

BOOK ~~IIII~~ V

The Family

Book V

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There were ~~some~~ matters waiting for me on the return to Hafeld, and ~~as it turned out~~ the most pressing was the least routine. I had to convince Der Alte to burn one of his hives. This instruction was ~~my direct response~~ ^{the Maestros' set} to a puzzling accident. ~~He~~ ^{Der Alte} had been stung severely by his bees, so severely that I found him in bed with a cruelly swollen face! Several of the stings had come ~~dangerously~~ close to his eyes. Given Der Alte's skills, he could not comprehend how so embarrassing an event had occurred, ~~nor could I.~~ ^{in the}

~~And all in the~~ ^{And all in the} course of looking into one of his better hives! While attempting to replace the queen—she was showing the first unmistakable signs of final fatigue—he was attacked by her escort. Der Alte had to

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

Upon receiving ^{this} ~~my~~ order—which I passed ^{into} ~~to~~ him ^{as} ~~while~~ he slept—he ^{not} did not fulfill the job ^{at} once. A few days went by. That was not like him. Rarely had he failed to cater to me quickly. So, I alerted the Maestro. I did not want to—I knew ^{all} ~~his~~ attention was ^{being given over to} ~~on~~ exploiting the aftermath of Khodynka, but I made a decision, nonetheless, to file a report. One did not want to ignore inexplicable events no matter how minor they might appear. Indeed, word came back, and quickly. Yes, I was told, he must burn the hive. Again, I fixed this thought into Der Alte's sleep, but now with harsh

enough emphasis for him to know it ~~was imperative~~, and so could not be construed as some cruel vagary of a dream. It was an imperative. All the same, our old fellow was full of dismay. He hesitated for another day. "Do it," I repeated in his sleep, "it will be good for you. Tomorrow is Sunday. That will ~~double~~ ^{augment} the good effect. Sundays offer double value, But do not employ a sulphur bomb. Too many of the recalcitrants could survive. Instead, soak the ~~entire~~ ^{with kerosene} hive. Then proceed to light it, and burn it, box and all."

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

"Burn it. That will make things ^{even} better."

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

What facilitated the act is that a good part of him was enraged at his bees for upsetting his sense of the given. At his age, ^{old} ~~that is one set of~~ habits which can afford few shocks. One's sense of the given is valuable in old age.

When violated, one is prone to surprising rages.

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

I will mention in passing that Adi happened to be present at the burning. He, too, had been given a message in his sleep which he had no difficulty in accepting. So, he slipped away from Klara and Angela even as

they were preparing to go to church. His sly escape did not bother Klara exceptionally. It had happened several times already. Moreover, she enjoyed sitting in church ~~a good deal more~~ ^{this} on those rare occasions when ~~it~~ ^{were the only ones there} came down to just Angela and herself. ^(Adolf) Adolf was no joy to bring along. If not squirming in his seat, he would ^(commence) be in a contest with his step-sister to see who could ~~best~~ ^{best} succeed in pinching the other. On the sneak.

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

high excitement of living in Russia had left me a touch indolent. I did not, as yet, feel eager to re-enter the complexities of this particular six-year-old. My morale was, as I have said, in fine shape, but I did not want to put it to work too intensely so soon.

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

John ignore this word

~~He was moved to the capital
on the same day~~

3a, 4c4, /
 Yes, on my return to these modest duties in the Linz region of *Austria*,
 I knew that *(I would no longer be dealing with humans)*
 Austria, my existence would be simpler. Nor did I feel that the work would
 be lacking *(therefore in)* but *who were like sources of nature.*
 interest. Hafeld could offer its own small revelations, and at
 this point, *perhaps* it was to my taste to gain each increase in understanding
 by way of the subtlety of the task. *In consequence, I*
 agreeable than arriving at one's new knowledge through the toil of a rough
 contest.

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

For one thing, Klara—no surprise!—was mistaken. Alois was not
 softening, not exactly. *He had thought it was appropriate to spend a little time with the little ones best the*
 The moment he was alone on this particular Sunday
 with Edmund and Paula, he put the sleeping infant, not half a year old, in
 her trundle bed, and told Edmund to stay with her and make certain she did
 not wake up. Alois had the ability to transfix a two-year-old boy into
 several hours of obedience by one transfixing look. So, yes, his son was
 now ready to do the impossible. Edmund would will the infant not to
 awaken. Be it said, that is also a function of the will, and it can even work

with some infants once they are left in the care of polarized two-year-olds.

Will! (It is almost as great a mystery as Time!)

So Alois did not mind staying ~~alone~~ at the farm with Edmund and

Paula on this Sunday. Truth, he was looking forward to being alone. He

~~alone and ask~~ wanted to meditate upon Der Alte's mishap. ~~It~~ had left him feeling cozy.

~~It~~ That was so curious. A dire expectation for himself seemed to have vanished.

All through May, as the weather had turned warm, Alois'

~~disturbingly~~ recurring fear was of losing his colonies. His dreams kept

returning a vivid picture to him of himself up there, high in a tree. There he was, much too high, trying to charm a maddened swarm of bees back to the ground and into their hive. The sad fact was that, having eaten well through the winter, he was now overweight. Indeed, he felt as over-stuffed as a man who has crammed 250 pounds into a 200-pound body. Where was his balance? It was as if he was being asked to walk a tight-rope. The fall could come at any moment.

Small surprise then, if this Sunday, he ~~needed to be alone. He~~

required time to unbend. Let his face go slack, his stomach rumble, his

and
Alois,
Junior,
would
be on
the
other
side
of
the hill
with
Vlan.

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

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

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

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

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

Afterward, Alois was relieved of his fear for a few days. Air no longer entered his lungs like the oncoming trouble that sits in the ozone for the few minutes before a thunderstorm. It was as if the bolt had struck. Finally! Except that it was Der Alte who had been hit, not himself. Relief, then, replaced confusion. That had been true for a few days. But now on this Sunday, he felt as if he was ready to fall back into confusion.

For certain. His dread was going to return. And he knew why. It was Alois-Junior. He had not felt right since the boy had come back. Yes, something was in the air. He could not be such a fool, he told himself, as to have been afraid of his bees just because he was feeling thus uneasy with his son. Yet, that might be the truth! Human beings are full of subterfuge. He knew. He had certainly learned as much at each Customs post. The tricks that some tried! He remembered a woman who had wrapped her gifts in the folds of her black lingerie. A good looking woman. When caught by Alois, she was brassy enough to smile, and say, "You are so smart. The other officers were afraid to touch my private things."

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

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

All the same, this recollection kept him brooding about the nature of subterfuge. Back in the days when he could still enjoy a ride on a horse, there had usually been one or another steed who could rob some of his

confidence, something in their gait—as if, should they choose, you would find what felt like five legs under you, not four. You wouldn't know a damned thing about how to control that kind of spirit in the animal.

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

On the other hand! To be a father who made so severe a judgment on a son, and might later be proved wrong? That could feel shameful. The immediate truth, and Klara kept talking about it all the time as if she did not know whether to believe her words or not, was that Junior did not seem to be the same boy who had gone away to work for Johann Poelzl. Her parents must have been good for him. His manners were nicer. He did not seem to be judging you all the time. Before, that was the worst thing about him, Klara said. He was like a friend who was warm to your face but would say something ugly so soon as you left. Klara had no proof, but she would swear that was how he used to be. Now, maybe there was something nicer in him. Maybe. Before, if he had a fault, it was that he spent too much time riding Ulan. Of course, Klara announced, she was ready to put up with that. Better to ride over the hill than to start flirting with his own sister.

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

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

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

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

I know that we lose certain advantages thereby. One truism about most men and women is that they are incapable of facing unpleasant truths about themselves. Their ability to invent earth-moving machines may be an offshoot of their desire to cover over unseemly personal data.

try to force,
We, on the contrary, often fail when we ~~look to make~~ a breach into
the ~~impenetrable~~ ego of certain powerful people. They have what can only
be a God-given ability to conceal themselves from themselves. So ~~here we~~ *I can't*
appreciate how/ were/
~~are with~~ Klara and Alois ~~(full of worry over how to cope with Alois-Junior .~~
Perhaps they see his ego as impenetrable,
~~when, in fact, it is Adolf who is yet to become the exceptional product of~~
The equal of a tycoon! And only fourteen!
~~their closely related matrimonial loins.~~

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Yes,
All the same, I, too, had been pondering the changes in Alois-Junior.

On the face of it, he had improved. If manners were a guide, ~~then~~ he had become a reasonable imitation of a trustworthy youth.

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

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

handwriting. Many an undisclosed ^{corner} ~~recess~~ of the soul is to be found in the
pinched ~~set~~ ^{like} of a curved letter. Falsities stand out with the clarity of acne.

As I have already indicated, these ~~were lesser~~ ^{were modest in performance} devils I ~~had~~ left behind
in Hafeld, and so they were able to lift Johann's letter from Klara's sewing
basket ~~only~~ ^{only} long enough to ~~make the~~ ^{transcribe a} copy. With more skill, they could
have forged a facsimile, and ~~so keep~~ ^{kept} the original for us.

