

we certainly
not ~~have to be reminded~~ to take cognizance of every fornication that ^{can} gets us
off to a good start.

Our targets are obvious. Rarely do we fail to attend the joinings of rich and powerful people (so full of infidelity!). As has been noted, we do not ignore the occasional wretched couple whose rites include incest. Other copulations, however, particularly those ^(unnamed) attended by angels, present a more demanding task—it is ~~never~~ ^{not} routine to slip through their blockade! It seems—I speak here for myself—as if the E.O. has never been able to accept his failure to be present in the hour when Jesus Christ was conceived.

Fortunately for us, Jesus proved to be a typical Son. (The record we are furnished by the E.O. informs us that He was at odds with His Father.) Jehovah, indeed, was often incensed by the rebelliousness of this good son.

But I stray from the point. The prevailing fact of our existence as devils and demons is that we are obliged to live within a limited budget. You can well believe that our projects are chosen, therefore, with discretion.

For example, the E.O. does not ask, except in special instances, for us to show much interest in the early development of children. Sometimes we keep no more than a short record of those families who interest us. "Over

the first few years," our Maestro will remark, "a child is caught between the need for love and the development of the will. Those two inclinations are so naturally at odds with each other that we can rely on sufficient inner confusion in the subject to enable us to approach later."

open good approaches for us when they are older

Except for the most unusual cases, therefore, we exercise no intervention until the age of seven. (Until well into the nineteenth century, an extraordinary child was always in danger of being carried off abruptly by one grievous disease or another.) Any devil seeking to invest in a particular young boy or girl, must, therefore, argue his case.

Once a child has turned seven, it becomes easier to decide. It is, however, *usually* *not yet* ~~still~~ not promising. (The E.O. looks upon the next five or six years as the Age of Clods. "They are now encountering the world in its basic form—the school years. Nearly all of them rush toward habit, routine, and stupidity as the most immediate forms of protective insulation. These ~~are~~ the years when the average human ego takes shape in all of its readiness to lie, mis-remember, distort and forget—all in order to keep the young ego in some readiness to support the ongoing project, oneself."

Our hunt commences more often with adolescence. Here, we are at the first lively stage of intervention. Often the best energies of the D.K. are there for us to subvert since He is invariably ready to invest resources in very young men and women who hardly know what to do with ^atheir sudden inrush of increased will and appetite. Dramatic distortions of His Intention are now open to us.

I have proceeded ^{to} this far into explaining our processes of selection ~~to~~
~~because I wish to~~
 (emphasize how uncommon was the special attention being given to one particular five-year-old. That his name was Adolf Hitler was, after all, of no importance yet.

All the same, I had attended (by proxy) his conception, and ^{so} it had remained a matter of ^{some import} ~~course~~ for me to review the work of ^{these} ~~my minor~~ devils ^{would cover} who were watching his family's activities. Our jargon for this kind of surveillance was milk-runs, an expression we employed long before it was adopted by U.S. Air Force pilots in the Second World War. Any one of our ~~minor~~ devils could pass by a house in the hours before dawn, and by ~~way~~ of the small and large storms, inertias, and joys that had transpired in the family since the last visit, ~~we~~ could ingest a fund of new information. ~~It~~

required no exceptional expenditure unless the abode was ^{being} ~~seriously~~
~~protected by~~ ^{guarded by} guardian angels. In a more normal condition, one ^{could sweep} swept by the
house and ^{then} relayed the findings to appropriate superiors. While humans ^{(I think}
^{that does as much for them too.)} ~~In any event, while~~
^{humans} slept, we did our work. (As did the angels. Yes, those forces of Light also
worked in the night!)

I had ^{been able to keep} kept up then with a close history of the Hitler family for all the
years since Adolf had been born. ^{them (Be it understood} It had been imparted to me by the separate
^{that was also)} ~~devils who~~ kept track of ^{other} numerous projects in that region of Austria. ^{It}
^{had up to now} what my agents offered was virtually as modest as the narrative I have
^{now the less} presented, it had, ~~until now~~ sufficed. ~~In~~ ^R Reviewing Adolf's early years, I
confess that ~~at the time~~ I saw no large promise in the boy. He was
outrageously in need of love and damnably vulnerable. The odds were that
he would perish early, or creep through life with a mutilated ego. At least,
so I would have judged if the E.O. had not been present at his conception.
^{was significant} That event, however, ^{It} determined our judgment. Even on the busiest nights,
the Hitler family was included on every milk-run.

This routine of careful but passive observation was overturned
altogether for me on the day that Alois, Jr. dragged Adi off to the boys'

instincts, and was as much superior to an average five-year-old as a young race-horse ~~is~~ to a run-of-the-mill mule. I enjoyed working with him, ~~therefore~~, and that was just as well since the order had come during a period when I could not afford new inroads on my budget. Improving a child's courage usually demands the use of precious stores, precisely those funds of love and force we have managed to steal from the Cudgels. Courage is His, and if the D.K. were not such a wastrel, and we were not so adept, our chances would be paltry. Of necessity, we have become skilled at impersonating angels. Even an adult, feeling our infusion of love, tends to believe it is bona-fide, that he or she is the recipient of Grace. (I suspect Kierkegaard had just that in mind when he suggested people might well be wary of feeling too saintly, since they could then be working for Satan.)

I speak of this because we devils are human to this degree—a fine return on our investment puts us in the best of moods. So I came to enjoy being ~~with Adi as he proceeded to improve the little game of war that was~~ ^{in company / looked} being played by these five-year-olds in Passau in the spring and summer of 1894. Indeed, the change in my sentiments was as rapid for me as for the child. (Secretly, we do cherish our power to bestow gifts upon a putative

client.) We must. Often the only way to capture a child so young is, as I have indicated, to spend some of our limited stores of love to seal the conquest. A risky business. All too often, a child's shifting inclinations can waste our efforts. Our youngest clients can alter themselves on their own, or resist us, or, worse, the Cudgels move in.

To forestall this ~~event~~, ⁺ I was there night after night ~~during this period~~ to instruct Adi while he slept. Indeed, he delighted me (the rarest of pleasures for a devil!) by the development of his activities during the day.

To repeat—he was no ordinary five-year-old, no, he had an exceptional capacity to ^{improve them} ~~tinker with his~~ game of war. Rarely did he fail to ^(tinker with it) ~~improve it.~~

He soon saw, and I believe this came as much from his perception as mine, that outposts were necessary. It was wrong to send soldiers over the hill without fore-knowledge of what opposite force they might encounter. So, a scout from each army had to attempt to work his way up close enough to the summit to obtain a covert look at the dispositions of the other side. Following in logical sequence came another change in the rules—an advancing army had to be free to move its forces from flank to flank, even as it climbed the hill. Ditto for the defenders. The defense could also shift

their outposts. Of course, this called for larger forces on each side, but Adi was soon able to convince his regulars that more boys should be invited in from nearby streets and fields. ~~They~~ ^{Of course, they} the originals, having been here first, ^{were entitled by} ~~could~~ take promotion in rank. Let me offer one of his speeches to his troops.

"Why do we love our game?" he would ask. "Is it because we need to know more about war? Yes. Because, my friends, when we are big ^{men}, we will want to be heroes. Is that not true? Klaus, do you want to be a hero?"

"That is what I want."

"Of course. It is what we want. All of us. But to do this we must learn more. So, we need more soldiers. On both sides. How are we to accomplish this?"

"I will tell you. It is by bringing in all who are willing to join us. Then, we who are here can be given high rank. We who command must be very high in rank. Not just a captain, or a major, but a general.

"Klaus here, will be my colonel."

Those words are close to what I remember. While I have certainly ^{on his own} endowed him with an eloquence no five-year-old could muster, I have to

admit that some of the good turns of speech that came out of him seemed to be ~~neither his words, nor mine!~~ Could they have been inspired by some, ~~agent of the D.K., unknown to me, who was also present? Was he being helped by both sides at once? What a large investment to put into this little~~ ~~Adi!~~

he and his troop were
Before long, his ~~I will indeed say his boys,~~ ~~were engaged each~~
~~afternoon~~ *so* in hour-long battles. There were startling shifts of tactics and endless alterations of the rules. The numbers increased to fifteen and twenty a side.

