Alois applied the separator knife to whole patches at once, taking up swatches of top wax an inch wide and from three to four inches long. Then, he would do the next swatch, stopping to wipe off the tool after each graft, or so he saw the wax. To his eye, it was much like an inert skin which he, the

surgeon, had to remove, yes, no mean skill was required to strip this capping wax without damaging the miniscule cells beneath. He was beginning to take pleasure in the job. He would have made a good surgeon, he decided. Out of the corner of his eye, he was looking to see if Alois-Junior might also be admiring his command of the procedure.

I can add that the supposition he had a talent for bodily operations had begun to warm his loins. A woman once told him that a certain surgeon of her acquaintance was one of the two best lovers she had ever had. Alois was the other. How he had enjoyed that remark. Of course. He had no fear of the flesh and neither did a surgeon—brothers under the skin!

After a time, nicely pleased with himself, he handed the de-capping tool to Alois-Junior who ~~proceeded~~, after mangling one swatch and then the next, proceeded to get ~~to soon become~~ better at the job. No time at all, and he was as deft as his father. This occasioned pride in Senior, but a touch of disappointment as well. Truth, there seemed no great difference in their results. Now, to make it worse, Alois-Junior said, "This is as easy as scraping icing off a cake."

"Watch out for the cells," said Alois-Senior. "Don't damage them with your big mouth."

Adi had been allowed into the room to watch, and Alois-Junior extended the de-capping tool toward his brother as if to say, "Want some?"

Klara reproved him on the instant. "Why are you offering your little brother a mouthful of wax? He could choke on it."

"No, no," said Alois-Junior "it is a legitimate offer. It is wax with some honey sticking to it." He nodded. "I do not think that Adi would be so silly as to swallow the wax."

When Klara glared at him, Junior took a piece off the tool and proceeded to chew it vigorously himself, then extracted the residue from his mouth and nodded. Klara could only look away.

Soon, the task grew more difficult—they had to strip the layer of wax that was on the back side of the tray. The frames had been inserted vertically in order to leave room for the bees to build ~~their thousands of~~ wax cells on ^{two} ~~two~~ surfaces, not one. To remove the second coating, however, took longer. More honey was lost. Some leaked from the front, and more from the rear. Indeed, it was not unlike dealing with a piece of cake which

had icing on top and bottom. Soon enough, Klara had to take over. It was apparent that she had the cleverest fingers ^{of them all,} ~~for this.~~

All the same, it took a few hours. As each tray was uncapped, it had to be slotted into the honey extractor, where Angela was now at work turning the crank. With devotion, she followed her father's instructions. "Yes, yes, move slowly now as you start, yes, just as you are doing it. Look inside! The honey is beginning to come out of the combs. Keep it slow, yes. Don't speed up on that crank. Not yet. Slow, Angela, slow." (He could have been driving a dray and calling to his horses.)

It was a strain. The slower Angela went, the longer it took for the centrifugal force to fling the honey onto the metal sides of the extractor bucket down whose walls it could drip to a funnel. But if she sped up, the increased centrifugal force could loosen the wax of each little cell, and too much would fly off with the honey.

Before long, Alois-Junior had to take over. His sense of how to maintain the speed of the crank reduced the stress. By the end, the very end, Klara even let Adi turn the handle a few times.

Now there was silence in the kitchen as they listened to the ^{in a murmur} sound of
 of honey dripping down the walls of the extractor bucket.

Alois-Senior was ready to gather it for storage by way of a petcock at the bottom, and Klara was prepared with a coarse sieve and a fine one. After which, she held everyone back. It was absolutely necessary, she told them, that she and Angela spend another hour filtering the product through cheesecloth. Moreover, she was determined to save the wax as well. Beeswax had real value. It could produce the finest grade of candles. So **Mr. Meyerhofer** had told her at the Fischlham store. Alois snorted. He could have told her that already, he said.

Adi was the most impatient. He wanted honey, he wanted to gorge. ^{however,} But ^{he} not even his mother would let him, "Be patient," she said, "this honey has to settle."

^{Why?} "Why?" It is there," he cried. "It wants us to taste it."

"No," she said, "it is full of bubbles."

"I don't care."

"You must. Bubbles make honey uncomfortable."

^{"they don't,"} "It doesn't," said Adi. "I know."

talk to me about this name

"You don't. Air in honey," said Klara, "is as uncomfortable ^{to} ~~for~~ the honey, as gas would be on your stomach." She did not really know if this was true, but she hardly cared. It felt true. Besides, it would be good for Adi to wait. Patience could only strengthen his character.

Tears came into his eyes. That was to be expected. Whenever he was denied, he was quick to weep.

"Think of this honey," she said to Adi. "It has gone through so much. Such a great deal. It was living in one place so quietly and the bees were its friends. Now, they are gone and look at all that has happened. We have been shaking it and scraping it. Then we have been spinning it. Now, the honey does not know where it is. Let it sit. We will wait. Tomorrow, we can have the party."

-5-

No party took place on the next day. Foam and bits of wax had collected on the surface of the honey. Klara scraped it off carefully, but even so, the feast was postponed.

For one thing, Klara ^{now} insisted on stirring the honey each day. She did not know quite why, but insisted it was necessary. Sometimes she stirred it every ten minutes ^{when} ~~that~~ she was in the kitchen, and then dragooned Angela and Junior, despite their protests, to fill in for her ~~when necessary~~.

This, she told them, was to keep the honey from becoming hard. She remembered from her childhood, she told them, even if their father did not

know. Once in a while, she told them, a wife can see farther than her husband. Why not? God gives His gifts to everyone.

Finally, she gave way to the chorus and declared the honey to be ready. She still had misgivings. But they had their party. Alois-Senior had considered inviting Der Alte until Klara was quick to veto such a notion.

"This must be for the family ^{alone,} she said. ~~"For the family alone."~~

So they each took a spoon and stood in a circle, all but Paula whom Klara held in her arms and fed by way of her forefinger. The others licked their spoons. Instantly, they were ready for more. Klara had baked a sponge cake and offered slices dipped into this communal trove, but Senior and Junior and Angela and Adi just kept licking their spoons, yield after yield.

It was as if they were drunk. All of them. In separate ways, but certainly each and every one was having an exceptional good time. For Alois, it was as special as good French brandy (which he had tasted three times in his life.) This honey was magical. It gave him memories of Fanni, splendid memories he had not permitted himself to enjoy for years. That had been true heat. What a bitch! What a witch! Too bad! She had paid a

great price. To die so young. Yes, she had loved him too much, and the thought of such an overabundance of love, excitement, and his old but so successful treacheries to Anna Glassl mixed well with the taste of the honey, yes, he might just as well be drunk.

And Klara, filled with notions of the illimitable panoply of God's gifts, thought again of a young fellow she had liked back in Spital when she was very young, even a year or two before Alois came to visit the farm, this uncle who would be her man for life. But the other fellow had been so nice. They had held hands once, although she had never kissed him, not even that. But this honey must have stolen into her heart because she realized now with all her heart—so beautiful a memory—that she had been so happy when she held hands with that farmer boy, happier than she had ever been with Alois. Such was life. One had to be careful. One could not live with honey every day. She was careful now to eat the cake and leave the spoon alone.

Alois-Junior was thinking of Der Alte. He felt such confidence in these thoughts. It had been something in the way the old man looked at him. Eyes so moist. The old man had looked like he was ready to open his

mouth and wet his lips and do the thing some of the younger boys back in Spital had done for him already. Once or twice. Then, more than once or twice. The honey was telling him the truth. He had liked it. He had tried to get a girl to do it, but she had screamed. Maybe it would happen here with one girl in Fischlham. He was old enough. Ready for tricks.

And now he remembered the older boys who had wanted him to do the same for them. One had even twisted his arm. When he yelled no, he just wouldn't, this big fellow hit him in the stomach. He had been smart enough to throw up. That discouraged the big fellow. Now, maybe, he could enjoy something with Der Alte. It would get him ready for the girls ~~in~~ *he had in* his mind. Give her a ride on Ulan. Bareback.

Angela was off in her dream. The honey made her feel nicer than she had ever felt. A truly funny sensation. So strong. She felt as if there were another person in her, someone new, someone good to feel. Was it right to feel so strongly?

If the question now exists how it is possible for a devil like myself to enter the thoughts of this family when little Adolf is my only true client, I will give credit to the honey. We have among our gifts the

power to invest many a substance with a trace of our presence. If we respect such a faculty, if we keep it fresh, and are careful not to abuse ^{such} ~~the~~ power, then that trace can, for a short period, enter the thoughts of a man or ^a woman or ^a child without costing us the responsibility of ~~having~~ investing ⁱⁿ them. This delicate link, carried off with finesse, can remain ^{every} for ^{a few} days. (I had to think with regret of how agreeable it would have been to offer Nicholas the Second one good taste of Alois' honey.) In any case, I suspect that was why Klara kept stirring the collection. By instinct, she wished to serve as an impromptu angel against our inroads. Of course, the reverse occurred. Her interventions only intensified the property I had added to the honey. I had, you see, been expecting just such behavior from her.

I did not spend time with Edmund and Paula. Before it was over, the boy would gorge too much and soil his pants, and the baby had a touch of colic from the honey on Klara's finger. But, that was later. At first, they kept smiling ~~and smiling~~ with such innocent glee that all the others were laughing at them.

Adi was the most interesting. As I anticipated, he went wild. The sweet had an effect on him equal to three cups of coffee for Alois-Junior or schnapps for the father on an empty stomach. So Adi made a point of giving sticky kisses to Klara and Angela, delighting in their screams, and the panic with which they wiped his kisses off their mouths. Klara, particularly. To scrub her mouth was a reflex, but when she saw a hitch in Adi's laughter, as if he had been ^{so} rebuked by the expression on her face, ~~and~~ ^{that} ~~so~~ ^{had to pop up} up popped the first tear in his eye, she caught the boy and kissed him with all the muscular intensity of a mother doing her duty, and Adi, not knowing whether he had been rewarded or further rebuked, snuck up on Angela with new honey on his mouth and a ^{small} ~~big~~ gob on his hand all the better to caress her hair.

Angela started screaming. There was hatred in the sound. He had ripped her away from ~~that~~ ^{the} delightful presence ~~who had been~~ ^{set of sensations that were} cavorting in the ~~lower part~~ of her belly. But even as Angela was catching her breath to scold him, Adi was off and prancing around Alois-Junior who froze him with ~~no~~ ^{more} ~~than~~ a look.

Edmund was left. Adi moved in behind, full of the power implicit in sneakiness itself, and left Edmund with so much honey on his head, that the two-year-old dropped some more caca into his pants, whereupon Adi went up to Klara, pointed at Edmund, and said, "Mother, I did not make messes like that when I was two years old. This Edmund, he is always dirty."

Thereby, he handed Angela her quick revenge. She was there on the spot to tell Klara what had happened, and proved so precise in her description, that Klara began to scold Adi with words she had not used before, not to him. "This is a disgrace. Do you understand? It is a sin to be cruel to those who are smaller than you. How can you be so bad? God will punish you. He will punish all of us." She spoke with woe. She did not wish to spoil this splendid family occasion but must do it for the sake of the others, for Angela, and for poor little Edmund, dirty again. "How can you play such a trick?" she said to Adi. "Edmund loves you so much."

This time she actually did want to make Adi cry. Instead, she was the one with tears in her eyes. He—perhaps it was the honey—felt as important to himself as he had ever been in his six and a half years. He was enraged at this rebuke. He glared at Angela. He whispered to himself, "I will never

forgive her. That is a fact!" And with it all, he was so proud of himself. He had brought his mother to tears, even to outright weeping. "Let her cry for once. Not me. It is time for her to learn."

-6-

I will now describe the carnal act of Alois-Junior and Der Alte. This is with some distaste. Be it understood, I am without moral judgments on these matters. As devils, we are directly obliged to be interested in every form of the embrace, dedicated, casual, perverse, or, as the Americans say, missionary—"I ^{got} was on top and whaled away." We are, of course, much more interested in sexual deeds that fall into no established habit. Routine practices—the Cudgels, I believe, would agree—are inimical to our purposes and to theirs. First sexual encounters, however, are rarely to be ignored. We speak of them as primes. The stakes tend to be larger. Few primes take place without some representative of the Maestro and the D.K.

in attendance. Fucking—to employ that most useful, all-but-cosmopolitan, and near-onomatopoetic word, (so close to the meats and fats of the occasion)—is of real interest to both sides. Much can happen, and quickly! Old habits, whose presence in the psyche are as heavy as breastworks in trench warfare, can be razed ~~sometimes~~. That is a matter of direct importance to the Cudgels and to ourselves—whose ox is being gored?

Small surprise, then, if we are free of moral judgment, and alert to practical estimates. Will this particular joining weaken our position or enhance it?

I was repelled, therefore, by what took place. Der Alte, after a few habitual courtesies and social commonplaces, designed on this occasion to shield his excessive pleasure, (and instant alarm) on seeing Alois-Junior at his door—what if it all turned out a disaster?—soon came to recognize (given decades of experience in these matters) that Alois-Junior was here for the precise gift Der Alte had dreamed of offering him ever since they met. "I am so glad you desired to visit," he repeated several times in the first few minutes, to which Alois finally replied, "I woke up this morning thinking about you. So, here I am."

The hitching post was some fifty feet away outside, but Der Alte could hear Ulan swishing his tail. He knew enough not to spend one second more in conversation, but moved over to Alois-Junior, knelt before him, laid his hand upon the boy's crotch. Whereupon—fierce Jack-in-the-box—Alois-Junior was on his feet, pants unbuttoned, and full of a happy, blood-filled organ, thrust it at once into Der Alte's mouth—poor old man!—those yearning, long-unemployed lips.

It was during the next moments that I became displeased. If I am free of moral judgment. I am hardly void of my notion of good taste, and Der Alte demeaned himself. To say it straight, he slobbered all over the boy, and spluttered raucously when Junior thrust a full discharge down his throat. Like a baby, Der Alte peed in his pants. It was a species of discharge—the best urination he'd had in months. Then he was all over Alois-Junior with kisses, plus a variety of verbal endearments I will not repeat here. "You taste sweet, your heart is good," is perhaps the most manageable example to offer, and, of course, the most absurd, for Alois-Junior did not have to be a client for me to perceive that his heart was cold, and well-coordinated in its beating. His concern was loyal to himself. Like all such very young men,

he was filled with disgust for this quondam partner, and left as soon as he could.

That took a few minutes. He had no wish to be entangled for the most part of an hour with endearments that sat on his skin like spider webs. On the other hand, his practical nature kept him present long enough not to insult Der Alte directly. That could interfere with a return visit. Who knew? If he did not succeed in the next few days in convincing one particular farm girl he had in mind, then back he would come to this old ~~miss~~ ^{miss}pot. Alois-Junior was the stuff out of which clients are made—at the age of fourteen, he already understood sex in a manner that was ideal for us—he would soon be adept at accumulating many a dominance by way of his priapic gifts. That we do look for. So many of our male clients have weak dicks. We never know when an erection will be ~~ready and~~ standing ~~up~~ there for us. It creates endless problems (~~too complex to enter into as yet~~) but we can also manipulate impotence whole or partial into its own kind of effective instrument. For example, Adolf was to suffer prodigiously from such a condition (which we will yet see as we follow him through adolescence, war, and his early political manhood.)

Alois-Junior was the opposite sort. Full of his father's blood, his natural interest was in women. He would have spent all ^{his} ~~this~~ hours with them except for what he considered ^{the} ~~a~~ built-in ^{trap,} ~~snare.~~ Girls were too much like women, too attached to family responsibility. Boys and men, on the contrary, were right there—good for ^{getting rid of} ~~washing out~~ the constrictions of the body. And very nice to command, ^{a bay on, better, a groom man,}

He would have been perfect as a client. We ^{would} ~~could~~ have enhanced his powers and he could have served us ^{by} ~~in~~ a rich variety of ways. My instructions, ~~however,~~ were to leave him alone. The Maestro's eyes were for Adolf. I understood. It can be disruptive to work with two clients in one family especially if they are much apart in ^{character,} ~~nature.~~ Should one devil try to tend to both, ~~sq~~ their needs will collide. Envies will stir. And two separate devils rarely make a good union at overseeing two or more clients in one home. As the Maestro has been known to remark, one might as well be ^{looking} ~~using~~ opera stars, ^{for close cooperation.}

So, I stayed away from Alois-Junior. Soon enough, he did succeed in charming Greta Marie Schmidt, a strapping farm girl to whom he gave rides on Ulan. Before long, he had something like the same set of keys to her

private parts that Alois-Senior had had with Fanni when she was still a virgin. To use one more American vulgarism (I confess to an unseemly pleasure uttering them), Junior knew Greta Marie from "asshole to appetite." He had no desire to steal her virginity—that was ~~snare-land~~ ^{the guilt-in-trap}. Moreover, he did not really like her. She was a touch too crude for his developing nature. So he went back to Der Alte. From time to time. Despite the full-grown odors of the hut, some of those occasions were entertaining for the boy. Der Alte was full of tricks, langourous slides and inspired flutters of his tongue—all to the good for Junior, the pleasure-lover, but, of course, once ~~alone~~ ^{done}, Junior could barely look at him. The youth was as repulsed as ~~I was~~ ^{myself} by all that sobbing and gurgling, which accompanied just about every trip into the kid's verboten regions. The sad truth was that Der Alte's tongue was ~~most~~ ^{preternaturally} excited by the back door. Alois' cheeks began to feel like the entrance to a bounteously endowed temple. He ~~would wait~~ ^{would wait} until his pleasure rose high enough to ~~begin to make sounds himself~~ ^{be} ~~ready to turn around long enough to~~ ^{turn} explode in the old boy's gullet. Afterward, he stood still as a statue again, doubly disgusted by the recognition that his

father, Alois, was hopelessly in awe of Der Alte. "How well he can speak," his father had said.