Bereft of the calligraphy, I ~~had~~ ^{looked} to content myself with the words.

Esteemed daughter,

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

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

**Your father,
Johann Poelzl**

I was not ready to act upon my doubts. I could have put in a request
for one of our nocturnals in Spital to pass through Johann's mind on a milk-
run, but decided to wait. Such a request would end up on one's record—

everything did—and could be seen as ^{needless expenditures} ~~dilatory~~, (particularly if the results were inconclusive. Given so devout a church-goer as Johann Poelzl, there might even be some mean old Cudgell ^{for our devil} to face. (Not all of the excessively devout ^{became} ~~were~~ our clients!)

Besides, I could learn as much as I needed about Alois-Junior now that I was back in Hafeld. If I had had to leave behind the ^{able} ~~devils~~ I had taken to Russia, and did not know how long the Maestro might hold them, still, I had compensation. The ^{ones} ~~devils~~ left behind had, to my surprise, improved a bit. ^{despite all} The greater responsibility seemed to have worked out well. They were picking up ~~more of~~ ^{his} our trade. One of them might even be ready for the first techniques ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ dream etching.

I will not, however, bother to describe ^{my resident devils} ~~them~~ further. At present, a century and more has passed, and ^{the} ~~one's~~ ^{employed them} lesser devils offer no more to the pleasure of memory than mediocre songs. ^{Our personalities lack} A demon's personality ^{after all} lacks human lineaments. ^{thereby} While a man or woman's presence is closely related to their body, and we often gather ~~our~~ insights into a person by acquaintance with their flesh, we devils are without bodies (except when it is necessary to inhabit someone for a period.) So, our personalities, whenever we are

obliged to take human form, are no more than temporary ~~choices, available~~
 palettes, ~~that~~ ^{exhibiting} bear more relation to changing a garment than altering a habit,
 or ~~a~~ ^{as devils} passion.

I find it more congenial, therefore, not to discuss our situation ~~other~~
 than to say that we find our happiest terrain in the land of the dream
 where—if we can afford the expenditure—we become anyone we wish.
 Some of such ~~our~~ ^{show} improvisations are even adroit, talented, brilliant. ^{Our brilliance}
~~is our reward.~~

Indeed, if dreams dictated as much of human history as we desired,
 the Dummkopf would soon become our servant.

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

The Maestro was ~~all too~~ ^{so} aware of this ~~that he~~ frowned upon those
^{any and all} ecstasies of self-approration with which irresponsible devils ~~would~~ ^{might}
 congratulate themselves for terrors they had initiated by ~~way of a~~ nightmare.

The Maestro was rarely impressed with such success. "It is never enough,"

he tells us. "Dreams are evanescent. True control of events ^{belongs} is the prime ^{to the day."} aim."

I was in accord. If the Maestro continued to maintain interest in the Hitlers of Hafeld, I looked then to comprehend his motives. ^{His} These high hopes for this Adolf Hitler ^{while still mysterious to me, took on} took on ~~the~~ more immanence for me.

I ^{did} continued to feel honored to be the Maestro's trusted lieutenant on what seemed to be so important a venture. ^{most} ^(Then I had to wonder if) until I realized that I might be ^{adrift} ^{space} engaging in my own ~~way~~ of self-congratulation. I knew so little, finally, of the reaches, outposts, and centralities of the Maestro's domain ^{For} ~~For~~ all I could attest, our special six-year-old might be one of a hundred or a

thousand prospects whom the Maestro was overseeing on no more than one or another remote likelihood that they would yet become ^{human} ~~most~~ useful figures-

^{servants} for him. The notion that my task might be of major importance had then its ^{immediate vagaries and its subsequent} ups and downs, and not only in the immediate seasons ahead, but for a full ^(this) ^{a few which} eighteen years until August, 1914, and then I had to take care of him through World War I. By then, there was no time to ^{oversee} ~~take care of~~ anyone else. The Maestro made it clear. I was there to keep him alive through the immediate battles ahead. Woe to me if I failed.

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

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

has been of significance, and every detail that is now recalled can not only be registered with newly polished perspicacity, but, indeed, ^{ought to} ~~should~~ be.

I can assert, therefore, that Alois-Junior was demonstrating his

considerable talent to charm whoever was in his immediate surroundings.

~~For a time, he~~ ^{emanated} and thus even succeeded in leavening the heavy suspicion that ~~came off~~ ^{from} Alois-Senior ^{is person} in the first days after his son came back. ^{when Senior} Senior's suspicion ^{was in a state of suspicion, he bore much likeness} remained all but equal ^{oncoming} to a wall of approaching bad weather, ~~an~~ ^{an unsettling} ~~unstirring~~ effect he had often used at Customs ^{when} while confronting a dubious

tourist. Yet, such was the boy's charm—a nice combination of youth, health, intelligence, a touch of wit, and apparent good will—that Alois ^{an overbearing} could not maintain such a psychic front for more than a few days. Indeed, Alois-Junior was showing fine interest in the bees. He had ~~so~~ many good questions to ask.

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

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

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

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

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

Now, it would be closer to a major effort. He looked to sell the better part of this harvest, and he could hardly do so if his product was full of detritus. Even one dead fly would be a ~~disaster~~ ^{spoiler!}

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

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

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

I made a point of being present during Alois' visit, then, for I wanted to improve Der Alte's mood. If a client's thoughts are usually darkened by us in order to drive them into our desired direction, so we also have the ability to absorb their black ^{moods,} ~~thoughts~~. We can lift a man out of his depression for an hour, even—if it comes to it—provide him with some joy. Usually, it is to our advantage to keep our humans reasonably well and alive in order that they continue to serve us. Indeed, there is a loss if they expire too soon. Very few can then be transformed into strong devils (unless they die young and in a true rage.) Given rigor mortis, most of our old clients either cease to exist, or are ^{reincarnate} ~~picked up~~ by the Dummkopf (who does not like to give up on any of His creatures, large or small, wise or foolish—which is one reason the world becomes more and more empowered by human mediocrity.)

This situation is, of course, not simple, since we, too, have to look to take what profit we can from mediocre arts, products, and trivial people.

All this may help to explain why I was looking to improve Der Alte's mood when Junior and Senior came to visit. Indeed, I was able to give him relief from his unhappiest thoughts. I even returned him to the notion that

he was an attractive man. (Vanity is the human sentiment ^{that is ready} ~~which comes~~
^{to come} ~~closest~~ to illusions of infinity!) As a direct result, he felt powerfully
attracted to Alois-Junior. It was the first time in ten or fifteen years that he
had so desired to make love to an adolescent.

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

In full form, intensely aware of the boy, and—provided with these
fresh seedings of vanity, keen to how the boy might be aware of him—I had
even taken pains to reduce the kidney reek in these quarters. Der Alte felt
more than ready to launch into an exposition on the lesser-known aspects of
honey-gathering.

"Yes," said my rejuvenated old fellow, "honey-gathering is an art in
itself. I am so glad you two have come together on this day because, truly,
skilled as your father has become in his short period here at Hafeld—a
brilliant man, your father!—nonetheless, the best of bee-keepers have to
learn what is virtually a new vocation when, after the long winter and a
kindly, warm spring that fulfills our hopes, the brood combs, having been

well fed their supply of honey by the good ^{worker-bees} ~~workers~~ assigned to them, are now hatched. That, if I may say, is a most pregnant moment in our vocation. The hives are teeming. The old bees are out on flights and the youngsters are assigned to the innumerable tasks of housekeeping, one of which, for example, is to fill the empty wax combs with honey and cap them with a fine thin layer of wax. Specialists among the bees are assigned to do all that. Young Alois, it is like a miracle. Some of these young workers are newly-born, ten days old, but already we may think of them as craftsmen. The layer of wax that covers each tiny comb is no more thick than good stout paper."

Alois restrained himself from saying, "I know that already," and winked instead at Junior. In advance, he had told the boy to be prepared to listen. "When it comes to his bees, Der Alte can only speak in full paragraphs, no, I would say rather in full pages. All you need do is nod. I know. I know in advance nine parts in ten of what he will say, but it is like fishing. Be patient, and you will get what you came looking for."

"So, yes," Der Alte now said, "the honey-gathering, if not done properly and in the time appropriate to it, can be a rude interruption of a sort-

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

To be courteous, Alois smiled. So did Junior.

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

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

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

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

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

"Locate the Queen," said Senior. "That's one thing you taught me."
He turned to Junior. "Yes, bees ^{will} panic ^{if} when they do not know where their Queen is. To move them from one box to another, you ^{have to} ~~move her~~ ^{as well} ~~as well~~
^{again} "Exactly," said Der Alte, "I have shown your father how to locate the

Queen in the first place. You must introduce a queen-cage"—he took a little box from his pocket the size of a deck of cards. "With this cage ready, you ^{will} ~~then~~ use a queen-catching glass."

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

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

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

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

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

"Whether one uses one's digital sensitivities or resorts to the catching-glass, the heart of the matter, nonetheless," he now said, "is that by means of the one-way exit in the separator board, your bees will look to escape from the honey chamber into the brood chamber for there you have relocated the Queen. How they will struggle with one another in their haste to use the

exit and ^{so be able to} reunite with their lady. It is the kind of passion that reminds me of my youth."