Word came from the E.O. "Enough for now. Let us see how much of this endures after the move."

This was not uncharacteristic of our Maestro. We had to be ready to accept ~~any and~~ every quick change of direction. In this case, it was the situation of the family that would be altered. Alois had decided to move Klara, Angela, Alois Junior, Adi, and the baby Edmund, up from Passau to dwell nearer to him in Linz.

I am obliged, therefore to apologize twice to the reader. Once, for bringing so abrupt a termination to Adi's young war games, and again

sympathy
because ~~interest~~ was thereby aroused for the boy. Good readers are the most
allegiance
unprotected of humans—their ~~sympathy~~ moves in advance of their
judgment. Some may have felt uneasy, therefore, to discover that they were
enjoying these first successes of the child Adolf Hitler. Be assured. To read
is bound to
about the skills or triumphs of any protagonist will elicit happiness in just
about all who follow the story, especially if there is a suggestion of the
sentimental, or even better, the magical. *useful* (These are two useful tools for any
wishes
author who ~~desires~~ to arouse quick emotions in the reader.) That is why—
count on it!—popular writers come looking for arrangements with us ~~all the~~
~~time~~. We love them. They are dupes. Popular writers think they are
working both for God and their own prosperous selves. We never disabuse
them. We want them to steep their readers in baths of misperception. The
(one more form of)
profit comes to us. Misperception of reality serves as ~~compound~~ interest for
us.

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I was not ~~well~~ prepared for Alois' interest in these matters.

Here was not the man I knew. While I could see ^{his} ~~some~~ practical purpose ~~to~~ it all, since the product was eminently salable, apiculture also had its risks, including the peril of receiving a serious number of bee stings. While it might be reasonable to engage in such efforts rather than endangering his long-worked heart by plowing a field, I had, all the same, an uneasy suspicion. Alois was too sincere in his enthusiasm. He was not sufficiently concerned with profit. That surprised me. It did not seem in character. The desire for money is the tap-root that drives most men like Alois into new activity. The relative absence of this desire did concern me, therefore. (I have to feel like a sorry devil whenever I cannot come close to a man's real

motives.)

~~intentions.)~~ Yet here was Alois ready to undertake this venture because it satisfied something in him that I had not yet ferreted out for myself.

I did recall that he had tinkered with keeping bees in one small town near Braunau, dabbled, and soon gave it up. In the last few months, however, he had written a short article for a bee-keepers' journal. To my surprise, the piece was literate. Alois' experience might be limited, but he had acquired a degree of book knowledge on the subject, and was now fascinated by new modes of cultivation. It looked as if bee hives made of straw would soon be done away with. Skeps they were called, squat-ribbed domed objects about the size and shape of big-bellied human torsos, and these old skeps had their drawbacks. To harvest the honey, bee-keepers had to keep the population of the hive stunned by enough smoke to put them into a near-comatose condition. It was an imprecise process, and the skep often had to be ripped open to collect the product. Despite the smoke, some honeybees awoke long enough to sting the collector.

A new and much-discussed innovation was, however, being developed in England and in America. Even in Austria, some bee-keepers were ready to do away with the old ~~uneasily straw~~ structure. If the skep had

been for its time an improvement over the more barbaric practice—common ^{through/} ~~in~~ antiquity and the Middle Ages—of chasing the bees out from their ^{encampment} ~~holes~~ in ^{the hole of} ~~a~~ tree, advanced bee-keepers around Linz were now speaking of hives that could become the equivalent of a bee-city. This new housing, no greater in size than a small wooden cabinet, was filled with wax trays installed vertically. The worker bees seemed content to build their miniscule wax cells on both sides of each tray. Since this cabinet could hold a good number of trays, which each had room for thousands of cells in a grid of files and rows, some keepers calculated that each hive could be seen as comparable to a giant apartment building in some future megalopolis like Berlin or New York.

To explain this venture to Klara, Alois did emphasize the pecuniary promise. Good money would come back from clean work, and Alois Jr. and Angela would help, he told her. And Adi as well! He convinced her that the new project was eminently practical.

I was more than bothered. Klara might believe him but I did not. I had decided that Alois was looking to find a way to come nearer to the Dummkopf. That was not a matter I could afford to ignore.

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I was now debating whether to pass this concern on to the E.O. I was supposed to be on the alert for unexpected turns. On the other hand, Alois had never been one of our clients. We had never felt the need. He was by our measure an average man, which is to say, sufficiently corrupt to be available for our use whenever we might decide to invest ^{a little} ~~temporarily in~~ ⁱⁿ him. The assumption was that he would be open to us. The Cudgels would ^{the fellow,} hardly be guarding ~~him~~. To what end? He was so self-centered. What could there be for them to protect? Whereas, when it came to someone like Klara, we did not choose to go near. Not for too little. It would have proved punishing and again—to what end? We did not need her directly.

Some of our most exceptional clients are the offspring of good mothers.

as I have attempted to show,
Indeed, evil children can issue from the most loving mothers. Average men
this
and women find it hard to accept ~~that~~ realization. It shakes their faith in the
Dummkopf. How could God allow ~~this~~ *it?* A standard lament.

But no need to go)
We had ~~not gone~~ near Klara, therefore, except for that one
incomparably special night—our lightning raid!—when Adolf had been
conceived.

After that, she was more useful to us as herself, there, innocent,
nurtured by the attentions of the Cudgels. This is, however, a complex
matter. To give but an indication, let me say that Klara, being gifted with
depths of love, would not only adore her Adi, but would become enchanted
by the new one, Edmund; that was certain to agitate many of Adolf's
feelings.

To watch over a child through the early years is, as I have indicated,
so chance-filled a procedure, that we usually wait. Whereas Alois, in
himself, on the hoof, that is to say, Alois, his faults and virtues all more or
less predictable, had been serving as the keel to our ongoing comprehension
of the Hitler family. He was so dependable in his strengths and habits, his

productive contributions, his built-in cruelties ^(not to mention his) and crudities that one could, if necessary, intensify or reduce the heat of Adolf's hatred for his father in such a way as to mold the boy. Depend on it! We depended on Alois. He was predictable.

Now, his outsize love for bees was turning matters askew. For me, at least! There are ^a few atheists like Alois who can go all the way to the grave without being challenged in their heart on one or another occasion by the fear or, worse, the intimation, that God does exist. In this sense, they are comparable to pious virgins who are tempted into sudden and unholy heats. Like many such ladies, they cannot accept sex (or, in the case of atheists—religion!) as a force to be met on sensible terms. No, like the good virgin, the confounded atheist, has to take it, so to speak, through the back door. They fall in love with God by way of nature, paganism, service to others, technology—usually seen by them as the best possible solution to humankind's problems—or occasionally through exceptional allegiance to some phenomenon of nature. In Alois' case, it happened to be the recognition that a collaboration was possible between the mighty and the miniscule.

Since our good fellow was hardly ready to pray for the greater glory of the Lord, he approached this newly opened sense (of Mystery!) by way of his old allegiance to Franz Josef. I learned as much by a quick raid on his ^{Sunday morning} mind while ~~he~~ ^{he} ~~was~~ ^{was} in channel and he ~~was~~ ^{was} asleep, ~~an activity that depended on the likelihood that no Cudgels would be~~ ^{nowhere in the offing} ~~near~~ during the length of my excursion. Indeed, they were not.

So, I penetrated quickly, and soon was out. I gathered what I needed.

Now, I knew more about Alois' new preoccupation, and confirmed my unhappy sense of what might be in his mind. ^{He saw bees as giving} These bees gave themselves to ^{with parallels} a life ~~he could find analogous~~ to his own. This is why natural phenomena are so often the first perception by humans of the conceivable nearness of God. They discover, for example, that a puppy is a warm cuddly bit of existence not wholly unlike themselves in the need for affection and so can serve as the gateway to larger suppositions. For Alois, these bees ⁱⁿ ~~out in~~ search of new fields of flowers were creatures he could understand.