But if Der Alte was so ready to serve ^{himself up} to the son, then how could Junior respect his father? All that awful, endless, nervousness about his bees? Always seeking advice from Der Alte and then paying through the ~~nose~~. Now that they had had their honey-feast, here was his father worrying already about when to extract the rest of the honey from the remaining two hives.

A small but near-disaster was the upshot to this. I was not at all surprised. Alois-Junior managed to leave one of those cherished hives out in the sun. For no good reason. Distaste for his father. ~~Spice~~.

~~is never acceptable because I have many of these in the garden~~

-7-

Indeed, it had been a near-disaster. His father came upon it in time, touched the box, felt the heat of the wood under the glare of the sun, recognized that the hive was not yet critically overheated. ~~So the bees were~~ not yet whipping about ~~between the trays~~ in such a frenzy that they would damage themselves. ~~Or destroy themselves.~~ He had come in time. Perhaps it had been just in time. He ~~lifted the hive and~~ ^{the hive} carried it back to the shade.

"What were you thinking, idiot?" he shouted at Alois-Junior.

The boy felt as if he had been pulled inside-out by the power of his father's voice. Such an ugly power. It came with the heft of a heavy blow. Adolescents can lose all sense of themselves when ^{un familiar} ~~such unexpected~~

punishment assaults them. That is because they are not only full of airs, poses, and witless shows of temperament, but, worse! At bottom, they possess no real age. In that instant, Junior ceased to be a youth of fourteen. Till then, he saw himself as "Fourteen," a clear concept, stark in its outlines. He had even pictured himself as XIV. In truth, like many another, he had developed more than one age. He possessed the calculations of a twenty-year-old, and yet in several corners of himself, ~~he~~ was as prone to self-betrayal as an eight-year-old caught ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ some foolishness. At this moment, he felt so brutally divided that he almost ~~began to cry~~ ^{started} ~~was~~ full of tears,

To his shame, he pleaded with his father. "You have given me so much good information," he said. "So new and so stimulating, dear respected father." He slapped himself on the forehead. "I confess it may have been too much for my ignorant head. I made a mistake. I know that now. But I believed I was supposed to put the hive in the sun, yes, for a few minutes—no more!—so as to warm the honey-combs. It was so cold last night! For spring—so cold! I hope I did not make a terrible error."

An inner part of himself had already begun to writhe. He could hear the sound of his own voice, so shrill, sliding off every grip he tried to keep

on some semblance of manhood. "You must forgive me, father. My mistake is an outrage. I cannot apologize sufficiently!"

He had dredged his exculpatory instincts, but he knew it was not enough. A weather-front had come up again in Alois-Senior—all the ^{stupid} ~~dark~~ depths of suspicion. "Think of this, Alois," his father said, and so quietly it was almost worse than his shout: "Our bees, all these bees, do their work by obeying the rules." Then he glared at Junior until the boy looked away. "They do not have patience with those who are weak or lazy. Or too selfish to remember their immediate duties."

He took hold of Junior's chin. His eyes would not let go of the boy's eyes. He pinched him on the chin, his thumb and forefinger as cruel as pincers. But the pain rallied the boy. Der Alte respected him, Junior, and, ~~more~~ ^{more}, much more, than Der Alte respected this father who ^{happened to be} ~~was~~ pinching him. That was so! ~~That was so true!~~ The thought came into his eyes and the exchange lasted long enough for Alois to feel a clear relief when the boy finally nodded and looked away. And once alone, Alois-Senior had to recognize that their altercation had taken a good bit from him. More than

expected. He felt as if a sixteen-year-old had been glaring back at him. A strong one!

If this bothered his sense of himself as a father, a good deal more was soon to come. Now, it was Klara. She received a letter from her mother which killed all the confidence Klara had tried to collect from her father, Johann Poelzl's, earlier letter. That communication had spoken so well of Alois-Junior. ~~that~~ ^{that} she had willed herself to believe ~~that~~ ^{the} earlier letter, ~~believe~~ it with all her heart. Or, had she? So soon as she read her mother's words, she wondered how she could have ~~believed~~ ^{thought for an instant} that Junior had changed at all.

Of course, the act of writing a letter was ~~a species of~~ agony for Johanna. Klara knew that. From the age of nine, she had been the one to ~~take care of~~ ^{respond to} the few letters that came to their house in Spital. Yet now, as if to emphasize the importance of this particular epistolary act, Johanna went on for a full page of the most painful halts and bumps. First, she insisted on listing Alois-Junior's virtues. He was so bright, very bright, she could tell that to anyone. Attractive, good to look at, she would say that too. Junior even brought back old memories of his father, your husband, Uncle Alois,

back then when your Uncle was so young, so attractive, a good young man, so responsible. All those years ago.

"Klara, I tell you," she now wrote, "I have to worry. What have we sent back [?] to you. Junior is wild. ^{must} If use the word, ⁺ wild. Klara, ~~keep an eye on that.~~ ⁼ ~~We~~ ^{Yes} had to send young Alois back. ~~That was such~~ had to be done. Johann even hires now a grown-up fellow for help, ~~in the field.~~ ~~No Junior here, we needed somebody to hire,~~ He is all right but ~~he~~ is a drunk. We pay wages to drunk. That is how much we lose by sending Junior back. But, this I also say. ^{This} The drunk is ~~very~~ bad, but, Klara, ~~he~~ is still better than Junior. We are not so afraid ⁴ ~~now.~~

Klara went to her sewing basket and took out the letter Johann Poelzl had written. Or, was supposed to have written. Who had handed the letter to her but Alois-Junior, yes, on the day he arrived? She searched the top shelf of a cupboard and found an old letter from her father, one she had taken the pains to wrap in a ribbon because it was his blessing on the birth of Edmund more than two years ago. The moment she looked at it now, she knew that Alois-Junior's piece of paper was not in her father's handwriting, no. The boy had written about how good he was, and it had been a forgery.

¹²¹⁴
Klara re-read her mother's letter and ~~suffered~~ a knot in her heart.

Johanna kept apologizing for her bad German, her inability to spell. Her poor mother!

Klara did not say anything to Alois-Senior until ~~well~~ after dinner. In bed, a little while before they were ready to sleep, he had begun to complain about Alois-Junior.

"I can't get any work from him," said Alois. "I speak to him, and he does not react. Not to my satisfaction. He is off with the horse. I don't want to worry, but I ^{do} ~~worry~~. He can get into trouble. He sees girls on the other side of the hill. In part, it is my fault, my conclusion not to raise potatoes this spring. Now, there is not enough real work. He ^{" knows} ~~says that~~."

She told him about her mother's letter then. He merely nodded.

"What are you going to say to him?" she asked.

"I will think about it," he told her. "I must take my time. The next step could be of consequence."

She was infuriated. She could not sleep well. There might as well have been a ^{bug} ~~tick~~ wandering around in the bedclothes. If Alois was not

ready to scold his son, she would have to. But she could hardly be ready for this. It was his son, after all.

On the following evening, not long before supper, Alois-Junior began to act as if he now knew ^{that} ~~what~~ Johanna's letter had ^{come,} ~~to say~~. It is the best explanation I can offer for why he chose to break an egg on Adi's head.

The occasion was simple enough. His girl, Greta Marie, had shown him a little more that afternoon of what she really was—a dull cow. So, the need for new endeavor was in his fingertips. Something new. Having felt like smacking Greta Marie around, the impulse now moved close to Angela. His sister was clucking again over her chickens, collecting each egg from each hen as if it were an ingot of gold—plain, dirty, hen-stained eggs. So, he took one out of her basket. Just to hear her scream. But when she did, he was ready to break the egg on her head. Only, he could not. She was his full sister—who else did he have? ^(So, he put the egg back) ^(Done the egg) But this act of absolution cost too much, ^{name here was} and Adi ^{up just} ~~was~~ beside him now, slunk ^(within reach) ~~that~~ smelly little hyena.

Right after coming back from his gallop with Ulan, he had seen Adi lying on the floor of ^{the} ~~the~~ barn, screaming away, one more temper tantrum. It was a sound to roil one's ears.

Junior ^{had} lifted him up in the air off the barn floor, then ^{5/2 smashed} jammed him down to a standing position, ^{his legs jamming into the floor}. "Keep quiet," said Alois-Junior.

"Try and make me," said Adi. ^{But he looked about to cry,}

~~Since Alois' return from Spital, a set of exchanges had developed,~~
^{Alois Junior}
~~between the brothers.~~ Each time that he pushed on Adi even a little, the kid would go ^{yowling} crying to his mother. Alois-Junior was soon aware that restraint was necessary. His kid brother had a mother—he didn't. He had to put up, therefore, with a species of truce.

On this late afternoon, however, there was Angela offering baby talk to her chickens, and Adi leering at him. So safe on his side of the truce.

"Try and make me."

^{It was then that}
 Junior took an egg out of Angela's basket, ^{5 smashed} popped it down on Adi's head, and rubbed in the yolk and fragments of shell.

~~Now~~, Adolf truly screamed. It was as if he had anticipated just this species of showdown ^{Now} for all on his own, he proceeded immediately to squeeze his gummed-up hair long enough to coat his palm with the spattered ^{some of the} yolk. ^{which he then} He wiped ~~that~~ on his shirt. Only it left no very large stain. So Adolf

^{another egg}
 lifted two more eggs from Angela's basket—out came a squeal from her!—
^{that}
 and broke ~~them all~~ over his own head, face, and shirt, in response to which
 he shrieked as loudly as if Alois-Junior had kicked him in the shins. Then
 he ran from the barn to the sanctuary of his mother in her kitchen. He was
 really crying now.

Vast screams. Klara came running back, holding Adolf by the hand,
 and burst into a tirade. She tried to tell Alois-Junior about the letter, but it
 all came out in no consecutive order. His lies, she told him, were worse
 than the filth left by the pigs in their sty. "They have an excuse. They are
 pigs. You have nothing. You are a brute. You are a pig. You are nothing
 but filth." She could not believe her words. They were so strong. To her
 surprise, Alois-Junior actually began to sob. In all of this, he had not had
 until now any real idea of how ready he had been to love her, and how ready
 she was to dislike him right down to the depths. Yes, secretly, he had
 thought she really did like him, yes, more than she did his father. Now, he
 did feel filthy. His ego was suffering a ~~direct~~ bereavement. ^{He could not bear that} So, just as
^{his}
 suddenly, the sobs ~~in his throat~~ were choked off by his will. He stopped
 crying on the instant, nodded formally, and walked away. He did not know

where the world would take him, nor when, but he understood that he would not remain long in Hafeld. He could not. He must soon say goodbye to everyone and to everything here, especially ^{to} his horse. Or, could he steal him?

This ^{last} idea proved too large for Alois-Junior ~~to retain altogether~~. Yet it was enough to know that, for the sake of his future self-respect, he would not leave until he was ready to strike back. That must come one way or another. Soon.

-8-

that night, they
~~They~~ were quiet at dinner ~~that night. All of them,~~ even Paula whom Klara kept at her breast. Alois-Senior was certainly preoccupied. He had been stung by his bees a few more times than the one or two or, occasionally, three, he was used to receiving on most days—that was part of the occupational hazard, no more. Tonight, he not only had little to say, but *hardly noticed* ~~did not notice~~ that the others were silent.

He was waiting for bed. Lately, Klara had begun to remove these bee-stings and, to his surprise, he *was able to* ~~could~~ enjoy *that* ~~it~~. She was skilled at this and never pulled *would she* ~~on the stingers so crudely~~ that you ~~could~~ suffer the wound ~~afterward~~ through the night. Done poorly, it ~~could~~ feel like a needle had

been left inside. A tiny wound but a real one, ready to puff up. ~~It throbbed.~~
Sometimes, ~~it~~ ^{the wound} felt personal, as if it refused, ~~out of~~ ^{frustration} meanness itself, to stop hurting. But Klara knew how to nudge the flesh gently where the stinger was peeping out, and then ~~not try to grip it, but~~ coax it forth with a little soft pressure, ~~and~~ so deftly.

He had begun to enjoy ~~such~~ ^{this} time together. ~~When they went to bed,~~ ^{Now, when} ~~on~~
~~this night,~~ ^{on this night,} he was looking to have his pains cared for. But first, ~~she had to~~
describe all that mess the boys had made, all that egg and shell. He did not care to listen. "Ach," he said, "it breeds bad feeling if you always take Adi's side."

"What are you saying? Tell me of something good we can expect from Junior."

"No," he said, "you must listen to me. We are obliged to look for a balance ~~between those boys.~~ ^{between those boys,} We must try. A good balance, ~~and~~ it will all quiet down. That is the secret."

A silence. It was followed by a deeper silence.

"I will try," she said at last.

Her instinct was to ^{reduce} close this space between them. If she didn't, the difference would increase. But could she believe that her husband was right? Young Alois was behaving like Fanni. Only ten times worse than Fanni could ever have tried to be. Yet, was it possible? Had she left a curse?

Well, their dreams were full of poor omens for more than a few nights. Alois-Junior kept giving a demonstration of his skills all through these last days of June, doing just enough good work to justify his right to go off one more time with Ulan. The boy had gotten good at handling his duties, ^{he} kept the hive boxes clean, and knew when and where to move the trays. He was even able to locate the Queen and put her into a Queen-cage without using the glass trap. Just like Der Alte, he could do it with his fingers.

He had also become the one to generate the prevailing mood at the table. The length of his silences weighed on them. No member of the family took a chance with him these days, not Alois-Senior, not even Adi.

It is possible that I exaggerate this force in young Alois, but he was certainly a ^{presence} force in his father's dreams.

~~Of course, we have to be careful of such conclusions. Milk-runs can become too routine or, to the contrary, concern one unduly. Usually, there is little we find in most men and women that is novel. The weight of worry can come from no more than the weight of repetition—whatever is the prevailing theme!—and Alois-Senior was all too ready to revisit his worries night after night. But, I remained intrigued by the dangers he saw coming toward him in these imaginary scenarios.~~

over-familiar with all this
 If I finally grew too familiar with them, (I tried not to lose my—
I knew nonetheless that
 understanding just because I was obliged to live daily with such material.

~~Alois-Senior was entitled to worry, because~~
 Alois all too well. What love the boy felt for horses! While riding Ulan, he felt as handsome as an officer squiring an elegant lady on one of the better streets of Vienna—how well the father understood that particular savory of emotion. But, he also knew what was hatching underneath. No tame chicken was enclosed in that shell. *egg shell* His son, Alois decided, might yet become a true lunatic. But for the girls, not the beasts. At present, the horse came first. Soon, it would be all about girls. The father knew this as well as if sperm was stirring in his own good equipment. The power of those first

revelations. Nothing could be better than the moment when a woman opened her legs before you. That first time! If you had an eye for the little differences, you knew twice as much about her as you learned from her face.

Alois-Senior would attest to that. The female organ! Whoever designed this form had been so intimate with the job. (This was about as close as

Alois ever came to the Creator.) Such a wonderful array of meats and

juices —
~~syrups~~ — a panoply of flesh in miniature — *such an offering* ~~full of archways and caverns and~~

lips. Alois was *a* poet ~~except~~ on this occasion! He was certainly no

philosopher, so he would not have known how to speak of Becoming, *or of*
state of existence when Being feels itself overt suddenly
~~now Being felt in the open, just revealed presence of Becoming~~ but all the

same, he could have tipped Heidegger off ~~to the root of it all~~. Becoming is,

yes, exactly, when a woman opens her legs!