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

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

"You must listen to your father."

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

"Yes," said Der Alte, "in the technical sense, if we speak of their gender they are female, but, of course, they are not queens, so their generative organs are not developed. Consequently, they act like men. Some become guards. They defend all the gates in the hive. Some are warriors. Most of them are loyal, determined, hard-working. In that case,

yes, they are like women, too. They live for the good of the hive. But they are like men in the manner that they worship the Queen."

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

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

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

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

I, too, went with them to hear it. I do not know if I would have interpreted the hum that entered my ears in just those words. The sound was

unmistakably strong. It offered the intent ongoing sound of the dynamos in an electrical plant, that elevating yet fearsome hum which comes into human ears whenever one form of energy is converted to another. So much is taking place. A dominion is being told to enter another dominion. It is the sound common to all motors. "How much we have done," these motors could be murmuring, "but where does it go now?"

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

-4-

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

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

~~doors,~~
~~doors,~~ then replacing them on ~~their~~ return. Perhaps ~~they were~~ ^{she was}
~~protecting everything too much—I do not think there was one bee in~~ ^(had gotten into) (the
house. ~~Of course, you could not always be certain of this. Klara could not~~
~~bake a cake without sifting the batter to make certain no unseemly foragers~~
~~had drowned.~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Soon, the task grew more difficult—they had to strip ^{another} the ~~layer~~ of wax ~~from~~ ^{that was on} the back side of the tray, ^{having} the frames ~~had~~ been inserted vertically in order to leave room ~~for the bees~~ to build ~~wax~~ cells on both surfaces, ~~not one~~. To remove the second coating, however, took longer. More honey was lost. Some leaked from the front, and more from the rear. Indeed, it was not unlike dealing with a piece of cake which had icing on ~~top and bottom~~. Soon enough, Klara had to take over. It was apparent that she had the cleverest fingers of them all.

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

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

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

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

By way of a petcock at the bottom of
 Alois Senior was ready to gather it for storage by way of a petcock at
the honey was ~~gathered~~ gathered in a basin.
 the bottom, and Klara was prepared with a coarse sieve and a fine one.

After which, she held everyone back. It was absolutely necessary, she told them, that she and Angela spend another hour filtering the product through cheesecloth. Moreover, she was determined to save the wax as well.

Beeswax had real value. It could produce the finest grade of candles. So Mr. Rostenmeier had told her at the Fischlham store. Alois snorted. He could have told her that already, he said.

Adi was the most impatient. He wanted honey, he wanted to gorge.
permit this,
 Not even his mother would ~~let him~~ *let him*, however. "Be patient," she said, "the honey has to settle."

"It is there," he cried. "It wants us to taste it."

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

"I don't care."

"You must. Bubbles make honey uncomfortable."

"They don't," said Adi. "I know."

"You don't. Air in honey," said Klara, "is as uncomfortable to the
had no idea whether
 honey, as gas would be on your stomach." She ~~did not really know if~~ *this*

might be

was true, but she hardly cared. It felt true. Besides, it would be good for

Adi to wait. Patience could ~~only~~^{only} strengthen his character.

Tears came into his eyes. ~~That was to be~~^{As} expected. Whenever he was denied, he was quick to weep.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It takes no more
 many a substance with a trace of our presence. (If we respect such a faculty,
 if we keep it fresh, and are careful not to abuse such power, then that trace
 can, for a short period, enter the thoughts of a man or ~~a~~ woman or ~~a~~ child
 without ~~costing us~~ *(involving us in)* the responsibility of investing ~~in~~ them. This delicate
 link, carried off with finesse, can even remain ~~for a few days~~ *we kept hours* ~~(I had to,~~
~~think with regret of)~~ how agreeable it would have been to offer Nicholas the
 Second one good taste of Alois' honey! In any case, I suspect that was why
 Klara kept stirring the ~~collection~~ *stuff for several days I expect*. By instinct, she wished to serve as an
 impromptu angel against our inroads. Of course, the reverse occurred. Her
 interventions only intensified the property I had added to the honey. ~~I had,~~
~~you see, been expecting just such behavior from her.~~

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

Adi was the most interesting. As I anticipated, he went wild. The
 sweet had an effect on him equal to ~~three cups of coffee for Alois Junior or~~

~~for the father~~ ^{Alois, Junior} schnapps on an empty stomach. So Adi made a point of
 giving sticky kisses to Klara and Angela, delighting in their screams, and
~~meanings in reaction at~~ the panic with which they wiped his kisses off their mouths. Klara,
 particularly. To scrub her mouth was a reflex, but when she saw a hitch in
 Adi's laughter, as if he had been so ^{surprised / dejection} rebuked by the expression on her face
 that ~~the~~ ^a first tear had to pop up in his eye, she caught the boy and kissed him
 with all the muscular intensity of a mother doing her duty, and Adi, not
 knowing whether he had been rewarded or further rebuked, snuck up on
 Angela with new honey on his mouth and a small gob on his ^{index finger} hand, all the
 better to ^{entwine} caress her hair.
~~Angela started screaming. There~~ ^{belloved and there} was hatred in the sound. He had
 ripped her away from the delightful ~~set of~~ ^{had been} sensations that ~~was~~ cavorting in
 her belly. But even as Angela was catching ~~her~~ breath to scold him, Adi
 was off and prancing around Alois-Junior, ^{that stalwart} who froze him with a look.

Edmund was left. Adi moved in behind, full of the power implicit in
 sneakiness itself, and left Edmund with so much honey on his head, that the
 two-year-old dropped some more caca into his pants, whereupon Adi went

up to Klara, pointed at Edmund, and said, "Mother, I did not make messes like that when I was two years old. This Edmund, he is always dirty."

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

This time she actually did want to make Adi cry. Instead, she was the one with tears in her eyes. He—perhaps it was the honey—felt as important to himself as he had ever been in his six and a half years. He was enraged at ~~these criticisms of himself~~ ^{his thoughts} ~~this rebuke~~. He glared at Angela. He whispered to himself, "I will never forgive her. That is a fact!" And with it all, he was ~~so~~ proud of himself. He had brought his mother to tears, ~~even to outright weeping~~. "Let her cry for once. Not me. It is time for her to learn."

-6-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

That took a few minutes. He had no wish to be entangled for the most part of an hour with endearments that sat on his skin like spider webs. On the other hand, his practical nature kept him present long enough not to insult Der Alte directly. That could interfere with a return visit. Who knew? If he did not succeed in the next few days in convincing one particular farm girl he had in mind, then back he would come to this old pot. Alois-Junior was the stuff out of which clients are made—at the age of fourteen, he already understood sex in a manner that was ideal for us—he would soon be adept at accumulating many a dominance by way of his priapic gifts. That we do look for. So many of our male clients have ^{(nondescript} weak ^{thrive, ready to salute.} dicks. We never know when an erection will be ^{Don us,} standing there for us. It

~~That~~ creates endless problems ^{Don us,} but we can also manipulate impotence whole or partial into its own kind of effective instrument. For example, Adolf was to suffer prodigiously from such a condition (which we will yet see as we follow him through adolescence, war, and his early political manhood.)

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

^{Yes, he} ~~He~~ would have been perfect as a client. We would have enhanced his powers ~~and~~ ⁱⁿ he could have served us ~~by~~ ^{My} a rich variety of ways. ~~Instructions,~~ ^{were} ~~were~~ however, ~~to~~ leave him alone. The Maestro's eyes were for Adolf. I understood. It can be disruptive to work with two clients in one family

especially if they are ^{considerably} ~~much~~ apart in character. Should one devil try to ~~tend~~ ^{control} ~~both~~, ^{he may be confused by their conflicting needs} ~~both~~, their needs will collide. Envy will stir. And two separate devils ^{never} ~~make~~ a good union ^{while} ~~at~~ overseeing two ~~or more~~ clients in one home. ~~As~~ ^{Every stir, As} (the Maestro has been known to remark, one might as well ~~be looking to~~ ^{ask} opera stars for close cooperation.

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

private parts that Alois-Senior had had with Fanni when she was still a virgin. To use one more American vulgarism (I confess to an unseemly pleasure uttering them), Junior knew Greta Marie from "asshole to ~~her yell-cocked~~ ^{her yell-cocked} appetite." He had no desire to steal her virginity—that was ~~the built-in~~ ^{her yell-cocked} trap. Moreover, he did not really like her. She was a touch too crude for his ~~developing nature~~. So he went back to Der Alte. ~~From time to time~~. Despite the full-grown odors of the hut, some of those occasions were entertaining ~~for the boy~~. Der Alte was full of ~~tricks~~ ^{tricks} languorous slides and inspired flutters of his tongue—all to the good for Junior, the pleasure-lover, but, of course, once done, Junior could barely look at him. The youth was as repulsed as myself by all that sobbing and gurgling. The sad truth was that Der Alte's tongue was preternaturally excited by the back door. Alois' ~~cheeks~~ ^{buttocks} began to feel like the ~~entrance~~ ^{portals} to a bounteously endowed temple. He would wait until his pleasure rose high enough to be ready to ~~explode and then he would turn and give it all to~~ ^{explode and then he would turn and give it all to} ~~turn around and explode in~~ the old boy's gullet. Afterward, he stood still as a statue again, doubly disgusted by the recognition that his father, Alois, was hopelessly in awe of Der Alte. "How well he can speak," his father had said.

