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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. Nor did he reduce the intensity when the boy was within arm's reach. In the tavern, Alois was now fond of saying, "While raising a boy, do not let go of the whip. I speak from experience."

More than once, Alois said to Adi, "Time and sacrifice was wasted on your older brother. You, Adolf, will not waste my time."

Adi was half-paralyzed with fear. I had to wonder how the final effects of this could serve our purposes. We certainly know how to use humiliation and self-abasement as a tool that can prove effective with manic-depressives.

If we are looking to drive a client into a violent act, a series of humiliations can stir 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 this early a time in Adi's life. It was obvious to me that the Maestro was willing to flood the boy's spirit with wretchedness. While it would not be all-consuming and oblitative, it would amount to a taste of pure misery, and so implant a fear that times to come might well be worse. It was obvious to me that Adi being given a purview of the anguish that attaches itself to ineradicable melancholia.

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

Yet, the Maestro often surprised us by such moves. He was a bold, even an exceptional gambler, and often ready to take extreme chances with the lives of our clients. There were occasions when the Maestro, entertaining an ambitious future for a young client, would be ready to incite

such absolute wretchedness. (Provided he was dealing with a proud spirit.) I think he saw it as a species of inoculation.

Naturally, these gambles made for unstable results. For once we have implanted a deep sense of humiliation in a proud client, we still have to turn such a wound into a strength. That is even more difficult than converting a coward into a hero. Yet, when we succeed, when the psychic abysses in a would-be suicide can be transmuted into promontories of achievement and personal power, an immense gamble has proved successful. The once-humiliated wretch has now acquired the power to humiliate others. That is a demonic power, and does not come easily. I went through many years, indeed, when I was ready to give up on this project. After the death of Alois in 1903, and Klara in 1908, Adi was jobless in Vienna, and stricken with timidity. He had quit school too early, was an avaricious reader who remained hopelessly superior to what he read (particularly when he could not understand it) and, in addition, was lazy, prone to temper tantrums, and possessed of an ego as swollen as an infected limb. All the same, he was desperately afraid of virtually all meetings with human beings, and had no love-life whatsoever. Yes, this boy was an unmitigated mess.

I was depressed. This project to which I had now been attending since his birth, now nineteen years old, remained an outrageous gamble. Unless some historic changes could accelerate, even thrust, my protégé into prominence, he would end up as one more failure. (He had prepared himself only for future prominence and there seemed no sign of such exceptional conditions developing. The disasters that fell upon Germany and Austria after the First World War were still more than a decade away.) My role, as I saw it in 1908, was to continue to be a jockey who guided a horse running against unbelievably long odds. I could foresee further demotions for myself.

All this is not of much interest now. We know, after all, what happened to the horse. And I was the one who rode him (with occasional but crucial help from the Maestro) all the way up to glory (and down again, which is one good reason why I have proceeded to tell this much of the tale.)

And yet, we can all certify—who indeed cannot?—that he did learn, and far better than his father—how to humiliate others. How curious that he used to be paralyzed by his father's whistle.

Nonetheless, some beginnings of a revolt were even then in progress. Adi was not reduced altogether to a wretch. Not altogether. Having already

half-accommodated himself to the notion that he was the one who had been beaten into insensibility, he was always ready to work upon Klara's feelings of fairness.

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

She was hardly unaware of his discomfort, particularly since Alois' whistle had become a needle in her own ears.

"You must never say that your father is wrong," she told him, however.

She would always offer the same speech. "Yes," she repeated, "you cannot say that your father is wrong."

"But what if he might be?"

"He does not 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." She nodded again as if to oblige herself to believe 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 knowing eyes.

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 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 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 years whenever he was on the point of developing 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.

"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 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 paved streets of the mind, always available for full mental traffic. On many a night I told him again that Alois-Junior was totally separated from the family. Alive or dead, it would not matter.

Alois-Senior was of no small aid to me. 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 official procedure, he also added: "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.

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Part of Alois' decision to write a new will had come because he was able to sell the farm. The buyer had been referred to him by Albrecht Schultz, the man who ran the local store and had once offered to purchase their honey. At the beginning of Fall, Schultz had even offered his advice to Klara about who might be interested.

"Dear Frau Hitler," he had said, "the best way to sell your farm is because it looks good. 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.)

"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 have the patience to wait. Soon enough, one of these comfortable people will come along. And when he does, you send him to me. I will be your friend. I will know how to answer all the questions that come up."

The wealthy house-hunter did arrive, loved the look of the house and the farm, knew even less about the pitfalls than Alois, was sent to talk to Schultz, and 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 dream that he might live his last days on a farm could be put to rest with his last hopes that the 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 obedient. The act of whistling for him had become a pleasure. The response was so quick.