Let me leave it at this: if Alois could have talked to his son, he would

have had a good deal to tell him. But he could never *venture to speak of* ~~such matters.~~

these matters

(Having been a guardian of the border, which is to say a policeman, all his

life, he could not even trust his children. A good policeman had to *respected* ~~handle~~

trust as if he were *handling* ~~transporting~~ radium. Trust was filled with risk. To offer

your closest thoughts to others was to ask them to betray your wisdom.

Still, if he could have spoken to young Alois, he would have been quick to inform him that there was nothing better than to be a young man interested in girls—he, the father, could tell him the best of stories if it came to that—"but, young Alois, I must impart this to you: Young women can be dangerous. Often, they are the sweetest angels, a few of them maybe, but it is not them you have to be ready to deal with. It is their fathers, their brothers. It can even be a relative. Once, I nearly received a beating from a girl's uncle. I was big enough, but he was bigger. I had to talk my way out of it. So will you. It is certain that you will know how to talk, young Alois, but that is an ability which works better in a good-sized town. And works best of all in the city. Out here in Hafeld and Fischlham—not so good—country people can be difficult."

There was so much he ^{would} ~~could~~ have told his son. If only they could ^{confided in} ~~have spoken to one another!~~ ^{It} ~~This was at the core of much that made Alois~~ ^{a separation} ~~sad.~~ I must say, however, that it can certainly be construed as ^{his own} ~~his own~~ ^{even} ~~doing.~~ Maintenance of authority was ^{even} ~~more~~ important to him than ~~the life of~~ ^{his} ~~his~~ love for his oldest son. ~~That was, as I have noted, a buried affection of~~

~~some real size, but never enough to endanger the more valuable quality of
always being able to present himself as a man of authority.~~

So he could not be so generous as to offer the core of his advice:

"Enjoy every woman you can," Alois would have told Junior, "but always
be aware of the price. Especially out in the country. Listen, young Alois,"

he would have said, "country people do not have enough to do with their
minds. Their backs are strong, but their lives remain much too unchanging. ~~the same.~~ Year after

year, it is the same. They are bored. So, they start to think about the

wrongs that have been done to them. I say to you, son, watch out! Do not

get a girl in trouble. When the time comes, do not be too certain that you

will be able to deny that you are the fellow who made her pregnant.

Sometimes, that does not work."

Alois lay in bed, drenched in perspiration. His son's drama unfolded
before him with all the power of a fine tragedy in a lush Viennese theatre.

In his mind, he now said to young Alois, "Do not make fun of the father of
the girl you have made pregnant. Ten years from now, he will find out

where you are living, and he will come to your door, and he will blow your

head off with a shotgun. ~~Pay attention.~~ I have heard more than one story

like that. ~~(Never insult a peasant who has nothing much to think about.)~~
See pay attention. / too little

~~All this was not of great interest to me, but, finally, it was amusing.~~

much
 If Since devils know how to ~~live on both sides of the veil with which~~ men and
~~women keep themselves quarantined from a clear view of their motives, I~~
can conceal from own

soon understood that behind all this splendid advice to young Alois, the

father was worried ~~more~~ about his own safety, yes, Alois-Senior's bare
~~it could be his buttocks that were exposed!~~
~~buttocks were all exposed out there behind the veil!~~
felt as if

~~On~~ One evening, over a month ago, while having his beer in the

Fischlham tavern, there had been a bit of talk which he ~~had~~ dismissed at the

time as idle, ~~(some prattle about a fellow who lived on the other side of the~~
no more than

tavern a few miles further away from Hafeld. Two of the farmers who

drank with him actually knew the man, and it seemed this fellow had

~~actually~~ spoken about Alois. Yes, more than once, they assured him, "He

knows you, and he made it clear. He don't like you." They had laughed.

"I assure you," Alois said in all of his local majesty, "if I ever met ~~the~~
~~individual, I have forgotten it. His name means little to me.~~
he's
does not mean anything

Indeed, it ~~did not~~ ^{did not} ~~mean anything~~ ^{the name}, until ~~he~~ ^{he} came back to Alois in the middle of a sleepless June night illuminated with a moonlit view of fields outside their bedroom window. ~~he~~ ^{he} ~~was~~ ^{he got up to look} ~~view of silver fields, and Alois thought of~~ ^{view of silver fields, and Alois thought of} ~~how happy they seemed to lie fallow~~ ^{how happy they seemed to lie fallow and} and not be obliged to entertain the gluttony of young potatoes growing for ~~not have to satisfy~~ ^{however,} more of the earth's riches. ~~but~~ ^{and a disruption} Alois made the mistake of looking at the full moon too long. The face of this fellow who had declared his dislike of Alois Hitler came back to him.

Good Lord! As a reflex of childhood, Alois invoked the Dummkopf's name only when there was bad news. ~~Yes~~ ^{one} ~~Good Lord!~~ ^{Yes, he} That fellow was a smuggler, yes, he had caught him in Linz ~~one day~~ ^{one day} he could certainly remember now. The fool had been trying to take some ~~kind of~~ ^{kind of} contraband over into Germany. Alois could not even recall what the illegal stuff had turned out to be—~~there were so many restrictions they all tried to~~ ^{had been so many such cases} ~~circumvent~~—but now he certainly remembered the hatred in the man's eyes.

When they looked at each other, the expression of the other had been ~~so vile~~ ^{offensive} enough to tempt Alois to strike him—~~what a vile look!~~ ^{what a vile look!}—that Alois had almost struck him, and that would have been an act he ~~had~~ ^{had} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~considered~~ ^{considered} entirely beneath himself. Certainly, he had struck no one during these last years on Customs duty.

Now, he felt a little closer to those memories, Could the full moon be
~~a mirror for such phenomena of the mind?~~ ^{to one's memories?} ^{now, and} It was there before him. ~~Clearly.~~
^{clear-ly)} (He had not struck the fellow, ^{no, but} but, yes, (he had certainly mocked him. "You
 are angry at me?" he had said to the man. "Be angry at yourself, ^{You are a} you fool. ^{Even} ^{I could have caught you} ~~Even~~
~~could have caught you~~ my first day on duty when I was eighteen. That is
 the kind of fool you are."

If he was going to recall it all properly, could it be that the smuggler
 had not begun to look at him with such hatred until Alois began to tease
 him? ~~There was middle of the night logic to this.~~ Smugglers don't hate you
 for getting caught—^{that is)} part of the game—but don't mock them. How often had
 he said as much to young officers. "Make fun of them, and they will never
 forgive you."

In the morning, after a night full of fear—yes, that smuggler had
 actually been sentenced to a year in jail, and now he was free—Alois got out
 of bed with the recognition that there was not going to be a hell of a lot of
 sleep for him until he got a new dog, a truly fierce hound. Luther was good
 for nothing by now but yodeling at the moon on a night when nothing was

happening and no one was stealing across the fields toward the house with

odium in their hearts.

~~If that were to take place, ~~from old letters would probably~~~~
~~include~~

-9-

It so happened that
 Indeed, ^Athe right kind of dog was available. ~~One of the farmers~~ ^{he}
 knew was looking to sell a German Shepherd. "He ^{is} ~~was~~ the best of ^{his} ~~the~~ litter,
 which is why I have kept him all these months and ^{have} ~~fed~~ him, this gross
 guzzler. Can you afford to labor ^{longer} ~~long~~ hours ~~for him~~? Because he eats all
 the time. *That is why* ~~I will sell him to you for next to nothing. Maybe he will make~~
 you as poor as he has made me. Then, I can laugh, and you will cry."

Good beer talk. But Alois took a walk the morning after his close
 recollections with the faculties of the full moon, and ^{decided to say} ~~bought~~ the hound ^{to}
~~and not a cent for a cheaply~~
 cheaply as promised.

when it came to dogs dogs
He was a good wild one. Alois could tell. ~~He~~ had always had a nice understanding ~~with dogs~~. He could stare right into the eye of a fierce one, yet because he felt a moment of love for the poor ugly old bastard, the animal would usually respond ^{well}. ~~Alois could talk to dogs~~. If the beast growled a bit, Alois would say, "Oh, fellow, how can you speak so to me? I like you, I approach you as a friend." And he even knew enough to bring his hand to the dog's mouth as a token of friendship. He had never made a mistake. The one time in a hundred when a dog was actually fierce enough to bite, Alois could sense that, too, and he would extend the forefinger and pinky of the near hand, his fingers directed to the dog's eyes so that they looked like pointed horns, and the animal might keep up his imprecations but he would not attack.

So, Alois was delighted that this overgrown, six-month-old German Shepherd with the regal name of Friedrich was fierce. Better still, he was a one-man dog. Let the children recognize that quickly. Let Klara complain. Let young Alois mind his business. He would be the only one to feed Friedrich. And he would change his name. To hell with remembering King Friedrich the Great. He would call the dog Spartaner. Like a Greek. A

warrior. Any ex-smuggler who had thoughts of coming to the farm in the middle of the night, would not dare ^{not know, not} with both dogs present. You could take care of one with a piece of meat and a cloth ^{dipped in} ~~full of~~ chloroform, ^{then} but the other would ~~still~~ be there to attack you.

How Alois enjoyed the walk ^{back} over the hills with the dog. He let him off the leash early, threw sticks for Spartaner to return, taught him to stop and sit at command, even though he ^{probably} ~~knew~~ that already. Alois ^{no question} ~~merely~~ ^{this dog had} keened up this good dog's reflexes. Alois found himself in such a fine mood that he almost wrestled with the hound. Indeed, he restrained himself only because it was too soon. Wonderful. Quick love between a dog and a man is close to a perfect event, he decided.

The animal did not cease grinning with an all-knowing, all-breathing tongue that lolled at the edges of his grin until they came in view of the farm. But now, it was as if he knew, and most suddenly, that there were problems awaiting him.

Of course. It was Luther. Alois was ready to clap himself on the forehead for having been in such a state of blind certainty that he had not thought once of how the two dogs might get along on first meeting.

They didn't. They were terrified. Each was most afraid of the other, and sick with shame at their own fear. They nipped with their teeth at the parts of their own body they could reach, clawed at newly discovered fleas beyond the reach of their teeth, they barked at bees and butterflies, they ran in circles that did not overlap with each other, they staked out the territories.

The problem was that Luther, ^{while} now an old dog, ~~he~~ was larger than Spartaner, considerably so, but he was making the big mistake of lumbering around enough to tell the young dog what to capitalize upon ^{and if} when they had their fight.

If Alois had had more than an afternoon, perhaps he could have brought them into some variety of strained mutual existence, but they went to war two hours after ~~the~~ first sight of each other. The family ran out in the yard to witness them rolling on the ground, ^{plus} teeth as awesome as sharks, blood on their faces and their flanks.

Alois, being the furthest away at the moment, was the last to arrive. He was also the first and only one to dive into the fray. He had no fear of either animal. He was outraged. How did they dare to get into this? He had

told Luther an hour before to shut up, sit down, let live. This war was disobedience.

He roared at them to stop, and on the same impulse, flung them apart with his bare hands. The sound of his voice was enough. They lay on the ground, half stunned, breathless, two yards apart, showing open gashes on their noses and bloody fur at their throats. Spartaner kept panting as if the breath he needed was just beyond his tongue, ~~and that tongue kept shaking.~~ Luther was ill within. The sum of his years had exploded ~~in this hour.~~ He looked at Alois with such pain, and so full an expression that Alois could all but read what he said: "I have worried about you and the safety of your house for all these years, and you yell at me as if I mean no more than that interloper you just brought in." Alois came near to petting him, and tenderly, but that would have spoiled his plans for turning Spartaner into a great defender of a dog, truth, Alois recognized that he would have to live with cruelty itself. Luther must go.

It was obvious that the younger dog had won. As their wounds healed, Luther did not try to eat until after Spartaner had gorged himself. This regime continued even when Klara made a point of putting out separate

bowls at a distance from each other. Then, Spartaner proceeded to gobble up all the second bowl as well. It hardly mattered. Luther had lost ~~his~~ appetite.

Alois ^{now} ~~had~~ decided what the next step ^{must} ~~would~~ be. He would have to ~~decide how to~~ dispose of Luther. Good old Luther was probably ready by now to lick the hand of the first thief who came strolling over in the middle of the night.

-10-

My ~~greatest~~ ^{was for} interest in this dog fight ~~soon shifted to~~ its effect on Adi.

This was the second time that he had heard his father roar, once at young Alois for leaving that hive in the sun, and now again to shock the dogs ~~out of their near-to-death grip on~~ ^{apart} ~~each other.~~

What mastery had been in his father's voice! What a complete command of the situation! The fearlessness with which his father had leaped at ~~these~~ two beasts entangled in one fury, blood flying from their strings of saliva, ~~yet~~ ^{these} ~~even as~~ ^{had} his father had pulled ~~those~~ animals apart, ~~thrown~~ them apart. So fearlessly! Adi was in love with his father. For a few days that gave issue to a sense of inheritance, of brave man's glory there for him

to share. Whenever Adi had an opportunity now, he would go off into the woods by himself—no small matter—but he forced himself to be as fearless as he could manage against the weight of all the silence and mystery of these immense trees quietly muttering above ~~while nearer to him were all the insects hidden in or near the ground, and all of this so small in sound~~ against the greater silence of the forest. ^{There is} But then, even shivering in the warmth of the June air, Adi would work on the power of his voice. He would roar at the trees until his throat was too sore to open his mouth.

I was delighted with him. I was beginning to see why the Maestro might be exhibiting ^{some} such special interest. And I was amused at how Adi was ^{so quickly} ready to credit his voice with something of his father's power. If, after his best attempts to bellow, a few leaves did shift by way of a passing zephyr, Adi knew that only the power issuing from his throat could have inspired this breeze on so still a day.

Once he almost met his father in the woods, ^{but I stopped} ~~Alerted by one of the~~ resident Hafeld devils, ~~I gave orders to divert him. It was easy for us at this point to steer Adi in any of a number of directions particularly while he was~~ ^{Adi away,} in the woods, and I did not want father and son to meet. Not on this

occasion. The father might have mocked the boy for being so crazy as to
 yelp at the trees, and the boy might have ^{crept} ~~shunk~~ up behind his father and ^{thereby} ~~so~~
 would have witnessed the most peculiar execution of Luther. ~~That~~, I was
 looking to avoid. ^{that} ~~The shock might prove not readily classifiable and the~~
 Maestro would be displeased. ~~"With all we have to contend with, our~~
~~strongest tool is clear results. Otherwise, we will be in danger of~~
~~maundering around just like the Dummkopf."~~

~~That~~ ^{that after noon, it} was a long walk for Alois-Senior and longer for Luther. One of his
 hind legs had become infected from a laceration ~~received in the battle~~. He
 limped ~~in pain~~ and after a few hundred yards ^{he} began to hobble.

I think Luther understood what was going on. While the Maestro
 must certainly possess the ability to monitor any thoughts that pass between
 humans and animals, he does not encourage us to exercise our instincts in
 such a direction. Or, at least, not among the devils I work with. For that
 matter, and this is a concern I hesitate to develop too openly, I often am near
 to painfully curious concerning what I do not know about the departments,
 out-reaches, special services, zones, belts, salients, precincts, orbits,
 spheres, beats, and occult enclaves that the Maestro commands. Particularly

this last—occult enclaves. For a devil, I know no more about this last than what I am instructed to use directly in my work. The curses, spells, and incursions into madness which legend would have available to all devils, is, actually, meted out to us as tools only when needed.

So, ~~as I say~~ ^{B-me}, it was not common to follow the thoughts offered and thoughts received which passed between Alois and Luther as directly as ~~any~~ ^{I could have done the same with two humans}. ~~two humans might have chosen to direct their unsaid words back and forth,~~ ^{All the same} but I was at no loss ~~here~~ to recognize that Luther knew his end was near and Alois, willingly or not, was fully occupied by ~~now~~ in thinking of how ~~and~~ ~~why~~ he would dispose of the dog.

To begin with, he decided he would not shoot him. He did own a shotgun and a pistol. The first would be too messy, and the second made him uneasy. It would dishonor Luther. Yes, just a bit. Pistols were ~~an~~ ~~execution~~ reserved for malefactors. Whether in cold blood or self-defense, a bullet was ^{not only but} so impersonal, a shattering end.

Let me remark at how surprised I was to read Alois' thoughts so easily. True, I was familiar with the workings of his mind in sleep and so my insights could collect his conscious thoughts as adroitly as one can

connect the dots in a child's puzzle. But still, he was not a client. Yet, I knew him better than many of my clients.

I think I may have been granted a few exceptional powers for this particular service. If Adi was ~~one of~~ my major assignments, ~~then, indeed, I~~ *I had also been* should be granted a few subsidiary powers, enough at least to get to know the father and mother with something like the clarity *of possessing* ~~obtained through the~~ *the mind of* committed step of taking on a client.