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

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

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

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

The boy felt as if he had been pulled inside-out by the power of his father's voice. Such an ugly power. It came with *all* the heft of a heavy *muddling* blow.

Adolescents can lose all sense of themselves when unfamiliar punishment

assaults them. That is because they are not only full of airs, poses, and witless shows of temperament, but, worse! At bottom, they ^{do not} possess ~~no real~~ ^{their own} age. In that instant, Junior ceased to be a youth of fourteen. Till then, he ^{has} seen ~~saw~~ himself as "Fourteen," a clear concept, stark in its outlines. He had even pictured himself as XIV. ^{But in} In truth, like many another, he ~~had~~ ^{possessed} developed more than one age. He ^{had} possessed the calculations of a twenty-year-old, ^{other} and yet in several corners of himself, was as prone to self-betrayal as an eight-year-old caught in ~~some~~ foolishness. At this moment, he ^{was} ~~felt~~ so brutally divided that he ^{felt} almost was full of tears, ^{really to be shed,} ~~of it actually pleaded with his father,~~ ^{He} To his shame, he pleaded with his father. "You have given me so much good information," he said. "So new and so stimulating, dear respected father." He slapped himself on the forehead. "I confess it may have been too much for my ignorant head. I made a mistake. I know that now. But I believed I was supposed to put the hive in the sun, yes, for a few minutes—no more!—so as to warm the honey-combs. It was so cold last night! For spring—so cold! I hope I did not make a terrible error."

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

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

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

He took hold of Junior's chin. His eyes would not let go of the boy's eyes. He pinched him on the chin, his thumb and forefinger as cruel as ^{pincer's claws} ~~Q~~ pincers. But the pain rallied the boy. Der Alte respected him, ~~Junior, much~~ more than Der Alte respected ^{his} ~~this~~ ^{His father} father, who happened to be pinching him. That was so! The thought came into his eyes and the exchange lasted long enough for Alois to feel a clear relief when the boy finally nodded and ^{And so soon as he walked away} looked away. And once ~~he was~~ ^{he was} Alois-Senior had to recognize that ~~their~~ ^{this} altercation had taken a ^{to much} ~~good~~ ^{Much more} bit from him. More than expected. He felt as ^{near to uncontrollable adolescent} if a ~~sixteen-year-old~~ had been glaring back at him. A strong one!

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

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

"Klara, I tell you," she now wrote, "I have to worry. What have we
~~to you?~~
 sent back? Junior is wild. I must use the word—wild. Klara, we had to

send young Alois back. ~~It~~ had to be done. Johann even ~~hires~~ now ~~a~~

~~must hire this other~~
 grown-up fellow for help. He is ~~all right but is~~ a drunk. We pay wages ~~to~~ ^{for a}

~~him~~ drunk. That is how much we lose ~~by~~ ^{because of} sending Junior back. But, this I also

~~say~~ ^{And this not good} This drunk is bad, but, Klara, ^{he is} is still better than Junior. We are not so

afraid. ~~ack, The boy was out of our~~ ~~control.~~ ^{control.}

Klara went to her sewing basket and took out the letter Johann Poelzl
 had written. Or, ~~was supposed to have written.~~ ^{Alois-Junior} Who had handed the letter

to her ^{yes,} ~~but~~ Alois-Junior, ^{yes,} on the day he arrived? She searched the top

shelf of a cupboard ^{to retrieve} and found an old letter from her father, one she had

taken the pains to wrap in a ribbon, ^{It had carnival} because it was his blessing on the birth

of Edmund ^{Now, so soon as} more than two years ago. The moment she looked at it ^{now}, she

knew that Alois-Junior's piece of paper was not in her father's handwriting.

~~It was the~~
 no. The boy had written about how good he was, ^{was all} and ~~it had been~~ a forgery.

^{who}
^{Re-reading} Klara re-read her mother's letter, ^{Klara} and ^{chest} felt a knot in her heart. Johanna

kept apologizing for her bad German. Her poor mother!

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

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

^{It was then that she} She told him about her mother's letter ^{then} then. He ^{he merely nodded} merely nodded.

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

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

She was infuriated. She could not sleep ^{well}. There might as well have been a bug wandering ^{around} in the bedclothes. If Alois was not ready to scold his son, she would have to. But she could hardly be ready for this. It was his son, after all.

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

The occasion was simple enough. His girl, Greta Marie, had shown him a little more that afternoon of what she ~~really was~~—a dull cow. So, the need for new endeavor was in his fingertips. Something new. Having felt like smacking Greta Marie around, the impulse now moved close to Angela. His sister was clucking again over her chickens, collecting each egg from each hen as if it were ~~a nugget of gold~~—plain, dirty, hen-stained eggs. So, he took one out of her basket. Just to hear her scream. But when she did, he was ready to break the egg on her head. Only, he could not. She was his full sister—who else did he have? So he put the egg back. Nonetheless, this act of absolution cost too much, now here was Adi, beside him now, slunk up within reach, smelly little hyena. Right after coming back from his gallop with Ulan, he had seen Adi lying on the floor of their barn, ~~screaming~~ ^{screeching} away, one more temper tantrum. It was a sound to ~~roll~~ ^{in flame} one's ears.

Junior ~~had~~ lifted him off the barn floor, then slammed him ~~down to a~~ ^{into a} standing position. "Keep quiet," said Alois-Junior.

"Try and make me," said Adi. ~~Baptist~~ looked about to cry.

Each time that Alois-Junior pushed on Adi even a little, the kid would go yowling to his mother. ~~Alois-Junior was soon aware that restraint was necessary.~~ His kid brother had a mother—he didn't. He had to put up, *with him,* therefore, *It was a truce,* ~~with a species of truce.~~

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

"Try and make me."

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

Adolf truly ~~screamed~~ *yowled,* It was as if he had anticipated just this species of showdown. Now, all on his own, he proceeded immediately to squeeze his gummed-up hair long enough to coat his palm with some of the spattered yolk which he then wiped on his shirt. Only it left no ~~very~~ large stain. So Adolf lifted another egg from Angela's basket—out came a ~~sequel~~ *yip* from her!—and broke that all over his own head, face, and shirt, in response to which he ~~shrieked~~ *caterwaulled* as loudly as if Alois-Junior had kicked him in the shins.

Then he ran from the barn to the ~~sanctuary~~ ^{Vast screams,} of his mother in her kitchen. He ~~land as catastrophe itself, could he hear~~ ^{was really crying now} in the barn from the kitchen.

Vast screams. Klara came running back, holding Adolf by the hand. ~~Her tirade had begun before she reached them~~ and burst into a tirade. She ~~tried to tell~~ ^{was trying} Alois-Junior about the letter, but it all came out in no consecutive order. His lies, she told him, were worse

than the filth left by the pigs in their sty. "They have an excuse. They are pigs. You have nothing. You are a brute. You are a pig. You are nothing but filth." She could not believe her words. They were so strong. To her surprise, Alois-Junior actually began to sob. In all of this, he had not had until now any real idea of how ready he had been to love her, and how ready she was to dislike him right down to the depths. Yes, secretly, he had thought she really did like him, yes, more than she did his father. Now, he ~~did feel filthy. His ego was suffering a bereavement. He could not bear it~~ ^{Filthy! To his ego, this was equal to}

~~that~~. Just as suddenly, his sobs were choked off ^{by} his will. He stopped crying on the instant, nodded formally, and ~~walked~~ ^{strade} away. He did not know where the world would take him, nor when, but he understood that he would not remain long ^{not for long} in Hafeld. ~~He~~ could not. He must soon say goodbye to

everyone and to everything here, especially to his horse. Or, ^{should} could he steal him?

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

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

He was waiting for bed. Lately, Klara had begun to remove ^{his} these bee-stings and ~~to his surprise~~ ^{so adept.} he was able to enjoy that. She was ~~skilled~~ ^{she} and never pulled ~~so~~ ^{so he did not have to} crudely on the stingers, ~~that you would~~ suffer the wound through the night. Done poorly, it could feel like a needle had been left

inside. A tiny wound but a real one, ready to puff up. Sometimes, the wound felt personal, as if it refused, from meanness itself, to stop hurting. But Klara knew how to nudge the flesh where the stinger was peeping out, and then coax it forth with a little soft pressure, ~~so~~ ^{so} deftly.

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

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

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

A silence. It was followed by a deeper silence.

"I will try," she said at last.

Her instinct was to reduce this space between them. If she didn't, the difference would increase. But could she believe that her husband was

right? Young Alois was behaving like Fanni. Only ten times worse than Fanni could ever have tried to be. Yet, was it possible? Had she left a curse?