On any warm day, such foragers ^{know} ~~knew~~ the heat of the sun and the intimate yearning that ^{will} ~~only~~ the sun ~~can~~ ^{will} arouse in flower petals. Alois was not about to throw open any bolted door to the mystical side of himself—he was no different from most people in that regard—but I had found a soft

the under belly of
spot in ~~his~~ psyche. He would actually, in the innermost recess of his
thoughts, muse on the art that must be present in any scheme of creation
that had chosen
~~which would choose~~ to draw the honeybee into the perfumed caverns of the
flower. It stirred him to think of two wholly separated existences, more and
more entranced with each other through the burgeoning heat of the sun. The
flower would surrender its nectar to the bee's tongue, while the hairs of the
honeybee covered themselves with the pollen of the stamens. In another
moment, the bee would separate from one passionate lust to look for
another, whichever fine flower of the same species was beckoning in the
breeze, ready to gather more nectar for the hive even as it left some of the
pollen of the first stamen on this second infatuation.

Such images gave life to Alois. It was the balance between hard work
and satisfied desire. He could feel close to that bee who would stagger back
in flight with its pollen bags heavy, and its stomach ~~valve~~ full of nectar.
Had not Alois, in his turn, given much to women and yet brought back
much for himself, so much accumulated wisdom on how to deal with the
world, or, at least, his customs-house corner ~~of the world~~, where by the end
of his career, he invariably knew what was true and what was false in

declarations offered by strangers, particularly women who might wish to

deceive him, yet could not, because he was wiser than they were. He

possessed the true honey. ~~— wisdom. That was~~ Wisdom was the knowledge of what others were

up to, ~~all those secrets held by~~

~~As Alois saw it, honey was a concentrate of secrets — secrets held by~~

passing travelers and commercial people, secrets as sweet as honey, all

those little goods travellers looked to steal and keep for themselves. But he

had been there to capture their secrets. He could work as hard and long as

any honeybee on the hottest and most productive day of summer when the

flowers were most open, working hard for a future beyond themselves, even

as he, Alois, had labored on many an occasion to protect the glory, centuries old, of the Hapsburgs and their exceptional Empire, so devoted to the future.

Not all the Hapsburgs had been great he would admit, not all were even

very good people, but it was true for the best of them, those who were like

Franz Josef. They were good, very good. Alois could hope to find a

resemblance to Franz Josef in his own features—the same sideburns, the

same dignity. It was said of the Emperor Franz Josef that he could work for

endless hours at his necessary and near-to-endless duties. When necessary,

he, Alois, was also ready. And yet they knew enough, both of them, ^{— the} to ~~comprehend~~ ^{Emperor and himself — to} ~~comprehend~~ ^{amass} that it was not enough to ~~carry~~ ^{also} the honey back, but that one must keep a taste for oneself.

Some people in Linz he knew, fools for the most part, had been shocked when gossip spread about the actress, Fraulein Katharina Schratt, whom Franz Josef had taken for a mistress when he had a wife so beautiful as Empress Elizabeth! Such news had spread like a spill of oil that has no boundaries. It had been a blow to some. Not to Alois. He understood. Both the best of men and the worst had to keep some share of the honey for themselves. As he entered retirement, this thought actually brought a taste of peace.

Let me not be altogether captivated, however, by the voluptuous turn Alois has just brought to his meditations. After all, he had his fear of bees as well. Once, in previous years, he had been stung so ferociously and apocalyptically (if I may put it so) that he never forgot the attack of vertigo it caused. Such power to create pain! That it could exist in creatures so small! It did not come from the honeybee alone, he decided, but must derive from congress with the sun! Such pain might even express the rage

of the sun. With that, Alois was familiar. He had worked through many an ~~August afternoon~~ summer in the glare of ~~hottest daylight~~ ^{blaze of sunlight}, stuffed into his uniform. Of course he knew the rage of the sun. ~~It might be there to disseminate warmth from the heavens above, but also to glow as a manifest of divine rage.~~

These were thoughts too large for Alois to accept openly. He ^{would} ~~never~~ ^{not encourage} ~~bring~~ ^{of this ilk to come} such meditations all the way forward into words, but this much he knew: Honeybees were agents of the sun even as he was an agent of the Hapsburgs, and both were close to the greatness of ~~the~~ ultimate power.

Could these swollen epiphanies be the product of full retirement ~~even~~ before Alois was ~~truly~~ ready to retire? I looked forward with my own trepidation to how he would deal with his four children now that Edmund had been born. For that matter, how would it be to live on a farm with Klara? I ^{could expect} ~~would have to be ready for~~ unforeseen rages. Like ~~still-unformed~~ ^{not yet} clouds on the horizon was ^{my unease} ~~the shape of my disturbance~~. So, I was prepared, but not well enough for the trouble that Alois, Junior, would bring in the next year when he turned fourteen.

"No! Donnerwetter, he can't pull out! The queen has hooks, or something of the kind, very sharp hooks for certain to keep him there. She likes him there. He is stuck. When he does insist, when he has to pull away, you won't believe it, his good organ is ripped right out of him. He ^{is} ~~obliged~~ ^{has} to leave it behind. His manhood! Gone. All gone."

"And him? What happens then? To him?"

"Oh, he dies. He is gone. Of course! He falls to earth."

"The poor creature," she said. But she could not help it. Against her will, Klara's mouth pulled into a smirk, then slipped over to a smile. Once begun, she had to laugh. Then, she could not stop. Never before had Alois heard her laugh so long.

"What a life," she finally said, and Alois had been right to tell her. She was over six months into her pregnancy, but they made love that night. Alois had known more than one woman who could even give you a good piece of the real business in that very last week before she would pop out someone else's baby. But that had hardly been the case with Klara. On this night, however, she was different. It was equal to her best.

decide to describe to Angela the poor wrenching end of the brave drone who succeeded in reaching the Queen. This time, Klara had company in her laughter. They carried on as if they were girls of the same age or just about, and so as Klara divulged more and more of what she had learned from Alois, the topic turned not only to odor, but to the exceptional power of the Queen Bee. There she was, this creature, hardly larger than her own nursing bees and certainly smaller than any drone. Nonetheless, she had the power to impregnate the air of the hive and the thousands who dwelt within it. All of them would know their own hive since they all smelled the same. "It is," said Klara, full of a new set of giggles, "as if all Russian men and women have one kind of awful aroma, and those Polish oafs another. Maybe there is a good decent smell of tea for the English, and we Austrians, we have to be something special, we are warm like strudel." Again, she had Angela in laughter. "And the French, yes, a shameless ugly scent. So harsh/^{Worse than} Rotten onions. Italians—nothing but garlic." They were hugging each other by now. "Maybe the ^{very} worst, the Bohemians. I shouldn't describe them." ^{Old cabbage?} "Stinking"
"Why not the Hungarians? They could also be just as terrible!"

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It is curious, yet, after all, not so curious that few matters concerning men and women are as difficult to discuss as odor. To make matters even less agreeable, it is also true that our echelon of ^{spirits laboring for} ~~aides to~~ (the Maestro do not possess a keen sense of smell. Gossip among devils can hardly avoid the notion that we, too, stink on occasion.

Enough! It is not a good subject. At this time, approaching the end of the Nineteenth Century, some of ^{our} the problems when managing ~~our~~ clients ^{could be traced} ~~were traceable~~ to one phenomenon. Many human beings in whom we had ^{found it necessary} ~~had to~~ be exceptionally fastidious in their personal habits, or they would at varying times ^{smell} ~~be~~ rank enough to arouse distrust.

How this condition began, I do not know. I have served the E.O. for ~~countless ages~~ ^{many an age} no need to count the centuries—but my recollection of earlier eras is no more grounded in the far past than is a human's ~~sense of his~~ ^{can have any} ~~real sense of previous~~ ^{possible previous} incarnations. It is probably not to the Maestro's interest to have us know any more than we need to know. Rather, we are asked to deal as effectively as possible with the problem before us. We do not have to call, after all, upon Judas or Bluebeard or Attila the Hun to encourage a drunken client to slug down one more ~~shot~~ ^{tot} of booze. In consequence, we have almost no idea of the real beginning of the war between the Dummkopf and the Evil One. Whether they were ~~brothers~~ ^{both gods} (the D.K. being ~~presumably the older~~) or, as Milton proposed, the contest was between God and an angel as important as Lucifer—~~that is~~ ^{is} entirely beyond my province. ~~I do not know that we will ever know~~ ^{I do not know that we will ever know} ~~It is not for us to know.~~ Nor can we dismiss the possibility that the Dummkopf (in whole command of this earth and this solar system) was obliged nonetheless to ~~address Himself out~~ ^{address Himself out} ~~to~~ ^{of} ~~even~~ ^{even} ~~his~~ ^{his} immediate need for an assistant. It is possible that our O.O. (to use for a moment his highest self-assigned title—the Other Omniscience) was ~~sent~~ ^{dispatched} here ~~on purpose~~ ^{on purpose} by those greater powers. Why? Why not? They may have

been dissatisfied with the progress of the D.K. Evolution had ^{itself} exhibited so ^{already} ~~many dead ends and disasters~~ ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ^{cul-de-sacs. But for} these matters, there are only questions.