~~And~~ *indeed* Alois' thoughts were interesting on this occasion. He had decided that the only way to dispatch his old companion Luther was by the stroke of a knife directly into his heart. Poison would never do—worse than a pistol or a shotgun—wholly treacherous and it might involve hours of pain. Alois did not know (or care that much) whether men and women had souls, but he was in no doubt about dogs. ~~Yes, they~~ *Yes, they* had souls. Treated properly, they were ~~even~~ the epitome of loyalty. So, in turn, one had to be loyal to the soul of one's dog, yes. One would not blast him into the next place with the reverberations of the bullet—what a shock to the soul!—no, it would have to be the incisive stroke of a knife, fierce and clean as the heart itself in the moment its integrity is severed.

Alois kept thinking these thoughts as he trudged through the woods, slowed and slowed again by the hobbling of the old hound, and soon there came a point where Luther sat down and refused to move and looked for a long time into Alois' eyes. I could swear that if he had speech at his command, he would have said, "I know you are going to kill me and that explains why I have been afraid of you all my life. Now, I am still afraid, but I will not move further. Can't you see, I am losing the last of my dignity as you insist on taking me further and further into the woods? I can no longer control my bowels and I do not want to keep pushing my legs along while they are covered with filth, so here I sit, and you will have to lift ~~me~~ and carry me if you wish to go any further."

Alois blew his nose. He could see that the dog would not move. But they had not yet come to the ground he had selected for the killing. In advance, in his mind, he had chosen a small sharp gully one-half mile further along where he could lay the carcass ^{down} (in the ~~hollow~~ crease of the divide and cover him with mud and leaves, ^{then} ~~with~~ branches, and finally, lay over him the hollow trunk of a huge branch large enough when turned

~~upside down~~
~~around~~ to hold and cover the body. If necessary, he would weight it with stones.

That had been Alois' plan. He had thought it through, every detail in the consecutive logic of such a burial—so much better than being buried under earth, his dog was not a damned potato!—but now he saw that Luther would not go on. And he, Alois, so regrettably, was no longer strong enough to carry him up and down along a rough trail for the next half mile. So it ~~could have to~~ ^{must} be here: Afterward, he would go back ^{to the farm,} get a pick and a shovel and dig a grave in ^{this} ~~the~~ copse, ^{which was, in fact,} a green and decent place, girded by a half-circle of trees and some scrub brush, yes, it could be done here. Poor Luther, under nothing but earth.

So Alois laid the dog down, turned him on his back, looked into his face which had sickened in the last few minutes as directly and recognizably as the face of any old creature whose liver is rushing to the grave ahead of him, a sad old face to be certain, and Alois unbuckled the flap of the holster that held his hunting knife, laid the point of the blade at the center of the arch of Luther's rib-cage and pushed it in to the hilt. The dog's face contorted, the sound of his expiring came out of him and it was fearful to

the ear. For it was much more human than Alois had expected. Then, the dog's face passed through one place and another and with many expressions of anger and dead gloom and bright life before it settled into the face it would have for the first few hours of its death before it all began to decompose. Luther now looked like a young dog again, and some indefinable pride had returned as if he had always been more beautiful than anyone had realized, and could have become a great warrior if it had been asked of him when he was young, yes, he did look very much like a warrior with his features composed into this near-final expression.

It was a better death than he had hoped for, Alois decided. All the same, he felt hollow. He was pleased with his acumen, he had made the right choice, but he was shocked by the changes he had seen in the last moments ~~presence~~ of the dog, ~~through all of the many seconds it took,~~

Alois had almost ten years left to live, but on that afternoon in the forest he passed a junction on the road to death and so he wondered afterward and often whether he was a better man or a worse one because of this commitment to dispose of Luther in person, and, yes, honorable enough to bury him afterward.

-11-

In the course of a walk ^{that} which Luther and he had taken through the woods, the dog lay down to rest and died. Peacefully. That is what Alois told the family. Klara was the only one to suspect ~~that~~ ^{that} more than this might have happened. For, on the same night, perhaps six hours after the dog's demise, Alois made love to her with a good deal of vigor. It was more than she had enjoyed in a while.

He had had a variety of insect bites from his second trip to the woods, done to give Luther a burial with pick and shovel. So, it had taken a while to remove the stingers. By the time she completed her ministrations, they were both ready to make love. While she had no basis of comparison, she

was ready nonetheless to think that there might not be another man of Alois' age, only one year shy of sixty, who was so vigorous, this Uncle Alois, her man, a good man.

They had an agreeable few nights. Alois was experiencing what can only be called a transformation. He was loving her. That can occur in a marriage. Often, it is necessary precisely because most husbands and wives use the relationship ^{most of the time} for excrementitious exchanges. Indeed, that is why they married in the first place. As the Maestro delineates it, they had a need to ^{exercise pretty cruelty} be cruel at any moment to a person close to hand. (This is because they were terrified of the rest of the world.) Lo! even the worst marriage allows them a species of magic. All the endless criticisms and upbraidings one would have liked to present to the world (but did not dare), can now be expressed through ^{critical} ugly judgments on one's mate. All that spiritual excrement! In marriage, it is there to be traded back and forth, a zero-sum game, ^{which} ^{mediocre participants} but nonetheless enjoyable. ^{find enjoyable}

Ergo, marriage is a workable institution—especially for dreadful people. Yet, it can also serve men and women who may be seen as average ^{And} ~~persons~~. Like our Klara and Alois. Strange shifts do occur. A relationship

can turn inside-out. Few of these reversals are permanent, but while they last, some aeration is offered to what has been ^{a relatively} an airless union.

So, we are always alert for ~~the~~ signs of a fresh breath in the relations of married people. We ^{can shifts} use these ~~new airs~~ ^{for a period} to shore up the worst of marriages ~~I~~ should that suit our purpose.

This was not the occasion here. The shift in ~~their~~ ^{it} attitudes was of their choice, and ^{it} caught me by surprise. Intoxicated by the full moon and the June air that came up at night from the fields, lying beside her in a state of trust, rare for Alois, he knew that her fingers would make no painful mistake as she took care of removing each stinger—there were so many more of them these days given the lushness of early summer—a festival for the bees!—but she was deft ^{she was} and purposeful, and he was at peace lying beside her. For this little while, it was as if he had become something like a ^{I exaggerate} woman. (Of course, I exaggerate. I will even dismiss this assumption, no, it is not that Alois felt like a woman so much as that Klara now came to seem the embodiment of what he had never been able to know—the presence of a mother hovering over him.

Night after night, their ritual took place. He even became so careless as to work on occasion without the veil. He was not seeking to be stung, he had, after all, acquired some skill and did make fewer mistakes. Still, there were additional stings, and they cannot be discounted. It is fair to say he was anticipating his reward. Each night her fingers played out their delicate movements on his brow, the cheeks of his face, and the meat of his hands.

Transformations disrupt the arid habits of the mind. Sometimes Alois felt as if his brains were cracking and creaking. He was entertaining ideas he did not believe could belong to him. He actually began to consider whether the pain from these bites was a means of paying for his sins. Just supposing—for in no other way was he ready to assume that he believed in sinning—what if these bee stings were a way of accounting for bad things you had done? A system!

What a notion! It gave him direct discomfort. Up to the moment he had this thought, he had been enjoying some decent sleep. It came from the knowledge that full-chested Spartaner was out there below occupying a new dog-house built for him on the day after Luther's death. That had been no small task, but necessary. Not only was a guard dog entitled to his own

sense of shelter, especially in a new habitat, but Alois' handiwork had established close feelings between the hound and himself.

New ideas, however, are full of paradox. So, Alois writhed at the premise that guilt could be real. If nothing else, it gave too much dignity to so many guilty people! Awful persons. Weaklings who huddled in churches. They walked around with a stone in their stomachs and a bigger one up their ass. But now, he couldn't scorn them any more. He now had a recognition he had never allowed himself, and the remembrance constricted his chest. He had committed incest. If he had made love to all three of his step-sisters, that was not incest, no, not unless their father was his father. But had he not always known that Johann Nepomuk was his father even if he had managed to know it without knowing it? ^{This} ~~That~~ was the sort of thought he had always ^{g swept} kept ~~kept~~ to the rear of his mind.

In any case, the worst might be that he had made love to Johanna, the oldest of the three sisters. If Klara was not the daughter of Johann Poelzl, then she had to be his child ("Sie ist hier!") That was a fact as sharp as the knife that had gone into Luther. What if there was a God who knew things like this?

In the dark, Alois began to nod his head. In common with all men who have strong minds (strong does not mean brilliant!) he had the mental force to push his worst thoughts back. He could even have relinquished the new pleasure of enjoying Klara as a mother. ~~He could have gone back to being himself again. For better or worse.~~ But not yet. He could not as yet relinquish the soulful pleasures that were present each night in the wake of the needles removed from his flesh.

On these June evenings, he allowed the echo of his pains to resonate within. He did not look to divert any small agonies by searching for happy thoughts. Instead, he was there, ready to accept the full message that came to him from this mysterious province of pain. To Alois, it was a species of music, replete with new sensations for the mind and heart, a symphony full of its own clarity even as it spoke to his flesh. He laid himself open to the ^{voice} ~~sum~~ ^{than} of each pain until ~~the sum of them~~ was as rich in amplitude as a choral group ^{in one's ear}.

If I interrupt this grand journey Alois is taking into the modest sufferings of the flesh, it is because I must comment about the saintliness he is feeling. He is exhibiting the saintliness of a sinner.

-12-

Too little is understood about these matters. Saintliness is ^{present} in everyone. It ^{can} even be found in the worst of the worst. While Alois ^{would} ~~can~~ hardly be characterized as the worst, he does offer some kinship ^{to them} ~~when he looks to feet beautiful as too little~~ ~~cheats like this~~. He is, after all, offering his nerves and meat and sensitive skin to the rhapsodies of small torture, ~~and he does so while eager on the sly to snatch up a harvest of insights which bona fide saints only acquire with the years and their labor as saints.~~

Nonetheless, men like Alois can be as complex as saints even if they are undeserving. This is a ^{due to} ~~mark~~ against the D.K. As the Maestro is ~~always~~ ready to remark, ^{such} ~~this~~ easy generosity ~~of the D.K.~~ is but one more example of

His Carelessness. The Divine Negligence, the Maestro declares, is as immense as His Godhead.

All the same, like the best of saints and the most insightful of devils, Alois, to my surprise, has here come close to the mark. The Dummkopf did establish ^{His} a system for judging moral behavior.

A vast system! ^{Replete with} Of rewards and punishments. ~~Limbo keeps track of~~

~~the moral accounts of each man and woman, good or bad.~~ Out in the ^{these divine, developed to serve judgments} empyrean, the extent of such offices ^{as shame} puts the largest American corporations ^{and law courts,} ~~to shame.~~ If carried out perfectly as a grading system, ^{the Lord's} ~~Limbo would be a~~ ^{those who} ~~perfect office, immense but perfect.~~ Decisions on the value of the dead ^{have just died and the} ~~and the relocation of their souls would prove efficient.~~ ^{be far better determined.}

Yet from all the signs available—or so the Maestro assures us—the ~~Grand Offices~~ are in ^{there to} ~~various stages of~~ disarray. Many of the Dispositional Angels ^{are} ~~who calculate these future placements for the dead,~~ have become corrupt.

I see that I am now obliged to speak of reincarnation (or, of Karma, as it is popularly described in America these years). However, the Maestro has

These Divine Offices, developed to serve judgments, puts to shame the largest

Confidential

no affection for Karma. Truth, he loathes it. ^{Thus,} (I must say ~~this~~ keeps us
limited in our comprehension of it.

Let me attempt, however, For
~~Still, I am able to sketch an outline of its cosmic topography. It does~~

does exist out there just beyond the limits of human life. ^a This process of reincarnation ^{which} has, of course, nothing to do with popularly accepted notions

of Heaven and Hell. Those two concepts have been our greatest

Of Heaven and Hell. Those two concepts have been our greatest contribution to human culture. For centuries, legions of our devils have ~~not~~ infected the minds of men and women. Into their needy brains, we have implanted this notion. You are going to Heaven or you are going

to Hell. How such concepts have served us! The majority of people in

Europe, Russia, and the Americas believe for the most part (or—at the

least!—feel too weak to detach themselves ~~altogether~~ from the notion) that

by way of God's judgment, they will all go to Heaven or to Hell. We have

gulled them! They do believe that each of these non-existent kingdoms is ^{imaginary} real.
What a delusion! They are

9 real and ongoing eternity, when they are not even suitable as intellectual

entities. I would point out that neither Heaven nor Hell can offer any

decent foothold (Heaven) Hell
comfort to the human imagination. One proposes eternal bliss, the other

condemning you to
promises unending torture. Where is the human who can comprehend either

condition? People know that in life neither state can endure for long. Bliss, particularly, cannot *continue for long*. Few minds will muster even the sketchiest notion of Heaven. (What does one do with oneself all day?)

The Maestro, however, has become ^a the mighty impressario ^{conceivably} with

these matters. ~~He presents Jesus to all humankind via the manifests of~~

~~Christianity and Church. It has given us an ongoing dominance over western civilization. We are now the prevailing culture of the West. We have succeeded in confusing, suffocating, warping, and perverting the cognitive energies of humankind. In the name of Jesus, and Christianity,~~

~~ourselves, and their preachers, we~~ (the churches) ~~have managed to subvert God's mercies into moral stipulations.~~

however, These well-advertised moral laws are ~~so~~ inadequate at speaking to the ^{ever-proliferating} ongoing complexities of human emotion that rebellion is ^{naturally} usually incited in

the best of His human creatures. ~~Moreover, expectations of Heaven and~~

~~to identify all the old~~ ^{meanwhile we do our best} ~~hell~~ ^{some have} ~~germinate whole varieties of misbegotten thinking. Where is the good-~~ ~~the illustrious patina of the centuries to support them~~ ~~Christian or the devout Jew whom we do not exhort to prayer? Pray all the~~

time, we tell them. Get on your knees and praise God. Of course, all this praise has to be boring to the Lord. It is so damnably repetitive! The D.K., despite all, is still, to a degree, creative. Dull prayer, therefore, roils His

So, it is not difficult ~~for~~ ^{as} to exhort ~~such~~ ^{believers} to prayer

~~funds~~ ^{over-directed} of Patience. How we encourage these ~~malicious~~ men and women to pray for what they have not earned. Or, do not deserve. Such prayer invariably returns us a profit.

~~So, we~~ ^{Therefore we are the ones to} advertise God. We look to establish Him as the fearsome and mysterious Godhead. There He is—All-Good and All-Powerful. ~~He is~~ ^{That} is splendid ~~padding~~ ^{for public consumption.} Leviathan. Of course, His ~~Exorcisms~~ ^{Exorcisms} have been exaggerated. We serve Him up as fodder for ~~public consumption.~~

From what we have been told ^{and only by} (most grudgingly ~~by~~ way of our need-to-know) the Dummkopf was formerly a ~~great~~ Artist, a true Creator. Yet His resources, once so prodigious, have in great part been wasted. Now, through reincarnation, He hopes to use what is left. Indeed, reincarnation ^{now} has become ~~the~~ ^{his most creative operation} the ~~modus operandi~~ for the Dummkopf's executive decisions on the Afterlife,

^{I perceive here,} Let me offer the ~~base~~ outline. Many who die, do indeed cease to exist. ~~They have exhausted their souls even as they cease~~ exist. Their souls perish with their bodies. Others, however, ^{up} ~~should the~~ ^{fact} ~~Monitoring Angels so decide~~ ^{judgment} travel into death with souls that are ~~judged~~

5614 viable. So, they are born again. That is to say, each reincarnated soul will now take up residence in an embryo. ~~(Whether that placement will be in a~~

future infant or in an animal—we do not know—the Maestro is iron-lipped in his reticence on this matter.) All I can assert from my purview is that our satanic program to keep alive these concepts of Hell and Heaven can even be subscribed to by the men and women who are reincarnated. That is because they remain, even when full-grown, full of the emotional turmoil that is implicit in the verdicts (call it the new placements) of rebirth. So often the soul—if it is the least bit spoiled, and most are—will feel that its new existence is needlessly hellish. All the same, there is a logic to the D.K.'s system. Or could be.