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

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

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

^{but then he} ~~If I finally grew over-familiar with all this, I knew nonetheless that Alois-Senior~~ was entitled to worry. He understood one side of young Alois

all too well. What love the boy felt for horses! ^{the boy} While riding Ulan, he felt as ^{must feel as} (handsome as an officer squiring an elegant lady on one of the better streets of Vienna—how well the father understood that particular savory ^{Alois} of emotion. But, ~~he~~ also knew what was hatching underneath. No tame chicken ~~was~~ enclosed in that eggshell. His son, Alois decided, might yet become a true lunatic. ~~But for the girls, not the beasts.~~ At present, the horse came first. Soon, it would be all about girls. The father knew this as well as if sperm was stirring in his own good equipment. The power of those first revelations. Nothing could be better than the moment when a woman opened her legs before you. That first time! If you had an eye for the little differences, you knew twice as much about her as you learned from her face. Alois-Senior would attest to that. The female organ! Whoever designed this form had been so intimate with the job. (This was about as close as Alois ever came to the Creator.) Such a wonderful array of meats and juices—^{such a} ~~a~~panoply of flesh in miniature—^{it's} ~~such an~~ offering of archways and caverns and lips. ^{Alois} ~~Alois was a poet on this occasion!~~ He (was certainly no philosopher, so he would not have known how to speak of Becoming (that state of existence when Being feels itself out suddenly in the open), but all

the same, he could have tipped Heidegger off. Becoming is, yes, exactly, when a woman opens her legs! *He felt like a poet having such thoughts.*

Let me leave it at this: if Alois could have talked to his son, he would have had a good deal to tell him. But he ~~could~~ ^{would} never venture to speak of these matters. Having been a guardian of the border, which is to say a policeman all his life, he ~~could~~ ^{would} not even trust his children. A good policeman had to respect trust as if he were handling radium. Trust was ~~filled~~ ^{indeed} with risk. To offer your closest thoughts to others was to ask them to betray your wisdom.

Still, if he could have spoken to young Alois, he would have been quick to inform him that there was nothing better than to be a young man interested in girls—he, the father, could tell him the best of stories if it came to that—"but, young Alois, I must impart this to you: Young women can be dangerous. Often, they are the sweetest angels, a few of them maybe, but it is not them you have to be ready to deal with. It is their fathers, their brothers. It can even be ~~a relative~~ ^{an uncle,} ~~relative~~ ^{almost}. Once, I ~~nearly~~ received a beating from a girl's uncle. I was big enough, but he was bigger. I had to talk my way out of it. So will you. It is certain that you will know how to talk, young Alois,

but that is an ability which works better in a good-sized town. ^{It} ~~And~~ works best of all in the city. Out here in Hafeld and Fischlham—not so good—country people can be difficult."

There was so much he would have told his son. If only they could have confided in one another! It made Alois sad. I must say, however, that it can certainly be construed as his ~~doing~~. ^{Just. Nothing was more} Maintenance of authority was ^{important than maintenance of authority,} ~~even~~ more important to him than his love for his oldest son.

So he could not be so generous as to offer the core of his advice, ^{or he would have to tell Junior!} "Enjoy every woman you can, ~~Alois would have told Junior,~~ but always be aware of the price. Especially ^{where} ~~out~~ in the country. Listen, young Alois," he would have said, "country people do not have enough to do with their minds. Their backs are strong, but their lives remain ~~the~~ much too unchanging. Year after year, it is the same. They are bored. So, they start to think about the ^{little} wrongs that have been done to them. ^{And big wrongs!} (I say to you, son, watch out! Do not get a girl in trouble. When the time comes, do not be too certain that you will be able to deny that you are the fellow who made her pregnant. Sometimes, that does not work."

Alois lay in bed, drenched in perspiration. His son's drama unfolded before him with all the power of a fine tragedy in a ^{for} ~~best~~ Viennese theatre.

In his mind, he now said to young Alois, "Do not make fun of the father of ^{any} ~~the~~ girl you have ^{had in the street} ~~made pregnant~~. Ten years from now, he will find out where you are living, and he will come to your door, and he will blow your head off with a shotgun. I have heard more than one story like that. ^{So, pay} ~~attention.~~ ^{Never} ~~Never~~ insult a peasant who has too little to think about."

Since devils know ^{to what extent} ~~how much~~ men and women ^{are able to} ~~can~~ conceal from themselves a clear view of their own motives, I soon understood that behind all this splendid advice to young Alois, the father was worried about his own safety, yes, Alois-Senior felt as if it could be his ^{rear end} ~~buttocks~~ that ~~were~~ ^{was} exposed!

One evening, over a month ago, while having his beer in the Fischlham tavern, there had been a bit of talk which he dismissed at the time as idle, no more than some prattle about a fellow who lived on the other side of the tavern a few miles further away from Hafeld. Two of the farmers who drank with him actually knew the man, and it seemed this fellow had

spoken about Alois. Yes, more than once, they assured him, "He knows you, and he made it clear. He don't like you." They had laughed.

"I assure you," Alois said in all of his local majesty, "if I ever met this individual, I have forgotten it. His name does not mean anything to me."

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

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

remembered the hatred in the man's eyes. When they looked at each other, the expression of the other had been offensive enough to tempt Alois to strike him—what a vile look!—but such an act he considered entirely beneath himself. Certainly, he had struck no one during these last years on Customs duty.

Could the full moon be a mirror for one's memories? It was there before him now, and clearly. He had not struck the fellow, no, but he had certainly mocked him. "You are angry at me?" he had said to the man. "Be angry at yourself. You are a fool. Even my first day on duty when I was eighteen, I could have caught you. That is the kind of fool you are."

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

In the morning, after a night full of fear—yes, that smuggler had actually been sentenced to a year in jail, and now he was free—Alois got out of bed with the recognition that there was not going to be a hell of a lot of

sleep for him until he got a new dog, a truly fierce hound. Luther was good

for nothing by now but yodeling at the moon on a night when nothing was

~~But what could he do if~~
happening and no one was stealing across the fields toward the house with
happening, he needed a dog who would
odium in their hearts.

he really saw a ~~blackguard~~ ~~some~~
bad fellow ^{stealing} ~~stealing~~ across the fields
toward this house with odium in
his heart

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

Good beer talk. But Alois, ^{on taking} ~~took~~ a walk the morning after his close recollections with the faculties of the full moon, ^{and} ~~and~~ decided to buy the hound.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He roared at them to stop, and on the same impulse, flung them apart with his bare hands. The sound of his voice was enough. They lay on the ground, half stunned, breathless, two yards apart, showing open gashes on their noses and bloody fur at their throats. Spartaner kept panting as if the breath he needed was just beyond his tongue. Luther was ill within. The sum of his years had exploded. He looked at Alois with such pain, and so full an expression that Alois could all but read what he said: "I have worried about you and the safety of your house for all these years, and you yell at me as if I mean no more than that interloper you just brought in."

Alois came near to petting him, and tenderly, but that would have spoiled his plans for turning Spartaner into a great defender of a dog, truth, Alois recognized that he would have to live with cruelty itself. Luther must go.

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

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

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

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My interest in this dog fight was for its effect on ~~Adi~~. This was the second time that ^{Adi} ~~he~~ had heard his father roar, once at young Alois for leaving that hive in the sun, and now again to shock the dogs ^{into reparation} ~~out of their~~ ~~near to death grip on each other~~.

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

Whenever Adi had an opportunity now, he would go off into the woods by himself—no small matter—but he forced himself to be as fearless as he could manage against the weight of all the silence and mystery of these immense trees quietly muttering above the greater silence of the forest. There, even if shivering in the warmth of the June air, Adi would work on the power of his voice. He would roar at the trees until his throat was too sore to open his mouth.

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

Once he almost met his father in the woods, but I steered Adi away. I did not want father and son to meet. Not on this occasion. The father might have mocked the boy for being so crazy as to ~~yelp~~ ^{shout} at the trees, and the boy might have crept up behind his father and thereby would have witnessed the

execution of Luther. I was looking to avoid that. If the shock proved too

great, ^{could} the Maestro ^{would} be displeased, ^{if the shock was}
^{excessive} ^{became}

That afternoon, it ^{was} a long walk for Alois-Senior and ^{consistently} longer for

Luther. One of his hind legs ^{was} ~~had become~~ infected from the battle. He

limped and after a few hundred yards, he began to hobble.

I think Luther understood what was ^{transpiring} ~~going on~~. While the Maestro

must certainly possess the ability to monitor any thoughts that pass between

humans and animals, he does not encourage us to exercise our instincts in

such a direction. Or, at least, not among the devils I work with. For that

matter, ~~and this is a concern I hesitate to develop too openly~~, I often am near ^{Def}

~~to~~ painfully curious concerning ^{all} ~~what~~ I do not know about the departments,

out-reaches, special services, zones, belts, salients, precincts, orbits,

spheres, beats, and occult enclaves that the Maestro commands. Particularly

this last—occult enclaves. For a devil, I know no more about this last than

what I am instructed to use directly in my work. The curses, spells, and

incursions into madness which legend would have available to all devils, is,

actually, meted out to us as tools only when needed.

So, it was not common for me to follow the thoughts offered and thoughts received which passed between Alois and Luther as directly as I could have done the same with two humans. All the same, I was at no loss to recognize that Luther knew his end was near and Alois, willingly or not, was fully occupied in thinking of how he would dispose of the dog.