Yet, if I must offer my conjecture as to what might have taken place during the interminable eons consumed ^{by} that same evolution, I would posit that the D.K. is undeniably the Creator of the familiar sentient world of weather, flora, fauna, and primates that we inhabit, all of us, all ~~we~~

separate souls, bodies and spirits—divine, satanic, and human. So, yes, if He is the Creator, then evolution was certainly His ^{immense} ~~great~~ laboratory, and the

signs of His ^{Folly} ~~Stupidity~~ as well as of His Genius are to be found in all those ^{over} ~~to~~ ^{elaborate} ~~poor~~ ^{as he proceeded to develop} ~~endless experiments concerning the development of His creatures, yes, the~~ ^{(to} ~~nearby~~ ^{get some of his creatures} ~~measureless time it took before He could divine how to enable a portion~~ ^{Add to this the} ~~certain of His beings to fly, the extreme divergences in the~~ ^{breadth and bulk}

of His earth-bound and marine species, His ~~great~~ ^{brontosaurus} ~~godly hopes that went,~~ ^{over-enlarged} for example, into the dinosaur (only to discover that that particular ~~construction of animal life was~~ ^{happened to be} simply too large to survive—that is one failure.) ^{I can name} A myriad of others are present. The Creator had His relative

successes and His abysmal failures, ^{while it must} ~~but it has to be~~ admitted that He never gave up, even if He was not always in firm control of the earth He had

Judith - do you know whether or not the very largest of all these species? the Tyrannosaurus? both both

it is also /
 fashioned, ~~It is~~ uncontestable that earthquakes and ice ages brought many an
 interruption to His experiments and savaged many of His pursuits. Why?
 Because He had incorrectly designed ~~the~~ ^{this} globe of earth in the first place.

Of one matter I am relatively certain. By the time ~~men and women~~ ^{the concept of}
~~had made their way into~~ ^{entered} the D.K.'s ~~concept~~ ^{expectations would} of how He was to develop His
 primates, so did our Maestro also appear. With ~~his~~ ^{at once,} entrance, ~~the~~ ^{For example,} perversities
~~and uncontrollable~~ ^{there} of human activity were stimulated. There, at just such a
~~point in the creative development of the world,~~ ^{what was often a} came a shift in the
 importance of odor. Its presence became an ~~often~~ ^{often} determining factor in
 human relations.

^{would suppose} I can be fairly certain that in the ~~bygone~~ ^{long-gone} era of primitive man, odor
~~had been one of the D.K.'s assets,~~ ^{I expect he used its signals} an enhancement to aid the development
 of all the species. In large part, animals and humans ~~both~~ ^{directly} were drawn or
 repelled by one another ~~through the messages that came in~~ ^{entered} through the nose.
 Presumably their smells (as developed by the ~~properties~~ ^{qualities} that the D.K. had
~~put into them)~~ ^{readily} were ~~there~~ to reveal the depth of each animal's courage,
 perseverance, fear, treachery, shame, loyalty, ~~their~~ ^{plus} determination to
 propagate—no end to the list. It was all useful to the D.K. It enabled Him

~~encourage~~
 to take good creative steps forward in evolution without having to oversee ~~each~~
 and every mating.

I think by the time our Prince entered the lists, however, the D.K.
 (entertained an idea of)
 could no longer see Himself as All-Good and All-Powerful. The presence
 of an unwanted colleague (possibly unwanted in the first place) reduced His stature. So He began to search for a
 method whereby His Cudgels could determine (assuming that they possess a
 good sense of smell!) which men, women, and children had ~~become~~
 separated from Him in their loyalty. If the Good Lord was not without His
 own skills as a sorcerer, (and indeed, how could He not employ such powers
 given the new and dire complexities of dealing with the varied acts of the
 Maestro?) I would go so far as to say that the D.K. even ~~had the ability to~~ proceeded to
 mark each of our clients with a touch of condign odor, a marking process, if
 you will, chosen for its simplicity and relative lack of expense considering
 the inevitable disbursements of divine funds that are inherent in any change
 of program. From the Middle Ages on, however, our Maestro combated this
 foreeful obstacle to his subtle intentions by encouraging many of his
 alchemists to develop perfumes whose subtleties became a means whereby
 rotten odors could be marinated into sweeter, earthier, more untraceable,

than the original body odors) and finally more appealing fragrances, even exotic in their hint of a curious, ~~even exciting~~, bit off kerk beneath the bouquet. (It is, for example,

impossible to reconstruct the history of court life in France during the reign of Louis XIV without pondering ~~these redolent~~ these redolences, these casual (tricks of camouflage).

~~Moreover, it~~ They proved a boon to all of our clients who were rich enough to afford good perfumes.)

By the end of the Enlightenment, matters had altered once more.

Soaps, developed by us, were able to add their powers of obliteration to mephetic aromas. Again, the Dummkopf was confounded. At this time of Adi's boyhood, and indeed, throughout the decades to come, a pervasive erasure of human odor became part of our immense progress across this ~~sector of divine combat~~ sector in the war between the kingdoms. Soaps, bath-tubs, cleansing oils and the development of plumbing all came into being, ~~determined and highly focused~~ and were due in large part to the ~~determined and highly focused~~ energies of those entrepreneurs in whom we had made successful investment. (A history has even been written of the common crapper.)

By the middle of the Twentieth Century, the D.K.'s dependence on ~~bad human odor~~ personal as a means of warning that the Evil One is near, had been

rendered obsolete. Deodorants ^{used} dominated the day. ^{By now, in the Twentieth} At the time of this ~~First Century~~ ^{has much of a sense} writing, hardly anyone ever knows any longer how their closest partner

might actually smell. (This is certainly true in the more developed nations!)

^{loss, each} This removal of cognitive power ^{has lessened the powers of} from the D.K. has given great impetus to

^{ours,}
~~our work~~

^{and} ~~Back, however, in the period I now relate,~~ ^{toward the end of the Nineteenth Century} this was not so, not yet,

and the meeting between Alois, Adi, and the bee-keeper called Der Alte was characterized by a curious but immediate intimacy between the boy and the old man.

I must not leap too quickly, however, over the walk to Der Alte's farm since Alois may have had his first real conversation with his son, Adolf Hitler, on this occasion.

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What may be more important, however, is to speak of the dream I installed in Adi's sleep on the Saturday night that came before Alois' Sunday meeting with the beekeeper. This dream was fashioned in response to a direct order from the Maestro. I will add that creating a dream which is unconnected to the dreamer's previous experiences, is not routine. ~~Not in the least.~~ While we ^{can} have the power to originate ^{such} chimerical episodes, or even on rare occasions, insert whole scenarios into our client's sleep, it is also true that these dream-works exact serious inroads on our budget. Inner dramas are expensive to produce ex nihilo. Moreover, there is risk involved when the client is that young ^{the presence of our} ~~should our dream-work stimulate open~~

stir up / phase
~~can use~~

conflict with the Cudgels who might ~~also~~ be involved with the client. A set of delicate manipulations calculated to alter a subject's psyche should not be undertaken under battlefield conditions. Few people prosper from a nightmare.

It has been my experience that the installation of highly selected visions can deliver many desired effects, but that succeeds best when one is able to work deliberately with the protégé, nimbly, subtly, proceeding in small steps over many a night in order that the Cudgels ~~are~~ *be not self* alerted.