The heart of the process comes ^{then} to this: How well or how badly does the reincarnated soul live with his or her new family? And ^{a little} later, with his or her part of the world? Does the reborn soul respond with art to ^{its new} the situation provided by the rebirth? That could serve as a means of moral measure. ^{now serves as human} But this concept is always in danger of becoming a conceit. That is because the Divine Inclination is to give the new person (the old soul) more advantages this second time. It is as if God, the Artist, ^{all that} is not ready to turn on His Creations. Certainly not on the majority of them. Like a true artist, ^{Rather, just like an artist} he looks for ^{the next} another opportunity to rework the original material.

~~Sometimes He engages in large scale redrafting. On rare occasions, He~~
~~selects a wholly new genre. That, I suspect, is why some souls come back~~
~~as animals. In any event, the only similarity which this process bears to~~
 Heavenly or Hellish judgment ^{comes} ~~does come~~ by way of the opportunities
 offered in the new life. Will one be ^{more} ~~stronger physically~~ or less vital than the
 last time out ^{will} ~~that sad previous life where the body was so abused. Will~~
 one be wiser or less imaginative? Braver or more timid, beautiful or plain,
 bolder or ^{more timid} ~~more cautious~~, greedier or ^{quite} ~~more~~ generous, colder or ^{good and} ~~more~~
 compassionate? ^{and then one} ~~Endless options are provided for the reborn soul. This is~~
^{one can} ~~These are~~ the means of paying for past errors. One can improve oneself or deteriorate
 further.

How the Maestro hates this system! Karma, far from being of open
 use to our purposes, ^{was} ~~may have been~~ designed to defeat us. Indeed, the
 Dummkopf created ^{them} ~~a set of~~ metamorphoses ^{to counteract} ~~that could work very well for~~
~~Him. For it does accept~~ His limitations as a Deity. If He still possesses
 great powers of Creation, He is not All-Powerful. Not at all! He cannot be.
 That is because His Power increases or diminishes in proportion to the
 success or failure of His Creations. Ultimately, it is His human beings (and

His animals) who determine the Lord's success or failure in the Cosmos. As His humans come into contact with a universe that was not created in whole by God, (perhaps not even in large part) nonetheless it is a world in which His Creatures can live, ~~can work, can explore~~, and succeed or fail. ^{Moreover, the} ~~The~~ consciousness of these human ^{experiences} ~~experiences~~ also returns to Him. He is wiser as a result, ~~and~~ more profound. Ideally, He could be strengthened further in His artistic instincts, in His desire to shape a future that would be larger than the one with which He began.

~~So it~~ ^{is} not difficult to see why our Maestro detests reincarnation. ~~If in contrast,~~ ^{in this life, not the next.} After all, the Maestro lives in the present. ~~In the main, he works with those~~ humans he manages to attract. ~~So, Reincarnation looms up as a restraining~~ ~~wall to the Maestro's purposes.~~ We may capture someone in a given life, but we lose control when our client dies. That leaves us obliged (if he or she has been valuable to us) to look to find them again. What a ^{labyrinthine} ~~wasteful~~ process!

Since the Maestro is, however, the epitome of resourcefulness, we ^{still} ~~also~~ look to play a supporting role in reincarnation. ^{Concerning} ~~Our dynamic is to be~~ ^{we try to be} there at the moment of conception. ^{does} So often that occasion will resonate

with our presence. I think this is one of the reasons that the Maestro never loses confidence. He believes ~~that~~ the ongoing faults of the Dummkopf will offer us an eventual victory. We are always reminded that the D.K., subject to his vanity as an artist, can muck up ^{many a} His karmic reassignments. He has ~~And there are a number of~~ such erratic excesses of compassion! ~~(Our little jibe is that He is still in competition with His Son?)~~ Some devils would argue that the D.K.'s

~~generosity does not come from any excess of kindness, but from self-indulgence. He does~~ ^{derives from self-indulgence. He does} indulgence. Too void of searching self criticism. He insists on keeping a high opinion of His Works. ^{does} So He ~~sees~~ every human as potentially

splendid. ^{By} In His original intention at least! (Should I offer Der Alte as one example?)

~~example?)~~ ^{But waste} Waste predominates. Some of us think ~~that~~ the D.K. ^{is} may be afraid of losing the loyalty of His subjects. So, He strews forgiveness. ~~Everywhere!~~

(Indeed, He has to—He has so little control over earthquakes, volcanoes, and floods!) He **spends** His compassion, therefore, like a damned fool, like ~~a spendthrift. So much is wasted, so many~~ ^{humans} ~~are~~ invested in too heavily ~~second time by God. Often, we pick them up for next to nothing on their return.~~

Given our ongoing skirmishes with the Cudgels, it is agreeable to have ^{such} ~~these~~ easy pickings. The Dummkopf does not give up, however, on those who come to us. Often, He ^{will} ~~for~~gives them. Then, He uses reincarnation to send them out again. When we locate a former client—we call them Retreads—we pick them up, as I say, for a song, a kiss, a one-night stand. Some are so easy, we do not even stop to congratulate ourselves. It is just one more reassuring reason for us to keep calling Him the Dummkopf.

-13-

Since many a reader will see

If the reader is offended by these presentations of the Hereafter which I think it is time to move on, I offer, I must admit, no handholds to repudiation or to authentication. I can

only apologize. These cosmic matters have pressed upon my thoughts.

sufficiently for me to assume they are of interest to others

back to some closer interests, Alois, for example,

What may be of ~~some~~ interest, however, is that Alois, given his propensity to brood on all that can go wrong, (which I attribute to his

decades of work guarding the financial integrity of Austria's borders) is now

full of paternal concern. Having suffered an unaccustomed

acknowledgment of his own acts of incest, he ~~could not~~ bear up for long

under such close self-examination. After all, he has been a policeman, not a

poet, and so old habits ~~of intellect~~^{of intellect} took over. When an officer of the law detects a vice in himself, he knows enough to look for its presence in others.

So, he began to worry about Alois-Junior and Angela. Was there something worthy of his attention in that quarter? He did not like the curious conflict developing between the boy and the girl over who could or should ride Ulan. Or when.

To the father's surprise, young Alois was not looking to keep total possession of the horse. On the contrary, he was always offering to teach Angela how to ride. The father had to see this as a danger sign. At the tavern, Senior had already picked up a few rumors about a girl named Greta-Marie Schmidt—nothing to insult him or his son personally, but it seems Junior had been teaching Greta-Marie to ride bareback.

Now it was Angela's turn. She kept refusing. Junior kept teasing her.

"You are simply afraid to get on Ulan's back, " he would say.

"No, I am not."

"You are. Admit it."

"No. I swear I am not."

After several repetitions of such false testimony, she was driven to offer new remarks. "It is simple," she said, "I do not want to get up on Ulan.

What for? If I learn, and am good at it, ~~then~~ **what then?** ~~I know you.~~ You

will keep the horse to yourself. ^{5/14} ~~I will have to beg for rides."~~

^{get on} "I will let you ride him as often as you wish. All day, if it comes to it."

"No. You will try to drive me crazy. I know you ^{well}."

"This is ~~nothing but~~ an excuse. What you fear is obvious. You are afraid of being thrown."

"I am not."

^{"Yes that is it"}

~~"Most certainly you are."~~

Finally, she said, "Have it your way. So, I am afraid. Why not? That horse is strong. And so high. He will throw me, and I will break my neck." She was ready to start crying out of annoyance itself. "You are so sure of yourself. You ride around wherever you want, but I know what will happen. I will get up on him and he will gallop. He will throw me off. I will die of a broken neck."

^{just} "Never. Your neck is as stubborn and thick as you are."

"Oh, yes, you are so funny. But I will die. What will you care? You have girls all over the place. I hear about them. You are always kissing them, and then they kiss you back. But I am thirteen years old this week and I have never been kissed. So, I don't want to die before I even know what it is like to be kissed." Now, she did burst into tears.

Alois-Senior heard the end of this conversation. As he approached the barn, he was in time to witness young Alois' reaction. The boy found her last speech so comic that he was unable to stop laughing. Finally he rolled on the floor of the barn.

At that moment, Alois told himself that if the boy spent too much time out there riding the hills, maybe it was for the best, yes, better for all if he was carrying on with some farm-girl out there, than fooling about with Angela. That must not be! She was not even a half-sister. She was a full sister!

Now, Alois-Senior began to wonder if the two had ever been together. Was it not likely that they had just seen him approaching the barn? If so, this conversation he overheard—was it all for him? Were they

capable of such subterfuge? Why not? Their mother had been. Himself as well. Of course.

Over the next few days, Alois-Senior tried to be sly about it. He observed Angela closely. But, he had spent too many years getting people to feel ill-at-ease through the clarity of his gaze. No surprise, then, if Angela was unsettled by her father's attention. She began to wonder if he was interested in her. At school, she had heard such stories. One girl had even been named by the other girls. She did things with her father. So everybody said. Ugh, thought Angela, so disgusting.

Now, whenever Alois-Senior was near, Angela would slide around him, drawing her hips in toward her belly as if to make certain nothing brushed, and very artful at keeping her distance.

This upset Alois. He certainly did not approve of female sophistication in girls as young as Angela. The manner, indeed, by which she drew in her hips. Where had she learned all that?

Klara now took a hand. If she worried about many matters, and if her distrust of Alois-Junior remained, she also knew that they could not send the boy back to the Poelzl farm. Therefore, they must do something

with him here. If she had learned one lesson from life, it was that most situations were not ~~all that~~ comfortable. Often, a poor solution to a problem proved better than no solution. She had learned from her father and mother. If the Poelzl children kept dying, her parents had managed at least to love the few who were left.

While she could not even bring herself to like Alois-Junior, and no solution was in sight, still she must decide upon one. Her husband was not going to plant potatoes again next summer. That was obvious. And putting in beets might prove just as unsuccessful. His bees, however, had been acceptable. Maybe even more good than bad. So perhaps they should expand.

Klara fixed on this possibility. An imperfect solution—to repeat her wisdom—had to be better than no solution. Idleness was equal to the boy riding horses up and down the hills and getting into trouble.

So she suggested to Alois that perhaps they should build a bee-house like Der Alte had. They could install ten or fifteen hives. A real business. That would keep them busy. And, she added, it would be good for Junior.

Alois could make him a young partner. A small share of the profits could even go to him.

"Take him on as a partner? You don't even trust him. So you have told me again and again."

"I said all that, yes," she had to agree, "but I do understand your son."

"You do? I would say you make a lot of remarks. And they are contradictory."

"I understand him," she said. "He is ambitious. And he doesn't know what to do with himself. But, I can see. He wants to make money. For now, he is a little wild, but. . ."

"He will always be wild," said Alois.

"Maybe so," she admitted. "But boys change. If we do nothing. . ."

"I must think about this."

The notion did appeal to him. Hitler and Son, Apian Products. If that crybaby, Adolf, and the snot-nose Edmund ever developed, it could be Hitler and Sons.

That ^{had to} would be down the road. But Klara ^{was} had been correct. They ^{meek} had
~~to~~ do something. The boy's ambition ^{should} must be put into a focus. At present,
 he looked upon work as ^{virtually} ~~ignoble~~ a chore.

Alois went back to his books. Over a few afternoons, he studied the history, culture and ancient traditions of apiculture in the several tomes he had collected on the subject and soon decided that he would give a small lecture to the family, designed for Junior, of course. Something like his old speeches in the taverns of Linz and Fischlham, yes, but now an exposition that might even be worthy of Der Alte.

He would tell Junior about the endless strife between bees and bears in the Middle Ages. **There had been contests between them right here in these lands. The bears would raid every hole in every tree where there was a hive they could reach, and the bees would die en masse stinging those ursine eyes and noses. Honey-gathering by humans had been near to impossible in Germany and in Austria until a few of the local medieval lords saw a solution. Hunters of honey deemed worthy could be granted crossbows. Now, brave men could defend themselves**

~~against the bears. A splendid solution. They would have bear-meat as well as honey,~~

→ That, decided Alois, could be a good story. Give the family a taste of such culture. He would even list all the lands where the bear and the bee struggled with one another. He actually memorized a few of the Latin terms. Selenarctos thibetanus for the Asiatic black bear. And Ursus arctos—the brown grizzly bear of Europe and America. Helarectos Malanus, the Malaysian sun bear. He decided to content himself with these three names. They would be enough. Too much memorization could wear you out. It was the stories he could tell. Why, even as recently as one hundred years ago, beekeepers would climb high trees to get to hives that the bears could not reach. "This was a common practice in northern Spain and in southern France," he would tell Junior. "One had to know one's trees then. Which were most congenial for good nesting. I can tell you. It was alder and ash, beech and birch, and most certainly, honorable elm trees, maples as well, oak, and willows. Lime trees," he could hear himself declaring, "those have always been great favorites for bees and for us as well, even to this day. Such honey retains the finest aromatic traces of the

skin of the lime. Yes," said Alois, addressing Alois-Junior in his thoughts, "this love of the bee for the lime-tree goes back to the very end of the Neolithic period, close to five thousand years ago. And the bees certainly knew how to build honey-combs in those days. North of here, up in Germany, they found one honey-comb recently, a fossil, that may have been bigger than any man who ever lived. Unbelievable. An eight-foot-long honey-comb. They found it, yes.

He was prepared to give whole funds of new information at the midday Sunday dinner. Get into the Greeks and the Romans. Since he rarely spoke at such times, as if to rebuke Klara for going to church, and the meal was generally consumed under the overarching profundity of his silences, he had a sense that a full exposition would impress Alois-Junior. If nothing else, he would witness the respect of the others. The number of countries involved would be enough to startle them. He would have stories to tell them about the Bassari in Senegal, the famine in Kilingula, practices in Madagascar, bee wasps shimmering in the intense light of Swaziland. He could speak of the Mbuti of the Ituri forest and the honey hunters in

southern Sudan, the Ndogo people. All that about Africa alone. He had stuffed these facts into his head like a bear gorging on honey.

He had read enough to be able to quote a line from Homer, and of how Israel right there in the Hebrew scriptures had told his sons to bring honey to Joseph in Egypt. To which Alois was prepared to add, "And this reminds me of the Egyptian god Min who as far back as 3000 B.C. is referred to as 'master of the wild bees,' while Ramses III is quoted as speaking of his honey-gatherers. The great writer, Pliny, speaks of the Sabaei to the south, and Strabo quotes Erastosthenes on the abundance of honey in Arabia."

Since he had memorized all these names, after all, he could have gone on and on. He was ready to tell them of crazy drinking bouts in Poland, the Ukraine, and in Russia from mead made of honey, the revels—although he must speak carefully of revels before his own family, yes, the wild habits of the Cossacks in the Urals and the Hungarians in the Carpathians.

Yet, when it came to deploying these findings, he decided to give it up. Perhaps he had crammed too much knowledge into himself. Klara kept nodding with approval, but whether it was for his words, or the apple strudel

she had made, he could not really say, and Angela kept nodding with an expression that spoke of school-house miseries. The three younger children were completely out of it, and Alois, Junior, who had shown a bit of interest, began to wilt. His eyelids closed for longer and longer periods.

Alois-Senior had to contain his temper. It had gone wrong. He simply did not have the eloquence of Der Alte. "You," he said at last to Alois-Junior, with an address as direct to the youth as a poke in the ribs, "You and me—let us go for a walk."

What a mistake to talk to them so at a midday meal. It was obvious. The boy had a visceral distrust of knowledge he could not use immediately. And when he was eating, he did not like to think. Could he be just like his father?

Alois did not take him far from the house, but sat him down on a bench near the hives and spoke instead about the money that was there to make by working together. "It is even possible that we could bring in Der Alte. He has made hints. He would be happy to work with us. That leads me to believe we would have much the better of the bargain. In a few years, you could be a prosperous young man, yes, most prosperous. And let me

say to you, good-looking young fellows like you are able to marry to advantage when it is seen that they are also able to make a fine living. We give it three years of hard work, and you will be sitting on top of a pretty good heap. Especially since you have a sharp sense of what is what. Believe me, you will be able to take your choice of some very good matches."

The afternoon sun was hot, and the boy was dispirited. Greta-Marie had been unavailable that morning—she, too, had been in church with her parents, and so he had visited Der Alte, and on this occasion, he may have been too greedy. Now, he felt stripped of vigor, and Der Alte's bad odor was in his nostrils. What a joy to work every day for three years with these two old men! Der Alte would be full of secret signals that his father might pick up, and it could be guaranteed that Alois-Senior would find something to yell about every day.

Now, all this sweet talk from his father, so full of fraud. He had no desire to work like a slave. Not for three years. Too many good things were waiting for him. The moment he was ready, he would leave them and go to

Vienna. The more suddenly, the better. He had hardly forgiven Klara for being so rude to him last week.

"Good and honored father," he said, "I appreciate your concern for my future. I, too, think about it, and often. I have come to certain conclusions."

"Yes," said Alois, "that is the first step to making a life for yourself."