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

Let me remark at how surprised I was to read Alois' thoughts so easily. True, I was familiar with the workings of his mind in sleep and so ~~my insight~~ could collect his conscious thoughts as adroitly as one ~~can~~, connecting the dots in a child's puzzle. But still, he was not a client. Yet, I knew him better than many of my clients.

I think I may have been granted a few exceptional powers for this particular service. If Adi was my major assignment, I had also been granted a few subsidiary powers, enough at least to get to know the father

and mother with something ^{close to} ~~of mind as with~~ the clarity of possessing the mind of a ~~which we possess the mind of a client~~ client.

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

Alois kept thinking these thoughts as he trudged through the woods, slowed and slowed again by the hobbling of the old hound, and soon there came a point where Luther sat down and refused to move and looked for a long time into Alois' eyes. I could swear that if he had speech at his command, he would have said, "I know you are going to kill me and that

explains why I have been afraid of you all my life. Now, I am still afraid, but I will not move further. Can't you see, I am losing the last of my dignity as you insist on taking me further and further into the woods? I can no longer control my bowels and I do not want to keep pushing my legs along while they are covered with filth, so here I sit, and you will have to lift and carry me if you wish to go any further."

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

That had been Alois' plan. He had thought ~~it~~ ^{every detail} through, ~~every detail in~~ ^{He had ~~seen~~ liked the} the consecutive logic of such a burial—so much better than being buried under earth, his dog was not a damned potato!—but now he saw that Luther would not ~~go~~ ^{move} on. And he, Alois, so regrettably, was no longer strong

enough to carry him up and down along a rough trail for the next half mile.

~~There~~ ^{there} it must be here. Afterward, he would go back to the farm, get a pick and a shovel and dig a grave in this copse, which was, in fact, a green and decent place, ~~girded~~ ^{enclosed} by a half-circle of trees and some scrub brush, yes, it could be done here. Poor Luther, ~~under nothing but earth.~~

So Alois laid the dog down, turned him on his back, looked into his face which had sickened in the last few minutes as directly and recognizably as the face of any old creature whose liver is rushing to the grave ahead of him, a sad old face to be certain, and Alois unbuckled the flap of the holster that held his hunting knife, laid the point of the blade at the center of the arch of Luther's rib-cage and pushed it in to the hilt. The dog's face contorted, the sound of his expiring came out of him and it was fearful to the ear. For it was much more human than Alois had expected. Then, the dog's face passed through one place and another and with many expressions of anger and dead gloom and bright life ~~before it settled into the face it~~ ^{his look finally} would have for the first few hours of its death before it all began to decompose. Luther now looked like a young dog again, and some indefinable pride had returned as if he had always been more beautiful than

anyone had realized, and could have become a great warrior if it had been asked of him when he was young, yes, he did look very much like a warrior with his features composed into this near-final expression.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ergo, marriage is a workable institution—especially for dreadful people. Yet, it can also serve men and women who may be seen as average.

Like our Klara and Alois. And strange shifts do occur. ~~A relationship can~~
~~even~~ turn inside-out. Few of these reversals are permanent, but while they last,
~~some~~ aeration is offered to what has been a ^{an} ~~relatively~~ airless union.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

↑

exhibits his highest skills when he succeeds in convincing
~~that I am now obliged to speak of reincarnation (or of Karma)~~ (angelic)

Aug 12 05 06:17a

Jm

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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. While I would not characterize Alois in this manner, he is looking, nonetheless, to ^(pick up a little) ~~for~~ beatitude

on the cheap. Offering his ^{one's} ~~bones and~~ skin to the rhapsodies of small torture, ~~is, however, not enough.~~ ~~he is pretending it is a matter of import~~

Nonetheless, men like Alois, even if undeserving, can be as complex as ^{no matter how} ~~saints.~~ He has, in fact, come, ~~which itself is a~~ saints. This is due to the D.K.'s generosity is ~~more than Divine~~ ~~declared his no more than Divine~~ negligence, which, the Maestro declares, is by now nearly equal in ~~importance~~ to the Godhead.

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~~Nonetheless,~~

with this ~~large, round head~~ ~~to him that I might sit~~ ~~in judgment~~

All the same, Adois ~~has~~ come close to the mark. The Dummkopf did

establish a system ~~This System!~~ for judging moral behavior.

And it is / It is a vast system / Replete with rewards and punishments. Out in the

empyrean, many divine offices ~~had to be developed~~ ~~to serve judgment on~~ ~~the human population.~~ ~~that has~~

humans who had just died. The extent of the project was vast. It puts to ~~shame~~ ~~the largest corporations, governments, and legal systems that would~~ ~~develop in its wake here on earth.~~ ~~Indeed, if the Lord's~~ ~~system of judgment~~ ~~means of judging~~

on the value of those who have just died had worked as well as the Lord intended, all souls, worthy and unworthy, would have deserved the justice they found.

Yet from all the signs available—or so the Maestro assures us—these Grand Offices are now in disarray. Some of the Dispositional Angels who calculate ~~these~~ ~~future~~ ~~placements~~ ~~for the dead~~ ~~are~~ ~~even~~ ~~corrupt.~~ (The Maestro

a fraction for karma at all. To us they
we all test it, and for good reason.
All the gang I wish to thought to offer

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hell—^{exactly} which is ^{just} the Maestro defects it. (We have invested ^{many} of our resources in ~~hell~~ ^{maintaining} His Relative Judgment! Gods evaluations and dispositions of recently

expired humans has nothing to do with popularly ~~accepted~~ ^{accepted} notions of Heaven

and Hell. These two concepts are, in fact, our major contribution to human ^{misunderstanding}. Indeed, they are our most effective ~~even eloquent~~ ^{even eloquent}

instruments for dominating the minds of men and women. Into their needy ^{unhappy} hearts, we implant one germ which leaves them permanently infected with a false notion. ^{So they think but they} It is that in death, you will go to Heaven or you will go to Hell.

How this concept has served us! (The majority of people in Europe, Russia, and the Americas ~~believe~~ ^{believe} it for the most part (or—at the least I feel too weak

to detach themselves from this psychic fever.) So they pray ^{such} (they pretend to believe. They ~~chant~~ ^{chant} in unison of ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~vouch for~~ ^{that} ~~their~~ ^{their} believe, they hope ~~that~~ ^{that} they are going to Heaven and their enemies will go to

Hell! They believe that each of these imaginary kingdoms is a ~~real~~ ^{real} and

ongoing eternity. What a folly! ^{Folly!} Such categories not even suitable as ~~Heaven and Hell are unnumbered~~ ^{Heaven and Hell are unnumbered} intellectual entities. My proof is that neither ~~Heaven nor Hell~~ ^{Heaven nor Hell} has been able

to offer ~~any kind of secure~~ ^a foothold to the human ^{intelligence,} ~~imagination~~ ^{imagination} (Heaven

proposes eternal bliss; Hell condemns ~~the~~ ^{each} sinner to unending torture. Where

is the human who can comprehend either condition? In life, ^{such states} ~~neither state~~ ^{cannot}

~~exist~~ ^{present} for long. Bliss, particularly, is brief. ~~So~~ ^{few} minds can muster even

So the mass of humans in a
5 fold of belief that Heaven
and Hell are predominant after death

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the sketchiest notion of Heaven. (What, indeed, does one do ^{all day?} ~~with oneself all~~

~~day?~~

I will admit that

Hell, given ~~the possibility of cowardice, treachery, and~~

~~in such the average human's~~

inanity, does inspire more belief. Of course, no divinity could afford such

Yet ~~where is the divinity who would bargain with the up boy~~
 of such an ongoing, endless extravaganza? Besides, there is no need of ~~it~~

Hell is such. Given

envy, misery, pain, and illness, simple human suffering is hell enough.

The Maestro, however, has become a mighty impresario concerning

posthumal

Wallowing in

while

these misrepresentations. Using the name of Jesus, attaching ourselves to the

loudest the most ambitious churches and their preachers, we have managed to subvert God's messianic into
 evasive mantras into

inflexible moral dictates. These well-advertised moral demands are

have to have a dirty thought in your dirty mind
 or the good lord Jesus will punish you, however
 however, so inadequate at dealing with the ~~for~~ complexities of

human emotion that rebellion is quickly incited in the best of His human

creature? ~~Can we work with them as well if in a different manner -~~
~~we love to lose them into drugs?~~ In the main,
 That does keep working to shore up all the old

however, we keep working to shore up every misdeed

midgotten belief, and we depend on the illustrious patina of the centuries, we

believe in the existence of Heaven and Hell, for that
 even use church music, and gothic architecture, to support these transcendental lies.

~~We have seen today~~

So, it is not difficult for us to exhort believers to prayer. Pray all the time,

we exhort all believers,

we tell them, Go to your knees. Praise God. In truth, such praise is often

boring to the Lord. It is so repetitive! The D.K., despite all, remains

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stubborn *(Creativity when all is said & done, God's essence!)*
 creative. To some degree, at least, *So*, dull prayer roils His Patience. How
 we encourage people to pray for what they have not earned. Or, do not
 deserve. Such beseechment *un*variably returns *a* quick profit when God does
 not respond.