Count on it, His angels react savagely to any dream that we initiate. From the commencement of human existence, the D.K. has been directly attached to the power that dreams offered His Purposes. *As an aid to* ~~They proved essential for~~

controlling those primates He was inspiring to *become them* develop into humans. Much *dreams proved essential. Much*

later, during what the E.O. calls the Jehovah Period (that is, from 1000 B.C. to the advent of Jesus Christ) *not only* it is clear that the D.K. wielded a host of *but many came* awards and punishments by way of His dream-works. He could arouse

visions in prophets and plebians alike, He could drive His wards in *many a* ~~any~~ direction He desired, often, I suspect, on not much more than His imperious

whim. (~~Gods, like humans, are less admirable in certain periods than in~~
~~others.~~)

Our entrance, however, into the developing life of humankind
~~was able to leech out many~~
 resulted in a pronounced leeching out of His powers. No longer could
 Jehovah employ dreams to control His chattels at will, indeed, by now,
 given our work through the centuries, dreams are no longer seen as visions.
 Rather, they present themselves as ~~eccentric, jagged, totally confused, and~~
 broken-backed narratives, ^{on} incomprehensible intrusions. People ^{no longer} ~~now do~~
~~their best not to~~ ^{all that often} search too long for messages they can extract from ^{the} episodes
 that take place in their sleep.

The D.K.'s once imperious use of dreams is, therefore, at present,
~~all but inactive.~~
~~inoperative.~~ Our forces now vie with the D.K. on how ~~to direct~~ men and
~~are to be steered through life,~~
 women, Jehovah, willy-nilly—and I use the word advisedly!—has had
~~willy-nilly~~ to reduce ~~these outsize demands of~~ His Ego. Manic obsession
 with Himself and His Powers ~~so swollen during that Jehovah Period~~ had to
 lessen. Now, He could no longer insist on the absolute adoration of His
 servants. No longer do so many of them feel obliged to bring gifts and
 sacrifices to His altar. ^{But the} ~~The~~ D.K. has ^{been able} ~~had~~ to adjust. On occasion, He can

even ~~show Himself to~~ ^{the use of} be adroit in His nocturnal insertions. ^{for} The function of
 the dream has altered. ^{Rarely now} Less often now does it serve ~~a medium~~ to deliver
 commands from Above. Instead, the modern dream serves ^{ideally} to give
 the sleeper a sense of buried disturbances in ^{the} his or her life. If a trusted
 friend ^{is likely to} might prove a hint treacherous down the road, ^{one's} then the dream is now
 there to alert ^{the dreamer} one to just such a possibility. If, on the other hand, ^{it is} the subject
^{who is} is himself ready to betray a close friend, that possibility and its
 consequences ^{of such an act} can also be suggested. The D.K., given all His shortcomings,
^{the} ~~was now~~ ^{has found a means to guide some} looking for a way to protect His human beings. Indeed, for those
 lucky or worthy few who had been guarded by the strongest angels and so
 could rarely be approached by us, ~~(real candidates for sainthood being one,~~
~~example of such protection)~~ ^{new theories on the dream} the D.K.'s new methods did prove efficacious,
 until humans, given their freedom, ran amok with ~~it~~. For a short period,
 there was a vogue that dreams were to be seen as wish-fulfillment, a most
 popular notion ^{but it} that never proved itself to be more than a theory. The dream
^{became} was, after all, a special species of communication between the human
 creation and Himself. Indeed, on those occasions when we devils and
 demons are not present to alter the content, a dreamer might actually obtain

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some insight into his or her ~~own~~ vulnerabilities. The ~~intense but~~ ^(intense enough) mock situations created by the dream are ~~there~~ ^{to} test the subject's ability to withstand anxiety. When successfully interpreted, the subject ~~would now be~~ ^{could become} most ~~unhappily~~ aware of how he or she possessed less courage, less loyalty, less devotion, less love, or less health than previously assumed. ~~One~~ ^{could} ~~function of the dream was to serve now as a security~~ ^{protective} system full of warning bells.

To the degree, however, that we could interfere, we looked to warp the D.K.'s new approach ^{Our entrance} at the root. Most of these nocturnal wars now produced chaos. The average dream became an extravaganza, usually incoherent, ~~no more than the~~ ^a strew left by ~~the~~ ^{the} Cudgels and ourselves.

So, the task of creating a whole dream for a child appeared, on the face of it, to require ~~(much to)~~ ^{ventures} much special attention. As I have remarked, the Maestro did not, for the most part, encourage ~~such~~ expensive experiments with children. Looking upon their growth as essentially indeterminable, he saw such actions as likely to fail. It will be recalled that when the Hitler family made their move from Passau, I was instructed to

cease paying attention to little Adolf. He and his family would now be monitored through routine milk-runs by my assistants. Except for the sole occasion when I had slipped into Alois' brain long enough to delve into his fascination with beekeeping, I had been working ^{for the most part} in that region of Austria ^{about} with other clients. The information provided by my assistants ^{proved} ^{proved} adequate. ~~I had had the information I needed for~~ the Hitlers of Hafeld.

Now, an unexpected and direct communication from the Maestro had arrived—no ordinary event. I was formally instructed to implant a dream into the head of a six-year-old, none other, of course, than our young first grader, little Adolf Hitler. Indeed, the order proposed considerably more than the passing insertion of a concept. Etch was the verb employed by the Maestro. "I want you," he said, "to etch Adi's brain with a permanent notion. We have been quiescent in that direction long enough to expect no interference from the Cudgels. You can probably gain an open operation."

That was not a short speech for the E.O. His regard for each of us could be measured not only by how quickly we were ready to carry out his desires, but by the length of his communication. All too often, reading our minds, we would hear no more than "Yes," or "Don't!"

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The act itself took no more than a few minutes, but the preparation had not been simple. Etch, I will repeat, was the ^{operative/}word chosen. A fixed notion, once successfully installed, can link the client to us. (Often, should he wish to leave, we use it to ^{draw}bring the stray back ^{to us.}) But etching is not there for ^{any}every devil to practice. It ^{has to}must be done with an incisive ^{set of strokes}stroke. Misapplied, it can drive the recipient mad.

I will go so far as to say that on this occasion, I was deft. Given the knowledge absorbed from the milk runs, I knew that Alois would soon be visiting this neighboring beekeeper, Der Alte, also known as Der Alte

Zauberer—the Old Sorcerer. So was he perceived by the neighboring peasants.

The term was an exaggeration. This old man was a hermit and highly eccentric. He was ~~also as~~ ^{could be like} mean as a winter wind, but ~~he could~~ ^{he might} on special occasions seem as agreeable as any other warm old fellow. The peasants in Hafeld, having known him for decades, knew better. Nonetheless, he was the only apiculturist in the area, and he knew more about beekeeping than anyone within a day's walk in any direction. Besides, they were curious to see whether he would succeed in charming Alois.

What was most comfortable about Der Alte was that he had belonged to us for decades. In effect, he was an old pensioner. Moreover, he and Adi would be kin in odor, and so were likely to find that the other had a good smell. The magnetic thrust of the dream soon suggested itself. Before they met, I would etch the boy's mind with a clear image of Der Alte.

As a matter of style, I have always been inclined to avoid excessive virtuosity in a dream-work. Modest scenarios tend to be more effective. In this case, given the necessary precision of the art-work, I satisfied myself by producing as close an image of Der Alte as I could manage and then placed

Sunday, he would feel a new sense of importance in the heart of his thoughts for he would now believe he had the power to peer into the future. Indeed, we had even prepared the bounty. For in his sleep, Der Alte had *also* been instructed to give the boy a taste of his finest honey directly on meeting him.