"So true. You speak with the knowledge of your gifts. I can say that I am full of respect for them."

He had now arrived at the obstacle that stood between them like a fence. Yesterday, for the first time, he had taken a jump with Ulan. It had been a low hedge, but not that low. It could have thrown them. But he had known. He had had to take the jump. Now, he did again.

"Everything you say is so correct, Father, but. . ." He hesitated just long enough to repeat it, "but, what you say is true for a person like yourself who is not exactly like myself. I have other gifts. So, I believe."

Alois nodded profoundly in order not to show his annoyance.

"Perhaps you will tell us what these gifts can be."

"I would say I have a gift for dealing with people." His father nodded again. "When I think of what I will do in years to come, it will be to make my living that way. By dealing with people."

At this point, he chose to stare into his father's eyes. It was no mean feat, but he held the glance.

"Do you wish to say that farming is without appeal to you?" said Alois-Senior.

"I must tell the truth. It is."

"But you wouldn't go so far as to say our little apiary has no appeal."

"I like the taste of honey. That is true. But I think I enjoy talking to people more than listening to our bees."

Now, Alois dipped into a reservoir of wisdom. "Son, I am prepared to let you in on a secret that will save you a few years. Maybe more. One cannot charm people for long. Not if you have nothing but words to offer. People must respect you. If they do not, they will laugh with you, yes, they will sing with you, oh, yes, and then, poor boy, they will laugh behind your back. Hard work is the only basis of a good solid exchange between two

serious people. A man who tries to get by on good talk is nothing but a fiddler."

"I respect hard work," said Alois-Junior, "but not the kind that calls for being a farmer. I like riding over the land, but I do not like working on it. A young man who works on the land all his life is, in my opinion, an idiot. He is as dumb as the earth. That is not for me."

"I do not think you understood what I have said. It is not the earth I am asking us to use but the air. I am thinking of the little creatures who fly through the air. Plus Der Alte. Let me put him into our discussion. I see the most profitable use we can make of him."

"Father, in all respect, I cannot agree. You have said it yourself. He knows more on this subject than we do." The illumination that came from vaulting the hedge with Ulan was with him again. A direct sense of exultation. It was as if his blood not only insisted that he speak, but that he be ready to insult his father. That would be equal to taking your horse over a real big jump. "You must face it," he said, "we are not ready for Der Alte. He would steal us blind."

"What are you saying? Do you insult me as a beekeeper?"

"Well, you are always getting stung."

"That happens. In this work, it always happens."

"Yes, and for those who know how, they can say, 'Oh, I had a little accident today,' but for you, not so. Every day is an accident. You are full of bites. Always."

Now, Alois lost his temper, that valuable but dangerous temper he had schooled himself for forty years to keep locked within himself. Now, there was no help. His temper was out of the gates and on the loose.

"Boy," he said to his son, "you are not equipped to go out in the world. You have no schooling. You have no money. And you think you will be able to talk your way into money? That is rotten nonsense. All you can do is to get your ugly little farmgirls to flap their tits at you and spread their legs. Why? Maybe they believe they will get lucky and pick up a husband as lazy as themselves. Maybe they will, and then I will have to look at grandchildren as ugly as your girlfriends, and you will have to work on her father's farm."

He had gone too far. He knew it. The fear he had been forming, that fear which he had been storing in every center where fear is secreted from

the mind to the bowels, there in the heart and the lungs and the nerves of the stomach, each developing their own particulars of the fear, even that overall fear which had been seeping into his pores, was as loose by now as his temper. It had been a large mistake to speak his mind.

Alois-Junior was even more vain than his father. To speak of the children he ~~yet might~~ have as ugly—~~that was~~ outrageous. "Yes," he said to his father, "I have worked with you. I have seen you as a farmer. Your knowledge is out-dated. Even Johann Poelzl, stupid as he is, knows how to farm. You don't."

"So, I am now stupid? Is that what you are saying? Maybe I am," he repeated. "Like father, like son. You flunked out of school. Then you lied about it. What a stupidity! I have lived with this foul and rotten news for too long. I can come to only one conclusion. The only answer to why you lied to us and wrote your counterfeit letter is that you are indeed an idiot."

"Yes," said Alois, Junior, "and you are different. You have beautiful children. Do you know why?" The boy's breath was coming so quickly that his voice went up in pitch. He was all but screaming his way through the

next words, "Yes, you find your women, you fuck them, and then you forget them. And my mother dies. Maybe I am just like you."

The father's reflex was faster than his mind. His fist struck Junior on the side of the head hard enough to knock the boy down.

-14-

If young Alois had been a client, I would have looked to convince him not to get up. His father would have been saddled with a guilt the boy could have ridden for a year. But since I had no control in this matter, Junior rushed at Senior, grabbed his legs, and threw him to the ground. Turn for turn.

Since his life was at a crossroads, he committed the error of helping his father to stand up. He had to. For he knew an incommensurable fear in the ^{immediate} ~~moment~~ ^{just} after upending Alois-Senior. There ~~he~~ ^{his father} was on the ground, looking like ~~such~~ an old man. What was one to do? So Junior picked him up.

To be knocked down was bad enough, but to be assisted to his feet?

By a youth with an open pimple on his face and the beginnings of a ridiculous little brown mustache which had sprouted but a few lank hairs?

In itself, the mustache was an insult *all by itself. He now struck Junior again and the ~~blow~~ success of the blow ~~blowing~~ him.*

~~Senior did weigh fifty pounds more and he began to beat upon Junior~~ *Alois* until the boy fell to his knees, whereupon ~~his father~~ kept pummeling him

even as his son further as he lay on the ground.

Klara had come out of the house by now. She screamed ~~at Alois~~ *Alois*. She begged him to stop. And that was just as well. For now, ~~Alois~~ Junior did

not move. He lay ~~so~~ motionless on the ground ~~for the next few minutes~~ and Klara kept screaming.

She believed she was wailing for the dead. "Oh, God," she managed to cry out, "I cannot believe what You have allowed."

I saw a rare opening. She was without her Guardian Angel—not a Cudgel near. Angels flee from people who scream—they know at such moments how close the man or woman is to us, and they feel outnumbered. For devils rush in to attend such outcries. To add to the tumult, there was

Adi giving vent to the most penetrating set of shrieks, ~~a sound to rally any~~ ^{other} ~~devils in the near region.~~

And Klara was so vulnerable. I saw my moment. I reached her heart, I touched her thoughts. She believed Alois-Junior was dead ~~already~~, and his father would spend the rest of his days in a fearful jail. It was her fault, all her fault. She had told the father to get close to the boy even when she knew better. Since the sum of her experience had told her that the majority of one's prayers to God were not answered, she prayed now directly to us, she called upon the devil, she implored him. (Only the pious can believe the devil has such powers!) "Save the boy's life," she implored, "and I will be in your debt."

So we had her for the future. Not as a client. Merely attached to a bit of her soul. These changes are never immediate. But now, we had ~~an~~ entrance to her. We could yet play some fine tunes on her mind. Indeed, ~~we~~ ^{would} over time to come, ~~we would~~ ^{we would}

She was a true gain. When Alois-Junior began to stir, she was convinced that there had been a direct response to her prayer, and felt the full responsibility of an oath. Unlike so many with whom we traffic, she

was the essence of responsibility. She would never betray an oath. In consequence, she felt damned on the spot. And she was full of grief at the pains she must be rousing now in God. What a nun she would have made. A rare one.

Our most significant gain was with Adi. He had seen his father beat young Alois into the ground, ~~into unconsciousness~~. He had then heard his father utter a groan remarkable for ~~the~~ fullness of its ~~suddenness and~~ woe. Then as his brother began to stir, Adi saw his father stagger off into the woods, ~~and indeed he had banged his knee in the scuffle~~. But that was the smallest part of it—Alois-Senior was fleeing beyond the view of the house to a glade in the woods where he could retire in full horror at how it had turned out, and ~~he~~ ^{at once} was given a whole taste of Klara's apple strudel as extruded through his nostrils, ~~and, in~~ ^{he} consequence, unable to breathe, ~~felt as~~ if he must evacuate a cannon ball from his esophagus. For the rest of the midday dinner was now surging up and down, ^{in his gut} with ~~almost as much force as~~ ^{the glass he} ~~had~~ ^{struck}. That was ~~time enough~~ ^{San} to spend on Alois-Senior. My attention was ~~more obliged to stay with Klara and Adi. Even more so with Adi. The boy~~

had voided everything, urine, feces, food. He was half out of his senses with fear that his father would return and beat his head into the ground.

How much I used my skills! At that moment, I ^{began to} ~~took my first strokes~~ ^{engrave} ~~at engraving~~ the plenitude of this beating into Adi's memory. Again and

again, I returned the images to his mind, until—given his certainty that it would all be done to him as well on his father's return, I ^(so soon as his father would) ~~managed to score~~ ^{I did manage to brand one thought upon his mind,} his thoughts. Now ~~he~~ ^{he} had the clear beginnings of ~~a~~ ^{a clear} image of himself lying ~~there in the field,~~ close to dead from the beating his father had just given him.

In later years, at the height of his power, Adolf Hitler would ^{actually,} believe completely that he was the one who received the beating. On many a night ^{during} ~~the Second World War,~~ ^{to} he would tell the tale to his secretaries and his military adjutants as they sat around the remains of the evening meal. He would be eloquent. "Of course, I deserved a whipping," he would say. "I gave real trouble to my father. My mother, I recall, was screaming. She loved me so, my dear mother." He would remember himself as being just as brave as Alois-Junior, yes, he had stood up to his father. "I think that is why he had to beat me ~~so~~ I must have deserved it. I said terrible things to him, words so awful I cannot

repeat them. Probably, I deserved ^{this} ~~a~~ good beating. My father was a fine strong decent man, one Austrian who was a real German. Still, I do not know that a father should ever beat a son so close to death."

Yes, he could tell stories about his childhood to bring tears to the eyes, and pure sorrow to the hearts of all who listened. It had not come all at once, this immaculate bedrock lie I had ~~engraved~~ ^{seared fixed} into those creases of his mental flesh where memory was stored. The art was to replace a true memory with false memory (and that can be equal in its exactitudes, even among the most malleable clients, to removing an old tattoo and ^{substituting} ~~replacing it~~ with a new one that shows no mark of ^{the} ~~its~~ predecessor.)

Given my developed instincts as a devil, I had known that this fiction

~~I looked to install in Adi~~ had to be perfect and all-pervasive. Only then

could I ^{use} ~~employ the certainty~~ of the implant to ^{develop} ~~deploy more and more~~

through the years his ^{By an attorney} ~~vital~~ incapacity to tell the truth. Instead, an elaborate

^{he possessed an elaborate} ~~artwork of lies would inhabit~~ even his smallest response. He became able to

shade the truth by a hair or, equally, could subvert it altogether. At need, he

could fill each and every one of the spaces between a truth and a lie with a

reasonable transition.

Done properly, it is, as I say, a slow process, and I worked to ^{elaborate} make ~~that initial breeding into~~ this a full installation. Over many a year, I succeeded. The grown man would have been ready to die in the belief that he was telling the truth when he declared that his father had almost beaten him to death. From time to time, I still took pains to reinforce the keel of this one absolute lie. ^{It was} ~~It was~~ worth it. ^(for the) The Maestro often pointed to my work on this matter: "There is no better way to usurp the services of a high political leader," ^{he} ~~the Maestro~~ would tell ^{us,} ~~other~~ devils, "than by this method. Such figures are of considerably more use to us when they do not know that they are lying."

-15-

On that night, in the darkness which followed the beating, several events occurred of the most exceptional nature and they were all initiated by Alois-Junior ^{so soon as he discovered} ~~upon discovering~~ that his father had headed off to ~~the tavern~~

in Fischlham.

^{customary}
~~That was not~~ ~~an ordinary occasion.~~ The tavern served no drinks in itself, that was ~~no ordinary occasion.~~ The tavern served no drinks on Sunday and Alois knew that—who didn't?—but he had also heard of a house on the outskirts of town where a former poacher who had once been an unsuccessful farmer now collected a meager income by way of the few men who would visit his house on Sunday for a stein of beer in the pantry back of his kitchen.

Alois had never visited before. It had been altogether beneath every notion he kept of what a reputable retired official of the Crown could consider reasonable activity, but this was one of the few times in his life when he had to have a drink at all costs and so, his knee throbbing from the ~~fall~~ ^{first}, his head aching from the discharge of his rage, and his heart as sore as an open wound, he hobbled across the fields into the sunset and took in enough, perhaps even a gallon of beer, to drown not only his sorrows but the augmented miseries of his ~~old~~ ^{de} body.

Nobody had to help him home. There were offers ^{back} which he rejected ^{them} — ~~it~~ ^{he} was still early enough in the evening for the sky to retain some light and he made it on the full fury of his sense of dignity up over the first hill out of Fischlham, and ~~then~~ almost up the second before he lay down in a pasture to sleep. He awoke a couple of hours later with his head not six inches away from a near-to-monumental cow ball the size of a derby hat.

His hair was clean. He had not rolled into it. If he had believed in Providence, he would have offered thanks, but it was just as well he did not, for by the time—it was after ten P.M.—decently rested by this impromptu

slumber, he came up over the last hill to his house, he saw the embers of a fire not thirty feet from the front door.

There had been no wind that night, which was just as well, but there were also no remains but ash of his three Langstroth boxes, nor any sign of bees except for those poor thousands who had been roasted to a microscopic crisp, as well as a startling sense of gloom clinging to the house itself. He felt at once something close to terror, ~~a surprising emotion considering the beauty of this June night so close to the summer overtures of July~~

Klara met him. If she had been weeping, she was, by now, dry of tears. There was too much to be enraged about. She was as crisp as the husk and butts of the fiery remains of the hive colonies, and as harsh in manner to him as the odor that rose from the last black lees of the honey that had smoked through the conflagration.

Alois knew a small but finite part of his wife's heart, her good will, and her allegiance would be soured forever by the fact that on this, the worst of all nights, he had found a way to drink so much beer that he reeked of it from six feet away.

Detail by detail, she told him what had happened. The sum was even worse than the sight before him. The boy had ridden off on the horse—of course—and then he had come back when they were all asleep, or pretending to be—she would admit that they were by now afraid of him—and he had gathered together his clothing, tied it in a sack, attached it to the saddle of the horse and had gone off again, allowing them to breathe.

Yet, just half an hour ago, safe as they hoped themselves to be now in the beginning of sleep, the hound dog began to bay, and howled with such ferocity that she almost left her bed to investigate. But then he yelped once and made noise no more, he just whined a little—like a puppy. And the horse neighed. Young Alois was back.

Then the flames had begun. She had known almost at once what was happening. Adi, as ^{alive} ~~awake~~ as a deer in flight, kept running between the house and the beehives. "He has set them all on fire. With kerosene," cried Adi. "I know. It is like it was before." And he was laughing as much as he was weeping, not certain whether this was a terrible event or another glorious auto-da-fe.

She had not been able, Klara informed him, to put out the blaze. She and Angela had done what they could, which was to throw pails of water on the walls of the house closest to the conflagration. More than that would have required the presence of a man.

And Alois-Junior, where was he? Oh, he had departed once more on Ulan. They had heard the last sounds of the animal's hooves as he trotted away. Nor would he be back. She did not think so. ~~How could one say that~~
~~Had he~~
~~he had~~ left a way for himself to return?

Worst of all—Spartaner had been poisoned. ~~It took them a day to~~
~~link but they did not look for him~~
~~find out, and he did not even die for a week.~~
~~too closely that night, but by morning~~
~~that it was but by morning~~
~~was very much present~~
~~was back and could not stop~~
~~retching. To make matters~~
~~worse, he did not die until~~
~~the end of the week.~~

he was obviously ill, and
 then to make matters worse
 he did not even die until
 the end of the week

-16-

A letter came in August from Alois-Junior. After that, they did not hear from him again. Alois-Senior did learn in the course of a trip to Linz that the boy had sold Ulan to a horse-trader for half of the steed's value, and that would have been enough for young Alois to live in Vienna through the time it might take to find work.

On many a late afternoon, Alois-Senior would walk down the trail that must have been used by Junior on that night when he set out for the road to Linz. Senior would come to an old stump, now his favorite seat in the forest, and there he would listen to the birds.

At rest on the amputated remains of what once had been a fine oak, he would mourn the bees he had lost, even as he proceeded to enjoy the fantasy that he had come back early enough on Sunday night to chase the horse and boy through the woods. In his mind, he had kept running after them, until brought to a halt by his heart and the pangs in his lungs.

That fantasy had also been part of a long summer of mourning for all he could name as lost, and then he would grieve even more for what he could not quite name.