So, *At the time of*
 Therefore, we are the ones to advertise the Lord. *(We look to establish*
~~Him as~~ fearsome and mysterious—All-Good and All-Powerful.

Yet from
 From (what we have been told (only by way of our need-to-know) the
indeed once) But
 Dummkopf was formerly (a true Creator. Yet His resources, *once* prodigious, in
 the past, *have by now* Yet, He hopes to save what is
 have in good part been wasted. Now, through reincarnation He hopes to use
 left by way of reincarnation. In the beginning
 what is left. Given all He bequeathed to mankind by way of Free Will, ~~He~~
 requested so much to mankind by way of Free Will,
 remaining Creativity is given over to what are, at best, the witty judgments of
 and this was in such great part abused that by
 reincarnation
 now he uses reincarnation to offer a judgment on
 the abuse of each person's Free Will.

Let me offer the outline I perceive. Many who die, do indeed cease to
 do cease to exist altogether. For their death is the
 end. They have exhausted their souls even before they perished. Others,

~~however, meet their death~~ *however, meet their death* *but their souls are still viable. So, they are born*
~~again. They take up new existence in an embryo.~~ *again. They take up new existence in an embryo.*
~~They are sent out to take up new residence~~ *They are sent out to take up new residence*
~~in life. They enter into the embryo.~~ *in life. They enter into the embryo.*
~~The heart of the process comes then to this: How well or how badly is~~ *The heart of the process comes then to this: How well or how badly is*

born again by way of their mother, and then
 the reincarnated soul able to live with his or her new family? Soon enough,
 develop, eventually, come at least into adult
 Have they been able to live their death
 what spirit do they now live? *But the*

*however, meet their death through the decline
 of their bodies, their souls are still lively. So, they
 are born again. One born again twice, is
 but it takes time to learn
 to live again.*

*the end,
 and
 they
 are
 not
 meant.*

*But the
 soul
 is
 not
 meant.*

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answer to this question is the test of
~~the~~ ^{the} reincarnation. ^{Does our}
 this question becomes a test. Does the reborn ^{and} respond with art to its
 vigor and ~~energy~~ ^{to its new} ^{divine}
 situation in its new part of the world? ^{That now serves as the measure.} The
^{is now}
 only similarity this process bears to Heavenly or Hellish judgment comes by
 way of the opportunities offered in the new life. Will one be more or less
 vital, ^{previous} better or worse situated than the last time ^{out}? Will one be wiser or less
 imaginative? Braver or more timid, greedier or ^{more} quite generous, colder or
~~more~~ ^{more} compassionate? These are the means of being rewarded for former
~~virtues, or paying for past errors.~~ ^{Does} Now reborn, one can improve one's soul or
 allow it to deteriorate further? Which last will bring a harsher situation for the
 next life. ^{Yes, the D.K. decided somewhere after the}
^{creation of His Son to dispense with Heaven and}
^{Hell, ~~Heaven~~ judgment would be the nature of one's rebirth.}
 How the Maestro hates this system! Karma was designed to defeat us.
^(the Maestro will insist)
 Indeed, the Dummkopf created these metamorphoses to counteract His
^{Inauguration as}
 limitations as a Deity. Since His Power increases or diminishes in proportion
 to the success or failure of His Creations, ^{is} it is His human beings ^{(and His}
^(much more now than his) ^{judgements or feelings)}
 animals) who will determine the Lord's success or failure in the ^{cosmos}
^{gods at the greater reaches of the cosmos?} Ideally, as He
 Since He also follows the development of consciousness in His humans, He is
^{and}
 wiser as a result, more profound, ^{ideally} He is strengthened in His Desire to

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shape a future that ^{would} be larger than the one with which He commenced His Labors eons ago.

In turn, ~~recognizing that reincarnation will not disappear~~, the Maestro ^{in reincarnation.} looks to play a role. ^{More often than ever,} So often we are there at the moment of conception. I

think this is one of the reasons that the Maestro ^{stays} never shows a loss of confidence. He believes ^{that} the ongoing ^{facts} ~~tales~~ of the Dummkopf will offer us ^{any}

eventual victory. We are always reminded that the D.K., subject to His vanity as an artist, ^{and the unbalanced advice he receives} has been ready to ^{also} ~~nick up~~ many a karmic reassignment.

~~He has such~~ ^{forgiveness!} excesses of compassion! The Maestro would argue that the

D.K.'s generosity derives from ^{outrage} self-indulgence. He keeps too high an opinion of His Works. He does see every human as potentially splendid.

At least by His Original Intention!

Waste, however, predominates. (Should I offer Der Alte as one example?) The Maestro will declare that the D.K. is so afraid of losing the

loyalty of His subjects, that He strews forgiveness willy-nilly. (Indeed, He has to—He has so little control over earthquakes, volcanoes, and floods!) So,

~~He spends His compassion like a damned fool.~~ All too many humans are invested in too heavily. Often, we pick them up for next to nothing.

Prayer
His
Over-
E
Compassion
= LTP
Son)
has
thanked
my

nicked
up many
a
karmic
reassignment

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

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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. While Alois

would hardly be characterized as the worst, ~~he does offer some kinship~~

~~he is looking~~ ~~on the cheap~~

when he looks to feel beatitude for too little. He is, after all, offering

his nerves and ~~meat~~ and sensitive skin to the rhapsodies of small torture,

~~even if undeserving~~

Nonetheless, men like Alois can be as complex as saints even if they

are undeserving. This is due to the D.K. As the Maestro is always ready to

remark, such easy generosity is but one more example of His Carelessness.

By Divine Negligence, the Maestro declares, ~~is immense~~ His

Godhead.

I would not

characterize Alois in this way

can

he is looking

on the cheap

he is

he is

pretending

it is

a

in a

other

important

~~It is just a (whole, rather, an elaborate)~~
~~man's~~
 which has, of course, nothing to do with popularly accepted notions of

Heaven and Hell. Those two concepts ~~have been~~ ^{are, in fact,} our ^{major} contribution to human ^{mis understanding.}
 culture. (Indeed, they are our most effective, even eloquent instruments for

~~dominating~~ infecting the minds of men and women. Into their needy brains, we have ^{heartily} ~~personally~~ ^{we} ~~implant~~ ^{implanted} one germ which ^{leaves them permanently} ~~is rooted with a false notion.~~ ^{It is taken in death,} ~~implanted one notion.~~ In death, you will go to Heaven or you will go to

Hell. ~~These are your choices.~~ How this concept has served us! The

majority of people in Europe, Russia, and the Americas believe ^{it} for the most

part (or—at the least!—feel too weak to detach themselves from the notion)

^{Seven} ~~So they pray, they pretend to believe, they hope~~ ^{that by way of God's judgment, that's where they are all going to Heaven} ~~(and their enemies will go to Hell!)~~
 or to Hell. They believe that each of these imaginary kingdoms ~~is real, a~~

^{What a folly! What such categorizing} ~~is a~~ real and ongoing eternity. What a delusion! They are not even suitable as

intellectual entities. ^{My proof is} I would point out that neither Heaven nor Hell ^{has been} ~~are~~ able

to offer any ^{kind of pleasure} ~~pleasant~~ foothold to the human imagination. Heaven proposes

eternal bliss; Hell condemns you ^{the sinner} to unending torture. Where is the human

who can comprehend either condition? In life, neither state ^{is present} ~~can~~

^{for long.} ~~Bliss, particularly, cannot continue for long. Few minds will~~ ^{is brief. So, few can} ~~must~~ even

the sketchiest notion of Heaven. ^{indeed} (What does one do with oneself all day?)

Hell, given the ^{timidity, cowardice,} ~~timidity, cowardice,~~ ^{treachery,} ~~treachery,~~ and inquisition ~~of all too many~~ ^{humans} ~~humans~~ does inspire more belief, but, of course, no divinity could afford ~~the~~ such an ongoing endless extravaganza.

Given envy,
misery,
pain
and
illness,
simple

~~extravagance~~ implicit in the lives of
~~the~~ And besides there is no need of it.
~~simple~~ human suffering ~~is~~ well enough

The Maestro, however, has become a mighty impresario concerning
~~misrepresentation.~~
these matters. Using the name of Jesus, attaching ourselves to the churches

and their preachers, we have managed to subvert God's mercies into ^{inflexible}
~~dictates.~~ ^{demands}
stipulations. These well-advertised moral laws are, however, so inadequate
^{dealing with}
at speaking to the ever-proliferating complexities of human emotion that

rebellion is ^{quickly} incited in the best of His human creatures.

~~That does keep us working to shore up all the~~
Meanwhile, we do our best to fortify all the old varieties of misbegotten
beliefs, and we ~~rely~~ ^{depend} on ~~the~~ church music and
thinking. Some have the illustrious patina of the centuries to support them.