Be it said again, this man, Magnus Rudiger, spoken of by everybody in the area as Der Alte Zauberer, was in fact not much of an old sorcerer. His curses were neither remarkable nor effective, ~~and his command of magic was not impressive.~~ Whenever a sense of dread came to him from forces he could not name (usually from one or another branch of the Cudgels) he hardly knew more than to lay a circle of salt around the table where he sat by himself in the kitchen. That was, for all its picayune effect, as effective at nudging us away as the Cudgels. Minor clients such as this Magnus Rudiger are an annoyance. Particularly when they grow old. Still, he was enough of an actor to keep everyone in the area respectful of him. No neighbor was in a hurry to attack his self-esteem, and indeed, he did offer a convincing suggestion (by way of his dress, his odor, his resonant, even reverberating, voice, and his compendious knowledge of bees), that he

It was at this point that I was ordered to leave Adi and the other members of the family (as well as my other clients in that area of Austria.) I deputized three of my agents to remain and I embarked for St. Petersburg where I had to come quickly to focus on the needs and dimensions of a massive oncoming project. We were going to attend the Coronation of Tsar Nicholas the Second, scheduled for May of 1896 in Moscow, ^(This event was a fill) ~~(seven months~~ ^{a way,} ~~into the future.~~

Off I went, then, to St. Petersburg. and on that very night. ~~While we~~ ^{say,} ~~devils are able to~~ insinuate ourselves for a reasonable period into many a man or woman. ~~Even as forty-two years later, I would be occupying the~~ ~~mind and body of an intelligence officer named Dieter in Hammler's Special~~ ~~Section IV-2a, and a new agent in the~~ ~~Section IV-2a~~ ~~still, when it comes to travel, we prefer to employ more rapid~~ ~~human~~ ^{means.} (But, of that, I will wait to speak.) For now, ~~leave it that I was~~ ^{to commence} obliged to ~~commence~~ immediately upon arrival ~~my~~ study of the late Nineteenth Century Russian soul, all of it—belly, vices, beliefs, harmonies and inner disharmonies. Once in that Slavic realm, (which is so much nearer to God and to the Devil than any other land above the equator) I

stayed for all of a winter in St. Petersburg prior to coming down to Moscow on a cold April morning ^{one month /} (in advance of the Coronation that May.

^{these seven months /} During this period, I did receive news regularly of Alois, Adi, Klara, and Angela. There were even reports on the temperament of the dog, Luther, and the horses, Ulan and Graubart. In any event, none of that was of great interest ^{to me, not at all} what with our oncoming venture in Russia. ^{Perhaps I had} Besides, I had become a little too full of the Hitler family's intimacies. While they had ~~been the focus of my interest in that region,~~ I had also been hoping to receive more of a ^{inactive /} ~~major assignment.~~ Now, I had it. Our O.O. was ^{obviously /} in the first stages of bringing off a ^{major and /} mighty mischief. ~~I could feel a major change coming in the calculations of our leader.~~

Now, I will make one apology, although I will do my best not to repeat it. (Good readers do not purchase novels, after all, to put up with the author's regrets.) I have to say, however, that having read the best and worst of novels for many years, which is, to remind you, part of a good devil's education, I should know by now (and do!) that not even the most loyal readers will stay true to an author who is ready to leave his narrative for what must seem an unrelated subject. Given that restriction, I have until

now spared the reader any reference to my other cases, particularly the month I spent in London back in May of '95 when I attended the trial of Oscar Wilde and was in the courtroom on the day of his conviction for "sodomy and gross indecency"—a matter in which I played a hand with the jury's deliberations. (My instructions were to do my best to get him convicted.) It is likely that the E.O. was looking to stimulate a rabid sense of martyrdom among many of Wilde's closer associates, particularly those who were of very good family. But to this I cannot attest. Only on rare occasions will the Maestro explain his strategies to us—we are there to ~~satisfy~~ ^{fulfill} his aims rather than ~~our~~ ^{to satisfy} curiosity.

Nonetheless, I was now harboring a conviction that this abrupt transfer of so many of our forces over to Russia had put the Dummkopf into a state of some disturbance ~~concerning the upcoming Coronation.~~

For that, I can only offer my own set of explanations. While I would not guarantee their dependability, I will say I have long suspected that our mighty antagonist, the D.K., is critically dissatisfied with the state of all the formal religions who claim to be serving exclusively in His name. (This, of course, must exclude reference to Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and

any other sects or faiths not based on texts dictated—so goes the churchly

and overbearing)
(claim—by God.)

No, I would assume he is unhappy with the
~~No, it is the unhappy~~ strictures and structures of the Catholics, the

Protestants, the Orthodox Jews, the Reformed Jews, the Sunnis and the

most unhappy)
Shi'ites about which He feels responsible. Yes—that is the word—
was not able *sufficiently*
~~responsible~~ He is unhappy that He proved unable to control the

development of these forms of worship. Humans—many of the worst

sort—are now the overlords in most such *dens?* *badly* places of worship. Given the

tenacity of the priests, reverends, rabbis and imams who *have* attached

themselves to *these* such concentrations of power *(and given)* (given their unholy lust to

control human behavior) these religious officers have *succeeded over the* so installed—

centuries in installing
(themselves into the mind of half of humankind, *that* they have also

succeeded in keeping God at a distance from His humans. I was ~~also~~ ready

to suppose that He resented it. Was that why the D.K. had generated such

special hopes for this *Coronation?* ~~occasion?~~ What I knew for certain was that the

Maestro was preparing to go to great lengths to thwart His expectations,
that it would become a luminous event.

For many centuries our O.O. has been an incisive critic of the D.K.

We have certainly enlarged the sum of emotional dissatisfaction in men and

women. Thereby—so went our working assumption—we might ^{successful in} come a

~~little closer to~~ deadening the vitality of the species. Over the last two thousand years, one of our more effective methods had been to encourage the most humorless religiosity. Everywhere are fine men and women locked into a mosque, a synagogue, or a church, all clinging to the same oxymoron.

Despite every other difference, they are attached to the obtuse belief that

God is not only All-Good but All-Powerful. This premise ^{so removed} ~~given its mind~~ ^{existing} ~~from all the evidence of~~ boggling contradiction to the perversities of existence—proves incapable of serving the mind. (The contradictions are too much to handle!) All-Good and All-Powerful is a concept to erode many of the hopes ^{God held for} ~~embedded in~~ human development by God. ^{137,} Promoting exactly ^{this} ~~that~~ concept—All-Good and All-Powerful—we have succeeded ^{century after} ~~in tormenting~~ ^{century, in locking onto the bed of Procrustes. (sp)} ~~the best minds of mankind for century after century.~~ All-Good and All-

Powerful. Indeed! Yes, we had looked to encourage every fundamentalist we could find, every Islamist, Born-Again, or unyielding nun—we didn't give a damn. "Come to us," became our creed, "come, all of you who are in need of rock-hard faith and anchored certainties! Be born again into total mental security, yes!" How ready they were to believe they were serving God even as they began to work for us in ways they could never conceive.

Now, the advantage we had obtained by 1895 was ^{in part} a product of the D.K.'s ^{own} inability to decide on which direction He would like ^{to steer} His human creatures to take. ^{(Encourage ~~that~~ these avatars of love will} His strength (as the Maestro will be the first to ^{beget} acknowledge) is that He can produce a plenitude of fine forms throughout the natural world. God is an Artist, and some of His Forms are ^{most} dazzling, ^{(the butterfly, the rose) and} some are useful. Some are relatively successful. (The honey-bee might be ^{And some were} one example.) Some are most improperly designed. (The dinosaur, the horse-fly, ^{—all} and the mosquito ^{come to mind.})

But, by the time the Lord had raised primates to the level of humans, He had become much too proud of ^{this} His latest creative ^{achievement} accomplishment. (He

^{even} saw the human animal as His finest work.) He felt ^{so} expansive ^{and so much so that} that He even chose to provide ^{provided} men and women with sufficient reason, memory, and passion to exercise free will. He encouraged them to develop speech.

In the beginning, He was prepared to allow this creation to be free, on most occasions, of ^{himself} Him. Just so confident was His belief in His ^P powers of Anticipation. He had no fear that humans would burst the limits He had allowed them.

^{This}
~~That~~ miscalculation was calamitous. It proved equal to raising a
 hound who turns on its master. Men and women, once endowed with free
 will, proved unmanageable. Worse! They gave every indication that, once
 left entirely to themselves, they would depose Him. (The first ~~signs~~ ^{tendencies} are
~~there~~ ^{visible} already in Adam and Eve.) So He gave up the heartfelt notion of
 engaging in a free and open partnership with this highest form of His
 Creation. Instead, He now looked to frighten men and women back into
 obedience. Finally, He could not recover from the blow to His ~~Anticipation~~ ^{Hopes}
 occasioned by the Crucifixion. He felt obliged, therefore, to return to earlier
 modes, to tyrannical judgments. He came back to His Persona as Jehovah.
 He proceeded to terrify humans ~~again~~ ^{once more,} ("Obey Me and ~~Fear~~ ^{I am} Me. I am All-
 Good ^{and} All-Powerful." The message that He had wished to transmit
 through His Son—"Love each other and you will share in My love" was
 now converted by St. Paul and ~~an ensuing~~ ^{his hand-assembled} crew of minions and acolytes
 into ~~"Fear Me, Respect Me, and I may~~ ^{I will} on occasion answer your prayers."