So the summer passed. He hired a man to assist him in mowing their pastures. He baled his cuttings, and sold the hay in Fischlham. ^{Since} ~~He had no~~
~~there no hives now, he had no worries concerning the~~
~~worries now concerning his hives~~ but that became a species of worry in
itself. ^{He felt} ~~There was now~~ a hollow in his body, a sense of absence. No fear
now of swarming, no calculations to be made of how much feed to give in
the after-season to the colonies, no inner debate on when to store the empty
combs for winter, no further examinations of the health of the hives, no
further estimates as to how many old bees had died but were not yet
replaced by new-born, no tremors at the thought of mouse invasions, no
need to consider whether he should put up netting to keep birds away, nor

any need to weigh the boxes, no more ponderings on whether enough pollen ^{for them} had been collected by the foragers to provide sufficient protein ~~through the~~ winter, and no Queen to locate. There were not even any Langstroths to repaint, nor ~~weight~~ records to be brought up to date. He was done, done with all of ^{it.} ~~that.~~ Yet, the worries did not leave completely. ^{And then} ~~Until they did.~~
~~at last, they did.~~

Sitting by the stump, Alois could hardly admit it to himself, but there came an afternoon by the end of summer when the more caustic tastes of his mourning finally gurgled down some ~~as-yet undiscovered~~ vent of the mind where useless feelings are drained. He actually said to himself, "I am relieved that I do not have to worry about my bees any more. I loved them, but their loss is not my fault."

At this juncture, I did not have to pay daily attention to the Hitler family. They would be in Hafeld until they left. I hardly was concerned. One of my developed instincts is to know when the humans under my study are ready to change at a good rate, as opposed to when they are relatively inert.

In truth, that is how we measure Time. Except for those occasions when the Maestro assigns us to intense activities, to dramatic arenas where

history can be shaped, as was true ~~of course~~ at the Coronation of Nicholas

II, we live reflexively. Time does not come to us by way of the days or

~~weeks or seasons. Rather, we experience Time by way of our ^{experiences} ~~episodes~~~~

~~episodes. While I cannot speak with whole authority on the expenditure and~~

~~regeneration of energy which humans experience, it is true that we, too, can~~

~~be in need of fallow periods. So, a quiet summer for the Hitler family went~~

by for me like a passage of sleep. I tended ^{more} ~~more~~ to other clients, ~~and if I~~

pondered the nature of our Time (as opposed to human time), ours was free

~~of such units as hours or days. Rather, it bore resemblance to a sculpture~~

~~garden of objects and spaces, palls and presences.~~

Alois, ^{meanwhile} ~~for example~~, was living in the pall of a long and lackluster meditation.

He was worrying to a modest degree (modest for Alois!) about the value of the farm. If he were to sell it, could the price match what he had paid? Or would a potential buyer recognize the beginnings of neglect? That became the focus of his attention. Nothing, he decided, is more subtle ~~at the onset~~ than the beginnings of neglect. While he did feel more relaxed than ~~he had~~ in many a year, it did nag at him that he was leaving all too

many chores to the women—certainly those which did not call for a man's strength. He did nothing with the chickens or the vegetable garden. He thought of buying a new dog; instead, he examined the paint on poor dead Spartaner's dog house, ~~as if~~ ^{it} was ready to peel in the summer heat. [?]

They did not need a new dog in any great hurry. With young Alois gone, there was no need to entertain any fears of an irate father somewhere in the neighborhood. No parent of Greta-Marie Schmidt was likely to appear on the doorstep—he could give thanks that that particular young lady was not pregnant, for if she were, he would by now have known all about it. And the smuggler who lived on the other side of Fischlham hardly entered his thoughts. Given the absence of Alois-Junior, he, too, seemed far away.

Senior's real worry was that he might become habituated to idleness. Idleness itself! Even a few minutes spent in doing nothing at all, had once been guaranteed to excite his annoyance. Now, he felt himself becoming too curiously contented at the sight of a curl of cigar-smoke, or the languorous drift of a cloud.

Such peace could ~~yet~~ prove expensive. A farm that was not worked—no matter how tidy one kept the house and the yard—might never

look right. Not to a potential buyer. Couldn't such a fellow be feeling the mute reproach of the fields? A small part of Alois continued to run uphill in his sleep.

The economic facts (which he calculated over and over on separate pieces of paper using separate stubs of pencil) was that no matter how observant he and Klara might be with expenses—and they were!—sooner or later, they would be obliged to spend more each quarter than his pension.

~~Or, he could go to some extreme lengths of thrift.~~ ^{So} There might come a time when he would have to decide that it cost too much to go to his miserable tavern in Fischlham. That would double every indignity. How much he was missing Linz! There, at least, you could find a drinking-place ~~or two~~ with intelligent people. What it all came down to was that they must sell the farm.

~~He knew it~~ ^{That} would not happen quickly. These days, the less work one did, the more time ~~it seemed to take~~ ^(it took) for anything to get done. Moreover, very much against his will, he was beginning to feel remorse about Alois-Junior. What an insidious ungovernable emotion! Was it incumbent upon him as a father to forgive his son? Yet what if Alois-Junior was also full of

remorse? He could not bear the thought of that boy alone in a poor room. Would he be sitting on a mean cot, his eyes full of sadness?

Like an amputated arm whose nerve-endings are still alive in one's shoulder-socket, Alois-Senior began to think again of Hitler and Sons, Apian Products. Because he could invest no essential belief in the notion, the thought, perversely, was sweeter than before. It might be unrealistic, but it did feel pure.

He even brought it up with Klara. If she had felt at a good and considerable distance from her husband all summer, if she could not forgive him for being such a helpless drunk on that terrible night when he came home too late from Fischlham to prevent the destruction of the hives, nonetheless, her sense of duty still prevailed. "If you want him back, if you truly want him back, I will not stand in the way." That is what she said. That was what she felt obliged to tell him. She even felt a sense of shame, for her quick hope was that they would not find him.

No such drama would develop, however. A letter without a return address came a few days later from Vienna, a vile letter. "You killed my

mother." The phrase was repeated several times. Then, the letter declared that the son would yet be famous, and the father would twist in his grave.

Alois could not believe what he read. The rest was worse. "You were a terrible farmer, and the reason is clear. You are, as I happen to know, half-Jewish. No wonder you cannot be a farmer." And there were so many misspellings in the letter that out of a sense of shame for his son, Alois-Senior had to write it out all over again before he felt able to show it to Klara. As he wrote, his hand shook so badly that the arthritis which would later bind the movements of his fingers made an early appearance on this day.

However, he had to redact the letter. The original (with its ink blots and errors of syntax) was too abominable to keep. The boy had always been able to speak so well. How could he have no embarrassment about these crudities?

Nonetheless, the words had ~~at least~~ to be shown to Klara. Alois-Junior could only have received such rank ideas by listening to Johann Poelzl. That old pious hypocrite! How he must have gossiped to the boy!

Klara, however, kept discussion well away from the subject of her legal father, Johann Poelzl. She only said, "I did not mind the thought so much. I used to think that was your reason for not going to church."

He was indignant. "It did not bother you to believe you had a husband who was half-Jewish?"

"How could it? Alois, you have always said that a man who hates Jews is uncultured. So, I knew. It is not appropriate to hate Jews. It is a sign of ignorance."

"But that does not make me Jewish."

He had a headache, sudden and fierce. Old memories of the earliest taunts at school now came back. When he was six years old. Of course. That had been the talk in Strones and in Spital.

"It never bothered you to think I was half-Jewish?" he said again.

"No. I was too worried about our children. I wanted them to be able to live." She could not keep her eyes from watering—not with such recollections at the root of her tear-ducts. "So I was glad to think you were part Jewish. I thought maybe that could give a little fresh blood for our Adolf and our Edmund and Paula."

"But I am not at all Jewish," he said. "We must be clear about this. Old Johann Nepomuk once told me who I am. I am his son. I am your real uncle, yes."

"He told you? He said such words?" She knew her grandfather Johann Nepomuk well enough to understand that he could never utter such words. Not in such a way—not so directly.

"He," said Alois, "suggested this information to me. He did state that he knew who my father was. And then he said, 'This man was not Jewish.'

He did not have to say more. It was clear. There was only one way he

could know. So, that was that. The next time a boy called me a Jew, I

gave him a good poke
~~smashed him in the face and broke his nose for him.~~ *felt like* That was one boy who

was left with an ugly mug." Alois began to laugh at the recollection. Then

he laughed even more as if to signify that he was not heartsick. "And all

these years you thought the opposite?"

She nodded. She hardly knew whether ~~she was~~ *to be* relieved or

disappointed. She had always felt a sneaky excitement ~~that she had a man~~ *to be used to*

in which she had so often heard
 with such blood. Jews did forbidden things. Maybe Alois and she had even

^{same} done those forbidden things. And Jews were ^{reputed to be} intelligent. So, she had heard.
if Alois was not half-Jewish,
Now, she was truly confused.

Alois, thinking of Johann Poelzl, could have boiled the old bird for soup.

-17-

The reader may recall ~~some hundreds of pages back~~ that when I first presented myself as the narrator of this novel, I did appear as an SS man.

And indeed, I was. ^{Over} For that period in the late Thirties, I ^{was} ~~had~~ ^{altogether} invested myself ~~completely~~ ^{— That is to say even corporeally —} in a particular SS officer, ~~indeed~~, I lived and functioned ~~at the~~ ^{a person named} time only within Dieter. At a price. We do not engage in total investiture unless ^{high} the stakes ^{require the direct, relinquish} justify it. For the cost is that one must sacrifice ^{more than one} during such a period all the stimulation of living in the consciousness of many lives at once. One's power, ^{demonic power is then} of necessity, becomes ~~diminished~~ ^{by} total investiture. One becomes ^{simulacrum} the virtual equal of a human. ~~Indeed, we might even react as~~ ^{to most situations as humans}

~~Humans in many a way if the core of our motivation did not remain demonic,
(which requires constant attention to one's skills of concealment.)~~

4 So, as Dieter, I ^{did make} made the inquiries in Graz ^{(that I} described earlier ^{and}
^{although I only learned)} discovered thereby (that the true father of Alois was indeed Johann

Nepomuk, ~~and that~~ ^{by} in formation I
received ~~for a reward~~ from the MacGraw

I had to accomplish that, however, without being able to use all that I
At the time in 1938, I was not able, however,
to describe my gov't. To a

~~It is this kind of restriction that thrusts us into the mysteries of Time~~

~~seems experience it. Our Time is (not identical to)~~
as we employ it. For we live in Time rather than with the sort of Time that

humans take in through the movement of a clock. That is to say our Time ^{even} ~~is even able to live in more than one~~ allow
can be worked, can be made malleable, can even live in two separate ^{us to}

~~period provided~~
periods—I will soon explain—provided that our powers of memory are
~~sequestered.~~

If this were not so, the complications that we initiate would then beset

us. If I, for example, living as Dieter, had been aware from the beginning of the earlier actual events in Strones and Spital, I would have been

overstuffed with information. The letter that came in from the son of Alois Junior to Adolf Hitler would have presented no problem in and of itself. I

That ~~we~~ state we do not enter, ~~for~~^{often}
~~often~~^{however} for many complications would reset
us. It ~~is~~ for example, living

would have known that Hitler was not Jewish. But ^{I would have} ~~what an insuperable~~
~~been at an impasse in trying to prove the news/~~
 problem it would have given me so soon as I tried to explain to Heinrich
^{I needed a means of information-}
 Himmler how I discovered what I knew.
~~gathering like his in order to make it credible.~~

Some indeterminate Time ago, I believe the Maestro came to a
^{quarantine}
 conclusion that he must ~~quarantine~~ the memories of his devils if he wished
 (So, as I have just indicated, we do not live often in
 to keep order in his quarter of the universe. He it said, this deprivation is
 not so wholly restrictive as it sounds. ^{We do have}
 On my own, working as Dieter, I was,
 in fact, able to discover what I had learned already.

Since devils like myself have instincts that reach far beyond even the
~~best~~ of human intuitions, I would warrant that the memories we are not
 permitted to recall are there nonetheless for us to tap into (to use the
~~American expression.~~) They are there to serve as ^{for} unconscious guides to our
 instincts.

^{mention}
 I have ~~bothered to approach~~ this condign matter because the
 question whether Jewish blood ^{is} ~~was~~ present in Alois-Senior has ^{reared up} ~~now~~
~~presented itself in two wholly separate situations almost four decades~~
~~apart.~~

When that happens, we ^{do} feel an impact, ~~It is as if we are being~~
~~attacked by the ligaments of Time~~ ^{and it is a} ~~as if~~ we are in two places at once,
 The shock to our system is analogous to an ugly sprain, and the pain is
 sufficiently acute to distance ourselves from whichever element of Time
 is not pressing immediately on our ^{immediate} purpose. ~~therefore, to return completely~~ ^{I did my best,}
 I can assure the reader, therefore, that I paid my quick farewells
 to Dieter, to Heinrich Himmler, and to the record books in the city of
 Graz, ^{so suddenly in the bedroom} ~~and in the full light of spirit itself, returned to the bedroom of~~

^{of} Alois and Klara in Hafeld.

^{He} Alois was in a fury. His rage at Johann Poelzl would soon subside
 into what would be no less than a lifelong grudge—his heart would lift on
 the day that Poelzl died—but his fury against Alois-Junior was up and
 racing again.

Senior was, indeed, in the moil of such an inner storm that he could
 not stay in bed with Klara. For the first time in all the years that they had
 lain side by side in the dark, he had to get up on this night, dress, pace the
 floor, try to sleep on the couch, try to sleep on the floor, and succeeded, of
 course, in keeping both of them awake.

Klara knew she had to pay directly. "Don't say a word," she told herself, "do not touch this subject ever again."

While I cannot speak with the medical authority of those devils who were assigned by the Maestro (in total investiture) to medical school and internship, I will say it is possible that the cancer which was to end Klara's life in 1908 could have taken a determining leap forward on this miserable night.

Too much had happened to her at once. She had lost possession of a long-cherished idea. Because of the certainty that her children with Alois were one-quarter Jewish, she believed that the last three born had ~~actually~~ been provided with more opportunity to stay alive. If she had one notion about Jews, (and she could not really say she had ever met one other than Alois) it was that no matter what their faults might be, and she had heard the most awful stories from friends, relatives, storekeepers, the truth was also obvious—these Jews knew how to survive. To be so disliked, yet still be among the living! Klara had always been impressed, therefore (in absolute privacy with herself—whom could she talk to about this?) that she was with

a half-Jewish man and they did have three living children, saved in good part by their Jewish blood.

She was not one to allow herself to be bothered by niceties of logic. If Gustav, and Ida, and Otto had all died much too soon, she could attribute that to her side of the family. But Adolf had survived, and then Edmund and Paula (over whose health she prayed every night.)

Now, her confidence was breached. If the three remaining children continued to live, it would not be because of some historic preservative in their veins. They would have no such advantage.

A large reason not to sleep. What was worse, she had to feel a keen sense of her cowardice. How could she have accepted the idea that Alois-Junior should be invited back? Lying there, listening to Alois-Senior making all those moves back and forth, thumping the floor with his body as he lay down, then slamming it again with his fists, she was certainly able to feel her own rage. It was shocking to her. She could not believe what she was telling herself. If it were possible and wholly without consequence, yes, she, too, could kill Alois-Junior. Only, she knew she could not. She would not ever. And the fury of repelling such a fury in herself lived in her

heart—which is to say, in her breast—with such force and such detestation that, yes, it is possible—this could have been the night when the breast cancer which would yet burn with hell's pains in her chest, might have begun. If it were crucial to know, I would have consulted one or another passing demon of a doctor I knew, but, to repeat, we do not request any disbursements on Time merely to satisfy a whim.

I prefer to take us back to Alois.

The immensity of his rage on this night was that he had betrayed himself. And in the worst manner. The joy of rage (which is too infrequently considered) is that it can offer the same nourishing sense of self-righteousness that is available on regular occasions to the more hypocritical of church-goers. The core of such pleasure is never to be angry at oneself, only at others. Yet, here, on this night, Alois could not escape himself—he was even more infuriated with his own deeds than at Poelzl or Junior.

If the boy had turned out badly, it was his fault, his fault alone. By such a light, he was among the worst of human beings, a father who was weak. How despicable! He had spent his life obeying orders, and then

enforcing them in the Customs Service, he had revered Franz-Josef, a gallant, great, and good king whose first virtues were hard work and discipline. He had put together his sense of his own nature as a private homage to Franz-Josef. If he had ever had the good fortune to be on duty during some near-miraculous occasion when the Emperor might visit, how he would hope that the good king might recognize what a fine influence his majesty had had at least on one Customs Officer.