In his heart, however, Alois-Senior did keep the equivalent of an old photograph. There still were nights when he would sit 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, yes, that nice and solid slap, just to stir up his bees.

This is all that remains to be said for Hafeld except for Angela. She was pining just a little for Alois-Junior. She knew he would not come back, and so she could accept him as her model of a fine figure of a young man. He had looked so handsome upon Ulan. She even began to play at the edge of a flirtatious dream. Of course, she was certain it would never go too far. Once in a while, she might allow him to dismount from the horse and kiss her. She soon learned, however, that the mind looks to 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.

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 photographing all the members of the family, and Alois had been so pleased with the image of himself.

Angela had stolen the picture. That had been her way of paying Alois back for all the teasing when she was 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 the picture. She didn't care that he was suffering as completely as if he had lost a gold watch.

Now, Angela could not have been more secretive about 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 restaurants he was beginning to attend. While the intimate but most carnal, even perverse, 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 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 of his life. Geli Raubel had been the love of his life.

That is far down the road. History (for those who have lived in it in for as long as myself, and in as many places) is not always recalled as all-fascinating. It is such a bed of lies! That is the only reason I could recommend the life of a devil to would-be aspirants. 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 never be said that the perversity of our natures bears no relation to the human nature from which, after all, we have ostensibly departed, that curious human nature which pushes its way into existence to the full accompaniment of urine and excrement, yet dreams each night of a noble life.

End

In the event of my unanticipated demise before I finish the rest of this work (which intends to carry us up to the year 1909 and the death of Klara, who has been a widow since Alois' end in 1903) let the text above on this sheet (as of now, p. 723) serve as the conclusion. While the present work 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

March 19, 2005

For once we have implanted a deep sense of humiliation in a proud client, we still have to turn such a wound into a strength. That is even more difficult than trying to convert a coward into a hero. Yet, when we succeed, when the psychic abysses in a would-be suicide can develop instead into promontories of achievement and personal power, an immense gamble has been successful. The once-humiliated wretch has now acquired the power to humiliate others, a demonic power, may I say. This did not come easily. I went through many years when I was ready to give up on the project. By 1908, for example, after the death of Klara, Adi was jobless in Vienna, and stricken with timidity. He had quit school too early, was an avaricious reader who remained hopelessly superior to what he read (particularly when he could not understand it) and was, in addition, lazy, prone to temper tantrums, and possessed of an ego as swollen as an infected limb. All the same, he was desperately afraid of virtually all meetings with human beings. Yes, this boy was an unmitigated mess.

I was depressed. This project to which I had now been attending for nineteen years remained an outrageous gamble. Unless an historic epoch developed that could accelerate, even thrust, my assigned protégé into

history, he would end up as one more failure. At this point, by the end of 1908, [??--cannot read date] there seemed no sign of such special conditions arriving. (The First World War and the disasters that fell upon Germany afterward were still a decade away.) My role, as I saw it, was to continue to be a jockey who guided a horse running against unbelievably long odds. I could foresee further demotions for myself.

All this is not of much interest now. We know, after all, what happened to the horse. And I was the one who rode him (with occasional but crucial help from the Maestro). I rode with Adolf all the way up to glory (and down again, which is half the matter, the other half being why I have already proceeded to tell this much of the tale.)

And yet, I can certify this much—as who cannot?—he did learn, and far better than his father—how to humiliate others. It does go back to the whistle.

During the worst of these whistles which pierced each night into the boy's sleep, the beginnings of a revolt were nonetheless in progress. Adi was not reduced to a wretch. Not altogether. Having already 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 upon Klara's feelings.

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

She was hardly unaware of what was going on, particularly since the whistle had become a needle in her own ears.

"You must never say that your father is wrong," she replied.

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?"

"He does not 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." She nodded again as if to oblige herself to believe herself. "There can be a moment," she said, "when the father recognizes that

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Too little is understood about these matters. Saintliness is present in everyone. It can even be found in the worst of the worst. ^{White} ~~While~~ I would not characterize Alois in this manner, he is looking, nonetheless, to pick up ^{a bit of} ~~a little~~ beatitude ^{at small cost to himself} ~~on the cheap~~. (Offering one's skin to the rhapsodies of small torture, is, however, not enough.

Nonetheless, men like Alois, no matter how undeserving, can be as complex as saints. He has, in fact, come close to the mark. The Dummkopf did establish a system for judging moral behavior.

It is vast. And it is replete with rewards and punishments. Out in the empyrean, divine offices ^{have} ~~have~~ ^{over the centuries} ~~proliferated~~ with the increase in human population.

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