This retreat ~~of necessity, re~~ opened large territories to the Maestro.
 Since our purpose is to lower the vitality of what is, admittedly, the most
 exceptional creature developed by the D.K., we look to encourage forms of

religiosity that are mindless. Warp the brains of men and women, and ~~the~~ ^{corruption of} soon follow. (Yes, human emotion will become corrupted. (For imbalance is the beginning of rot.) We are often reminded that once we accomplish our job, we may ~~be~~ ^{able to convert} His Creation into Our System.

I believe this has ^{not only} been the ongoing intention of the Maestro through many an age, ^{but} and our activities have ^{expanded far beyond} ~~hardly~~ been restricted to churchgoers.

We look to ~~independent people~~ ^{or independent} atheists, philosophers, entertainers, and any number of highly motivated individuals who are turning bitter at the edges.

Through the Nineteenth Century, this ~~has~~ ^{been} all worked reasonably well. Yet, ^{by the} now, as we approach the 20th Century, our O.O. ^{seemed to} ~~may~~ be contemplating a

profound change in ^{our} his procedures. Was ~~our~~ ^{the} Maestro actually preparing to ^{his} leap from ^{his} ~~centuries-old~~ ^{transformation} role as God's adversary into a more adventurous stance? Was he now ready for a metamorphosis from High Critic to Prime Creator?

I could not conceive of ~~what~~ ^{what?} such a daring shift might require of us. ^{I was perhaps too} ~~I had become mired in my dependable~~ ^{our dependable} Austrian tactics. So, this new ^{adventure in Russia had to} possibility did ~~prouse~~ ^{prouse} my uneasiness. For who could know more about the pestilence and slovenliness of human nature than those of us who have

worked through the centuries to inflame all that has ~~been~~ ^{proved} misbegotten in the calculations of God, all the harsh residue of unfocused animal rage ^(it) left in His human beings. There had been one sum of blunders upon another, and so many had been fashioned by the D.K. Himself, yes! all in the course of investing more and more heedless if Godly enthusiasm into His most advanced Creation! And we had done our skillful best to make it worse. Given His Desire to find a high but delicate level of life that would nonetheless be able to survive through grievous and often incalculable conditions of heat, cold, ~~flame, or even recover from catastrophic disasters,~~ ^{flood and forest fire,} the D.K. had had to endow man (and woman, most certainly!) with a sense of self-importance crucial to their survival. But, once again—was it due in part to our efforts?—His creative balance was ^{off.} ~~imperfect~~. Human self-righteousness, so necessary to meeting the demands of survival, soon produced envy as its first product, and that worked as dependably in our favor as compound interest serves a long-term investment. Of course, the D.K.'s powers to fashion new varieties of Creation were still encyclopedic, but His skills as a cosmic engineer were ^{riddled with} ~~not free of~~ fault. His design of the earth's tectonic plates was open to earthquake. So, His problems, even

without our presence, would not have been trivial. Over the eons of evolution, His endless refashioning of His own works by way of trial and error, (and His endlss re-designings of works-in-progress) even His readiness to live with His mistakes until such time as He could correct them, His outsize rages as a younger god!, His frenzies as Jehovah!, had compounded a multitude of open wounds in every avenue of human history. Now, I could wonder how the Maestro would begin to refashion such a boggled Creation ~~where~~ ^{constantly} we would be stumbling ^{left by} over the disarray we had spread through our work. I was worried. Yes.

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I will yet describe the disorder we would wreck ^{wreck in the aftermath} on the Coronation of Tsar Nicholas the Second, but I would prefer at this point to return to the small events and minor adventures of the Hitler family in Hafeld ^{during} for the period while I was away. Only then will I ^{return to} outline what we did in St. Petersburg and Moscow. I will say ~~now~~ that the eight months from my departure in October of 1895 until my return to Austria in June of 1896 turned out to be of some future importance for Adolf Hitler, enough, ^{took place} certainly, to describe what ~~occurred~~ during my absence.

Let me point, however, to a serious difficulty. During this period, an account of the various experiences of Alois, Klara, and the children was

passed on to me by ~~three~~^{three} second-rate agents—the ~~ones~~^{ones} had left behind to oversee my portion of the Province of Upper Austria. Given the import of our mission to Russia, I had, of course, taken ~~my~~^{the} best assistants with me. As far as the field is concerned, that, ~~So it was an ascertainable loss.~~ Lesser devils are comparable to lesser humans. This is particularly true of their insensitivity to significant detail.

While I can even keep a reasonably close notion of what is transpiring among my clients and their associates when relying on what is given me by mediocre agents, the work ~~loses~~^{does} tone. What will ~~however~~^{however} save the account received ~~is~~^{however} that there were a few determining events in Adi's development, and these episodes I ~~did~~^{was able to} study, if ~~from a distance~~^{at a nervous}.

On the other hand, my narrative does not have to suffer critically. ~~I~~^{too} had brought ~~even~~^{had been brought up} the least of my aides up to a reasonable level of performance, ~~and I mention this with pride.~~^{and I mention this with pride.} ~~even though they had virtually nothing to offer when I first~~^{had so little} received them. ~~If I am not eager to explain our systems of recruitment, that~~^{however} ~~is because it brings~~^{It would} us immediately into a more sacrosanct question: How are devils created in the first place? Is the Evil One on the alert for superior humans who might be ready to work for us, or, as is more usually the case, do they come to us as ~~lower varieties~~^{lower varieties} a brood of rejected humans? One of

the ironies is that ^{even though they} these last ^{they} had often been our clients, ^{they} but came to us ^{after} ~~their death~~ ^{they were better} nonetheless in a state of demoralization. (They felt that God had not ~~respected~~ appreciated their merits. So, they chose us. They declared their desire to be liberated from the wheel of human reincarnation, ^{they wanted} in order to serve us ~~at a~~ ^{again, Kubata not a} higher level, that is, ~~no longer~~ a client but as a demon, at least, no matter how low the rank. (How this arrangement was ~~over~~ negotiated between the D.K. and the E.O. is beyond my knowledge.) While I cannot declare why or when it happened, I am familiar with the results. ^{The Maestro} Our O.Q. ^{to} looking to make his way up onto a nearer plane of equality ^{to} to the D.K., was, of necessity, ready to accept God's exudate—all these spoiled human possibilities. Over the centuries, over—it well may be—the millennia, the Maestro had to ^{disburse} ~~give over~~ a large share of his resources to ~~shaping and~~ training the low-grade and highly disturbed material we did receive. It is analogous in difficulty to ^{working up} ~~developing~~ a symphony orchestra from applicants who have yet ~~to learn~~ to play an instrument.

I will not pursue these difficulties, ^{have} Not at this point. I will only say that the agents I had left in Hafeld, the lees, so to speak, of my small squad, did their best to report on Alois' ongoing efforts at bee-keeping, but they did

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In late October, if I had permitted it, my agents would have overwhelmed me with detail. To my complete lack of surprise, Alois had any number of obsessions concerning his new ^{ventures} ~~possessions~~.

I had no time to attend to this, ~~and was irked~~. Short of forcing a direct entrance into Alois' waking thoughts which, it may be remembered, is rarely done with men and women who are not ~~directly~~ ^{your} clients, my agents had to work by way of their milk runs. In what our Maestro chooses to call "the markets of sleep," most dreams of men and women are reasonably

to take measure of Klara and Alois' real strengths and, needless to say, their significant weaknesses.

Very well. Here then is my developed if second-hand account of Alois' woes now that he is becoming a bee-keeper.