But he had imparted none of that sense of respect to Alois-Junior. Was it because he had felt too guilty about the boy's mother? Yes, he had treated Fanni badly, so badly that he could not be stern with the offspring. There had been a lack of discipline in himself which could only be described as unforgivable.

It took every hour of darkness for his rage to cool. It was not until the first light of morning—a dim light that came with shrouds of rain at dawn—that he was able to speak from one part of his mind to the other, and so could issue a few orders on what his future conduct with Adi must become. He was not going to make the same mistake he had allowed with Junior.

He did not. Fortified with direct instructions from the Maestro, I stayed much at Alois' side in days to come and was with Klara as well. I felt as if for the first time since ~~Adi~~ had been born, I could lay some demonic equivalent of real hands on the shaping of this child not yet seven years old.

-18-

Now, whenever he wished to bring Adi to his side, Alois would whistle. It was a fine drill of a whistle, ^{and} sharp enough to hurt the ear when heard up close. Nor did he reduce the intensity ^{when} of the boy was within arm's reach. In the tavern, Alois was now fond of saying, "^{while raising} ~~When you raise~~ a boy, ^{do not} ~~never~~ let go of the whip. I speak from experience."

More than once, Alois said to Adi, "~~I wasted~~ ^{was wasted} time and sacrifice on your older brother. You, Adolf, ^{will} ~~had better~~ not waste my time."

~~I can say that~~ Adi was half-paralyzed with fear. I had to wonder how the final effects of this could serve our purposes. We certainly ^{know how} ~~understand~~ ^{to use} the applications of humiliation and self-abasement ^{as a tool} upon our clients ^{when} ~~they~~

~~they~~ ^{they can prove most}
~~necessary, and such tools can be applied.~~ They prove effective, for
 example, with manic-depressives. If we are looking to drive a client into a
 violent act, ^{a series of} successive bouts of humiliation ^{can stir} enable us to get the subject ^{into}
 oscillating faster and faster between the poles of ^{his} depression and ^{his} mania.

Soon enough, there is an eruption.

I did not see, however, why we needed anything ~~so~~ drastic at so early
 a time in Adi's life. It was obvious to me that the Maestro ^{was not opposed} wished to send a
~~to flooding the boy's spirit with a good~~
 flood of wretchedness ~~into the boy's spirit.~~ While it would not be a full
 wave of despond, ~~nothing so~~ all-consuming and obliterative as that, it
^{and so implacable}
~~it~~ would amount to a first taste of pure misery, (a fear that times to come might
^{It was obvious to me that Adi was being}
 even be worse, ~~yes, already Adi had been given a purview of the heavy~~
 anguish that attached ~~it~~ itself to ~~a~~ ineradicable melancholia.

These are well-established foundations for producing a suicide. So, I
^{ultimate}
 could not know what purpose the Maestro had in mind. The boy was
 delicate enough for it all to go wrong. What ^a an expensive (Time-
~~consuming~~) disaster it would be, and for so little.

Yet, if I knew anything about the Maestro, it was that he, too, lived
 with curious contradictions in his nature. He encouraged many a failed

human activity, for that could be ~~laid as exertment upon~~ ^{depressing to} the Dummkopf.

^{Yet} ~~But~~ he could tolerate nothing of that sort for himself. Whenever the Maestro had to pay for the waste, he detested it ~~in all its forms.~~

On the other hand, he was a bold, even an exceptional gambler. I knew that well. Often we would take some extreme chances with the lives of our clients. So I knew that the Maestro was gambling now with the boy.

Suicide can be of great value to us when we succeed in picking off some ^{potential} favorite of the Lord's, but that could hardly be the ^{situation} ~~desired outcome~~ here.

While such an event might destroy Klara ~~as well~~, that would offer but one more sorrow to the Dummkopf, and He was ^{so many} ~~lathered~~ ^{involved} ~~already~~ ^{in the} waste of ~~particular~~ humans in whom He had placed His Hope.

No, this was a gamble of no mean dimension. Very occasionally, when the Maestro was entertaining ^{his} ~~the~~ most ambitious future plans for a young client, he would look to encourage ~~this species of~~ close to absolute wretchedness in a proud spirit, ~~and~~ ^{once} ~~this~~ could even become a designed tactic after we had managed to generate large funds of that same pride. ^{I think he saw it as a species of psychic inoculation.} Naturally, these gambles made for immensely unstable results. ~~We~~

~~lose quite a few prospects.~~ Occasionally, they were splendid prospects. So

~~the skills to which we are put on these occasions can be most challenging,~~

For once we have ^{implanted a deep} ~~swelled~~ a sense of humiliation and abasement in a proud

client, we then look ^{still have} ~~to turn it inside-out~~ ^{such a wound into a strength,} (That is even more difficult than

^{convert} ~~metamorphose~~ a coward into a hero. Yet, when we succeed ⁱⁿ ~~in~~

~~accomplishing such reversals,~~ when the psychic abysses in a would-be

suicide ^{can develop} ~~are converted~~ instead into promontories of achievement and

personal power, an immense gamble has ^{been} ~~proved~~ successful. The once-

humiliated wretch has now acquired the power to humiliate others, a

^{demonic power, may I say.}

¶ During the worst of these whistles which ^{pierced} ~~visited again~~ each night in ⁶
the boy's sleep like the spikes in another Son's palms and ankles ~~(let us not~~

~~forget the real possibility that Adi is the Maestro's son!)~~ a revolt was

nonetheless in progress. Adi was not reduced to a wretch. Not altogether.

^{Having} ~~The boy,~~ already ^{himself} ~~more than~~ half-accommodated ~~(to~~ the notion that he was

the one who had been beaten to insensibility by his father, ^{he} ~~(certainly~~ knew

^{how to work)} ~~enough not to confront~~ Senior directly, but he brought off some nimble

~~work~~ upon Klara's feelings.

"Mother," he told her, "my father now looks at me as if I am the one who is guilty."

his discomfort,
 She was hardly unaware of ~~what was going on, particularly since the~~

The whistle had become a needle in her own ears.

"Aali, you

"You must never say that your father is wrong," she ~~replied~~. ^{told him, however,}

She would always offer the same speech ~~every time he approached~~.

"Yes," she repeated, "you cannot say that your father is wrong."

"But what if he is ~~so~~ ^{wish} ~~wish~~ ^{ht} ~~ht~~ ^{be} ~~be~~?"

"He does not ~~mean~~ ^{wish} to be wrong. Perhaps he makes a mistake. That could be."

"What if he is very wrong?"

"It will not remain that way." She nodded. She did not know if she believed what she said next, but she said it nonetheless. "He is a good father. A good father always realizes sooner or later that he may have been ~~going in the wrong direction~~ ^{for a little while}." She nodded again as if to oblige herself to believe ~~herself~~ ^{such words}. ("There can be a moment," she said, "when the father recognizes that he, too, can be wrong." She put her hand to the boy's face as if to cool the fever in his cheeks. "Yes," she said, "he hears his own words and realizes that they are not correct. So, he changes."

"He does?"

"Absolutely. The father changes." She spoke as if this had happened in the past. "He changes," she repeated for the third time, "and now there is order in what he says. Now, it all goes in the best direction. Because he is ready to change. Do you know why?"

"No."

"Because you were able to tell yourself that you would never cause him confusion. You would not do that because he is your father." She held Adi by the waist and looked into his eyes *with all her love, as if* as if she could relieve them and ~~then they would not burn any longer. If his eyes were like her own. How much alike, she thought, were the eyes of the boy and his mother.~~ *as if she could relieve them and*

Klara had been the first in the family to recognize (and she was still the only one) that Adi could be spoken to as if he were ten or twelve years old. "Yes," she now said, "it is best when there is no confusion made for the father. Since you have never accused him of anything, sooner or later he will be happy about you. So, you must never accuse your father. That would cause him to feel weiblich. For him to feel weak is very bad. You cannot expect him to admit that he has any weakness."

At this point, she ^{began to speed} ~~spoke~~ of ehre-fucht. To honor and to fear. She explained the importance of these words. They had been imparted to her by ^{her mother, Johanna} ~~Johanna. Her mother~~ had used them when speaking of Johann Poelzl. He was, her mother all but said to Klara, a hard-working but very unlucky farmer—who in the family did not know that?—and yet her mother had always treated Poelzl with ehre-fucht as if he were an important and successful man. "That is what my mother taught me, and I now tell it to you. The word of the father is the law of the family."

She said this with such solemnity and such certainty that the boy felt it enter him as a source of strength. Yes, some day he would have a family and all who were in it would honor him and they would fear him. At this point, his need to urinate (which always afflicted him in these young years ^{whenever he was on the point of developing} ~~when he held~~ large and magnificent thoughts about himself) now spoke to his crotch. ^{So} in the midst of his mother's peroration, he almost had an accident, but did not—not if he was to be entitled in the future to these emoluments of honor for himself ~~and fear felt by others.~~

"Yes," she said to her son, "the word of the father has to be law. Right or wrong, one must never argue with the father's word. One must

obey him. For the good of the family. So, the father is right. Right or wrong. the father is right. He ^{must} ~~has to~~ (be). Otherwise, all is confusion."

Now, she referred to Alois-Junior. "He did not have ehre-fucht," she said. "You must promise me that that will never be said of you. Because, now, you are the oldest brother. You are important. The boy who was your brother is as good as dead."

Adi was wet. His entire body was wet. His perspiration might as well have been illumined by holy light. Just so complete was the importance of this sentiment. I entered his thoughts long enough to tell him, "Your mother is correct. You are now the oldest brother. The younger ones will now honor and respect you."

Yes, Adi understood, and I worked upon his mind ^{each night} until it became a mental certainty, the equal of ^{one of those} ~~a~~ paved street ^{always available} in the mind, ~~ready~~ for full

mental traffic. On many a night I told him again that Alois-Junior was ^{totally} ~~forever~~ separated from the family. Alive or dead, it ^{would} ~~did~~ not matter.

Alois-Senior was of no small aid to me ~~here~~. By December, he wrote a new will. It stipulated that in the event of the father's death, the son named Alois was to receive no more of the estate than the minimum

proscribed by law. "The smaller the better," he added. Since the act of drawing up a will re-engaged all of Senior's long-developed sense of proper ~~contractual and~~ ^{added;} official procedure, he also ~~put in these words:~~ "This is stated in the full recognition of the seriousness of such an act by a father. In my years as a Chief Customs Officer for the Crown, I warrant that I became most familiar with the responsibility that must always be seriously attached to such grave decisions."

Whereupon, having completed the re-writing of his will, he whistled for Adi and read portions aloud to him.

have long to give that
 question a name
 How about
 Schultz? Albrecht Schultz
 put that in
 everywhere
 Kellogg.

-19-

Part of Alois' decision to write a new will had come ^{because} ~~from the fact that~~

he ^{was} would be able to sell the farm. The buyer had been referred to him by

Albrecht Schultz
~~Mayerhofer~~, the man who ran the local store and had once offered to

purchase their honey. At the beginning of Fall, ^{Schultz} ~~Mayerhofer~~ had even ^{offered} ~~given~~

his advice to Klara about who might be ^{interested} ~~likely to buy~~.

"Dear Frau Hitler," he had said, "the best way to sell your farm is ^{has said} ~~for~~
^{it looks good.}
~~its good looks.~~ Is that not exactly why your husband bought it in the first
 place?"

"I will not say that has to be untrue," said Klara. (For her, such a
 remark was equal to flirting with Herr ^{Schultz} ~~Mayerhofer~~.)

"Yes," he said, "it is good you recognize this. I believe you will be able to sell your property to people who are less experienced at farming than yourselves, but—" he held up a finger—"more well-to-do, not so? You must ~~just~~ have the patience to wait. Soon enough, one of these ~~well-off and~~ comfortable people will come along. And when he does, you ~~must~~ send him to me. I will be your friend. I will know how to answer all the questions that come up."

I could see that Klara and ~~Mayerhofer~~ ^{Schultz} were both favored by the ~~Cudgels~~. ~~For~~ ^{It} indeed, it did come to pass. The wealthy house-hunter arrived, ~~inquired first of Mayerhofer~~, ^{was sent to talk to Schultz} loved the look of the house and the farm, knew even less about the pitfalls than Alois, ~~and so~~ the sale took place. If the price presented no profit, neither did Alois suffer the loss he feared. The finality of the transfer, however, plus the continuation of a wholly palpable silence from Alois-Junior, convinced Alois-Senior that the end of ^{this} his dream that he ^{might} could live his last days on a farm ^{could be put} might just as well ~~coincide with the termination of any~~ ^{to rest with his} last hopes that ^{the} his oldest son would yet bring him some reason for pride. No [!] ~~it~~ was now up to Adi. He was not nearly so lithe nor so strong as Alois-Junior, not nearly so good-looking, but

as bright, perhaps, and he was ~~so~~ obedient. ~~Even~~^{The} act of whistling for him had become a pleasure. The response was so quick, ~~so~~ alert.

In his heart; however,

All the same, (Alois-Senior did keep the equivalent of an old

photograph, ~~in his heart~~. There still were nights when he would sit ~~on~~ on

the oak bench and muse again on the Langstroth box he had built for

himself. He would pat the seat as if to recall the sound of the slap he used

to give that wooden box in the old days, ^{*that nice slap*} just to stir up his bees.

This is all that remains to be said for Hafeld except ~~that~~^{for} Angela, ~~was~~

She was

(~~ping~~ just a little for Alois-Junior. She knew he would not come back, and

so she could accept him as) fine
so by now she had developed him into her model of a romantic figure. ~~He~~

of a young man. He

had looked so handsome upon Ulan. ~~Since it was safe,~~ ^{*even*} she began to play at

the ~~most modest~~ ^{*Of course she was certain*} edge of a flirtatious dream. ~~She never let it go too far.~~

Once in a while, ^{*she might allow him to*} he would dismount from ~~the~~ horse and kiss her. She soon

learned, however, that the mind, ~~once embarked on a fantasy,~~ can betray the

explorer. Before long, Angela began to think of all the girls that Alois used

to see. There was even one in her class who was always smiling at her now,

as if she, the girl, knew something special, and maybe Angela did as well.

*It
would
never
go
to
far.*

By early spring of 1897, after the family moved back to the outskirts of Linz, Angela had a room to herself and there, carefully hidden from everyone else, she kept the photograph that an itinerant photographer had taken of young Alois ^{by himself in the course of} after photographing all the members of the family. *Alois was so pleased with this image of himself together.*

Angela had stolen ^{that} this picture from her brother as punishment for all ^{that had been her} way of ~~paying~~ ^{paying} Alois back. ^{for all the} the ways he had teased her for being reluctant to mount Ulan. Then, she had ^{when she was} sworn to him on an imaginary stack of bibles (which didn't exist for one moment in her mind) that she had no idea what had happened to ^{her} his favorite *she didn't care that he was* picture of himself. *(He was)* suffering as completely as if he had lost a large gold watch. *he*

about (Angela) could not have been more secretive about ^{this} her new hiding place if the photo had been an early pornographic print. I mention this small breath of the carnal that she bestowed on the fading brown portrait of Alois only because three decades later, in 1927, her daughter, Geli Raubal, a young and nicely buxom blond beauty, would be entertained publicly by Adolf Hitler on many a night in Munich in one or another of the fine restaurants he was beginning to attend. While the intimate facts are yet to

be related, it was not long before Adolf commenced to have an affair with his niece. By the time it terminated four years later on the day of her death (by murder or suicide was never ~~quite~~ established) he, Adolf Hitler, now a serious leader of a Nazi party much to be reckoned with, had to go through some of the worst weeks of his life. ^{Geli Raubal} She had been the love of his life.

That is far down the road. History ^{for those who have lived in it in as} ~~as long as myself and in as many places~~ ^{many places as myself}, is not always recalled as all-fascinating. Sometimes, ~~the history through which I pass~~ can seem no more than the length of the road. ^{So} I no longer know whether I am ready to recommend the life of a devil to ~~any~~ would-be aspirants. But then I think—we know so much about how it happens, how it really happens. Who could ever wish to lose such riches?

End of Book V

In the event of my unanticipated demise before I finish the rest of this work (which ^{is intended} ~~intends~~ to carry us up to the year 1903 and the death of Klara,

who has been a widow since Alois' end in 1903) let the ~~text above~~ ^{on this,}

~~which comes as of now to page 727~~ ⁽

~~sheet (as of now, p. 722)~~ serve as the conclusion. While the present work

~~(proportions of the full structure)~~ ^{intended} ~~may be~~ does not yet have the balance I intended, I warrant that it is already enough

of a novel to be presented as such.

Norman Mailer

~~July 30,~~

~~March 19, 2005~~

August 1, 2005