His first concern (which I find comic—since he has spent his life in uniform) is that he has to remind himself constantly to put on light-colored gloves and a bee-keeper's large trapezoidal hat and veil, always of the whitest material. Since he must avoid dark coats or trousers, when that is what he usually wears, he is always concerned in these first days not to forget to change his garments before going out to the hive-boxes. Deep and somber colors, he knows all too well, do irritate bees. He knows that by experience. On the particular occasion some years ago when he had been gravely stung while working with the little colony he then kept near Braunau, he had made the mistake of inviting an attractive woman out with him one Sunday afternoon. As an element in his plan of seduction, he ^{not only} thought he would demonstrate ^{but his elegance,} ~~his competence with the hive~~ ^{Therefore,} he was in full dress uniform. That twilight he was stung so fiercely that the recollection still rises in one quick spurt from the pit of his stomach. Alois'

handle. They were gentler, Der Alte assured him. And what with their glowing rich yellow tan, not unlike the mellow hue of the best shoe leather, they were incontestably more beautiful. Alois did admire the three golden segments of their bodies, each fold set off by the sharpest edging in black.

So striking! Chic!
~~Elegant! So elegant!~~ Whereas the Austrian honey-bee was gray and hairy,
No, she
and did not gleam like these gilded Italians. All the same, Alois felt as if he had been disloyal. He should have taken the "Franz Josefs," the gray-beards.

What added to his unease is that he kept wondering whether he would have done better to wait for spring? Now, he had to keep his colony ~~well-~~
~~fed and~~ warm enough not to perish in the cold.

All through these months, therefore, he would have to keep taking the temperature of the air within the hive. He had even been advised to start a diary for recording the daily and weekly data. Yet, he must not open any hive. "No matter your curiosity," Der Alte had confided (as if in full command of the new apiculturalist's temptations) "you must not allow yourself to peer in, or extract any of the movable frames in order to study the combs. Why, the cold draft that could arise from raising the large lid of

truism. "Good German blood understands," said Alois to his wife, "that blessings do not come from God, but from hard work. That idea is as safe as a sound house." Still, it was not such a fine remark. Why not speak instead of good Austrian blood?

This concern stayed on like a minor sore that does not heal. The question bothered him. Did certain blood possess special virtues? Why praise German blood? Yes, why not Austrian? He had an Emperor who could live with the huge (and so often) idiotic problems of keeping ~~all those~~ ^{plus everywhere,} Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Poles, Jews, Serbs, ~~even~~ ^{one} gypsies living together in peace under ~~the~~ Hapsburg empire. Germans couldn't do that. Germans were always fighting with each other. Without Bismarck, they would still be nothing. Petty principalities. Squabblers. Mad King Ludwig I is followed by Mad King Ludwig II, both crazy Bavarians. And Prussians were worse. All Prussians had a ramrod up their ass. Why speak of good German blood? Yet, he said to himself, "All the same, I know what it means." Yet what did it signify to declare to yourself that you knew something when you didn't, not quite. Except in some way you most certainly did. A nice enigma. He was now thinking like a philosopher?

about This was of signal interest to me. I queried my agents ^{*more than once*} ~~again over~~
(what they could glean from the tag-ends of the boy's thoughts, and ^{*the more*}
I received, the more valuable it appeared. That night, Adi had heard his
father complain that the screen protecting the hive entrance had been torn
away. The entrance was small, but all the same, it was possible that a
mouse had entered the hive. Alois soon decided aloud that this was
unlikely—the hole was simply not large enough—but Adi was convinced a
mouse had gotten in. Since his father had repaired the screen that afternoon,
Adi no longer knew as he sat between the boxes which one might be
occupied by the mouse. Ergo, he set a hand on each.

What with it being Christmas Eve, the boy was full of his mother's
spirit of celebration. "On this night, one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-
five years ago," said Klara, "the Son of God was born, ^{*and*} and he was the nicest
human being ever to walk on earth. The loveliest, the sweetest. If you love
Him, He will love you."

Adi was certain. This was one night you could breathe the night air,
no matter how cold. For the Son of God was present. Would He offer the
power Adi needed to kill the mouse through the force of his thoughts?

To kill the mouse by the force of his thoughts? I knew the limitations of my agents. They could not have been the inspiration for such a notion. This had come from Adi. It was his. His alone. If I had been present, I would have thought to get the boy ready to believe that he could save certain lives by exercising his power to destroy others. That is one of the rarest and most useful of the aptitudes we can implant in our clients, but it does call for a series of ~~concerted art-works~~ exquisitely focused dream-etchings.

Since I was not present, I did my best not to brood over this lost opportunity. There was more than enough to occupy me in St. Petersburg. I, in company with my assistants, was undergoing some punishment in the course of exercising my activities. I had never encountered a group of Cudgels as determined as this Russian crew. Nor as brutal. Over the last few centuries, these Russian angels had developed an exceptional capability to resist the many demons we had succeeded in planting within Russian Orthodox churches and monasteries. In consequence, these Cudgels—fully as rough as the meanest Russian monks—were not only powerfully motivated, but in command of considerable zeal. During these months, they

were wholly ready to defend the Coronation of the young Tsar-to-be, Nicholas the Second.

When the Maestro consulted me—as would occur now and again in Russia—I did present a notion that he would adopt. I was bold enough to tell him that ^{by my estimate,} ~~our~~ chances of disrupting the Coronation were minimal, ~~but~~ ^{however,} ~~creating~~ a powerful disorder in the days after the event ~~could~~ accomplish ^{many} of our ends.

~~While my suggestion could have been seen as presumptuous,~~ ^A I had dared to speak my mind, but then, the Maestro does not like a lack of opinion among his subordinates ~~while he is coming to a decision.~~ "It is ~~much better for you to be wrong,~~ he would tell us, ~~than to be stultifying.~~ I can best estimate the difficulties before us ^{by} musing upon the contortions and distortions of perception that even the best of you will offer, ~~That~~ proves more useful to me than the inert silence that sits upon the fear of being wrong."

Enough. It is easy to see that these Russian matters were temporarily, at least, of more concern to me than the small events of Hafeld.

All the same, whether I was interested or not, Klara gave birth on January 21 to the new infant. For Alois, ~~there was~~ minimal joy. The much-anticipated strongman of the future had not arrived. Instead, a little girl was in the maternal bed. All the ruckus of baby-feeding at night and baby yowling in the daytime, would now be for naught. He had been counting on a powerhouse of a son for his old age instead of the three boys he could not, at present, boast about, a wild one, a mamma's boy, and a crybaby snot, yes, Alois was unready to celebrate, but he did—at the tavern in Fischlham night after night for quite a few nights (although the beer began to smell as sour as his infant's throwback). There were now six human beings in his home, and by late in spring, when Junior returned from Spital, he could count on seven. Yes, the louder the tumult of voices in the bar, the more he was ready to complain of the noise at home. That was a joke. The bar was noisier.

Let men drink in a crowded room and solidarity rises among them. They soar on zephyrs of grain spirit, a brotherly defiance against the inroads of angels and demons, a certainty that as men, they are at this moment equal to all else.

"Oh," said Adi, "I hope you are able to do that. It is so sad to be lonely. Sometimes I, too, am lonely. So, I know. But I feel afraid for this bee. Will it die?"

"Sooner or later, it must. It will. But I would like to see if I can make her happy for a little while."

"Yes," said Adi, "I understand. You love this one."

"Maybe more than a little," said Der Alte. He sighed. "Next time you visit, we will see if I have made progress."

Let us recognize that what has just been recounted is likely to leave many a reader uneasy. For some, interest in Der Alte might now be affected by the suspicion that he is a touch uncontrollable in his senility. Let me explain then that this outlandish pursuit of "well-being" for one isolated bee, an obviously stupid procedure (particularly after it has lost its wings!) is not without purpose. ~~Purpose~~ ^{For} the Maestro, that is. We have to test the immutability, if you will, of the instincts that the Dummkopf has placed in his vast consortium of creatures. The oddest experiments do reveal much to us.

I will say one outcome was clear. This minute and wingless ~~girl~~ embodiment of loneliness died before Adi saw her again. What is also to the point: Der Alte and Adi had tears in their eyes on the boy's next visit and were closer than ever. Count on it. Der Alte had decorated a small matchbox to serve as a coffin for the bee, and the old man and the boy then buried it by the side of his hut.

on the outskirts of Third World cities. Abandoned for lack of further ~~South~~ funds
capital.

It would be a gross mistake, then, to assume that this dream-etching
determined all that was to follow. I assure you we would be the first to
applaud if matters were that simple.