~~managers of cosmic non-existence~~ ^{Engel}
~~So, it is not difficult for us to exhort~~ ^{those} ~~to~~ ^{pray} to prayer. Pray all the time,

we tell them. ^{Go to} ^(humans) ^{in truth such}
Get on your knees and praise God. Of course, all this praise is

has to be boring to the Lord. It is so damnably repetitive! The D.K., despite
^{remains} ^{To same degree at least. I, dull}
all, is still, to a degree, creative. Dull prayer, therefore, roils His Patience.

How we encourage these over-directed men and women to pray for what

they have not earned. Or, do not deserve. Such ^{beseechment} prayer invariably returns ~~us~~
^{quick} when God does not respond
a profit ^{some}

Therefore, we are the ones to advertise ^{the Lord} God. We look to establish

Him as the fearsome and mysterious ~~Godhead~~ ^{Godhead} There He is — All-Good and
^{becomes}
All-Powerful. That is splendid fodder for public consumption.

garthie
dictatorship

bold or more timid, greedier or quite generous, colder or good and
 compassionate? These are the means of paying for past errors. ^{more (virtuous, etc.)}
^{and (being rewarded for former)}
 Now, ^{we have, one can} ^{one's soul or allow it to} ^{last with}
 improve oneself or one can (deteriorate further). ^{which can bring a}
^{harsher situation for the next life.}

How the Maestro hates this system! Karma, far from being of open,
~~use to our purposes~~, was designed to defeat us. Indeed, the Dummkopf
 created these metamorphoses to counteract His limitations as a Deity. ~~If He~~
~~still possesses great powers of Creation, He is not All-Powerful. Not at all!~~
~~He cannot be. That is because~~ ^{SENCE} His Power increases or diminishes in
 proportion to the success or failure of His Creations. Ultimately, it is His
 human beings (and His animals) who ^{will} ^{ultimate} determine the Lord's success or failure
 in the Cosmos. ^{Since He also} ~~As His humans come into contact with a universe that was~~
~~not created in whole by God, (perhaps not even in large part) nonetheless it~~
~~is a world in which His Creatures can live, and succeed or fail. Moreover,~~
~~He depends since He follows the development of~~ ^{in His} ~~the consciousness of these humans, so returns to Him~~ He is wiser as a
 result, more profound. Ideally, He ^{is} ~~could be~~ strengthened further in His
 artistic instincts, in His ~~Desire~~ ^{Desire} to shape a future that would be larger than the
 one with which He ~~began~~ ^{commenced His Labors}

~~Some twenty~~ ^{cons ago,}

~~By contrast, the Maestro lives in the present, in this life, not the next.~~

~~We may capture someone, but we lose control when our client dies. That leaves us obliged (if he or she has been valuable to us) to look to find them again. What a labyrinthine process!~~

~~That can be, Long hoarded energies can be consumed.~~

~~Since the Maestro is, however, the epitome of resourcefulness, we, too, in our turn, recognizing that reincarnation will not look to play a supporting role concerning reincarnation. We try to be there at the moment of conception. So often does that occasion resonate with presence. I think this is one of the reasons that the Maestro never loses confidence. He believes the ongoing faults of the Dummkopf will~~

~~offer us an eventual victory. We are always reminded that the D.K., subject to His vanity as an artist, can muck up many a karmic reassignment. He has such excesses of compassion! Some devils would argue that the D.K.'s generosity derives from self-indulgence. He does insist on keeping a high~~

~~an opinion of His Works. He does see every human as potentially splendid. On, at least by, By His Original Intention, at least!~~

~~But, waste predominates. (Should I offer Der Alte as one example?)~~

~~The Maestro will declare that Some of us think the D.K. is afraid of losing the loyalty of His subjects, so~~

~~that He strews forgiveness. (Indeed, He has to—He has so little control over~~

disappears

earthquakes, volcanoes, and floods!) ^{So,} (He spends ~~his~~ compassion, ~~therefore,~~
like a damned fool. ^{All too} ~~So~~ many humans are invested in too heavily. Often, we
pick them up for next to nothing.

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

13.

Allow me to move back to
Alois and his preoccupations. Giving

is bound to
Since many a reader will be offended by these presentations of the
~~man to be seen for what he is~~
Hereafter, I think it is time to move back to some closer interests. Alois, for
example, I will move back to my
narrative interests. Alois still
preoccupies me.

Given his readiness to brood on all that can go wrong, (which I
attribute in some part to guarding the financial integrity of Austria's

Since he has just
borders) he is now full of paternal concern. Having suffered an
come all too near to an
unaccustomed acknowledgment of his own acts of incest, he was not ready
to acting like a policeman. he is back
to bear up for long under such close self-examination. After all, he has been
a policeman, not a poet, and so old habits took over. When an officer of the

law detects a vice in himself, he knows enough to look for its presence in others.

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

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

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

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

"No, I am not."

"You are. Admit it."

"No. I swear I am not."

After several repetitions of such false testimony, she was driven to offer new remarks. "It is simple," she said, "I do not want to get up on Ulan. What for? If I learn, and am good at it, what then? You will still keep the horse to yourself. I will have to beg for rides."

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

"No. You will try to drive me crazy. I know you."

"This is an excuse. What you fear is obvious. You are afraid of being thrown."

"I am not."

"Yes, that is it."

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

"Never. Your neck is just as stubborn as you are."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(She was too artful at keeping her distance.)
This upset Alois. ~~He~~ certainly did not approve of female sophistication in girls as young as Angela. The manner, indeed, by which she drew in her hips. Where had she ^{to do} learned ~~all~~ that?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"He will always be wild," said Alois.

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

"I must think about this."

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

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

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

He would tell Junior about the endless strife between bees and bears in the Middle Ages. That, decided Alois, could be a good story. Give the family a taste of such culture. He would even list all the lands where the bear and the bee struggled with one another. He actually memorized a few of the Latin terms. Selenarctos thibetanus for the Asiatic black bear. And Ursus arctos—the brown grizzly bear of Europe and America. Helaretos Malanus, the Malaysian sun bear. He decided to content himself with these three names. They would be enough. Too much memorization could wear you out. It was the stories he could tell. Why, even as recently as one

hundred years ago, beekeepers would climb high trees to get to hives that the bears could not reach. "This was a common practice in northern Spain and in southern France," he would tell Junior. "One had to know one's trees then. Which were most congenial for good nesting. I can tell you. It was alder and ash, beech and birch, and most certainly, honorable elm trees, maples as well, oak, and willows. Lime trees," he could hear himself declaring, "those have always been great favorites for bees and for us as well, even to this day. Such honey retains the finest aromatic traces of the skin of the lime. Yes," said Alois, addressing Alois-Junior in his thoughts, "this love of the bee for the lime-tree goes back to the very end of the Neolithic period, close to five thousand years ago. And the bees certainly knew how to build honey-combs in those days. North of here, up in Germany, they found one honey-comb recently, a fossil, that may have been bigger than any man who ever lived. Unbelievable. An eight-foot-long honey-comb. They found it, yes.

He was prepared to give whole funds of new information at the midday Sunday dinner. Get into the Greeks and the Romans. Since he rarely spoke at such times, as if to rebuke Klara for going to church, and the

meal was generally consumed under the overarching profundity of his silences, he had a sense that a full exposition would impress Alois-Junior. If nothing else, he would witness the respect of the others. The number of countries involved would be enough to startle them. He would have stories to tell them about the Bassari in Senegal, the famine in Kilingula, practices in Madagascar, bee wasps shimmering in the intense light of Swaziland. He could speak of the Mbuti of the Ituri forest and the honey hunters in southern Sudan, the Ndogo people. All that about Africa alone. He had stuffed these facts into his head like a bear gorging on honey.

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

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

Yet, when it came to deploying these findings, he decided to give it up. Perhaps he had crammed too much knowledge into himself. Klara kept nodding with approval, but whether it was for his words, or the apple strudel she had made, he could not really say, and Angela kept nodding with an expression that spoke of school-house miseries. The three younger children were completely out of it, and Alois, Junior, who had shown a bit of interest, began to wilt. His eyelids closed for longer and longer periods.

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

What a mistake to ^{give such a lecture} ~~talk to them so~~ at a midday meal. It was obvious. The boy had a visceral distrust of ^{any} ~~knowledge~~ he could not use immediately.

And when he was eating, he did not like to think. Could he be just like his father?

Alois did not take him far from the house, but sat him down on a bench near the hives and spoke instead about the money that was there to make by working together. "It is even possible that we could bring in Der Alte. He has made hints. He would be happy to work with us. That leads me to believe we would have much the better of the bargain. In a few years, you could be a prosperous young man, yes, most prosperous. And let me say to you, good-looking young fellows like you are able to marry to advantage when it is seen that they are also able to make a fine living. We give it three years of hard work, and you will be sitting on top of a pretty good heap. Especially since you have a sharp sense of what is what. Believe me, you will be able to take your choice of some very good matches."

The afternoon sun was hot, and the boy was dispirited. Greta-Marie had been unavailable that morning—she, too, had been in church with her parents, and so he had visited Der Alte, and on this occasion, he may have been too greedy. Now, he felt stripped of vigor, and Der Alte's bad odor

was in his nostrils. What a joy to work every day for three years with these two old men! Der Alte would be full of secret signals that his father might pick up, and it could be guaranteed that Alois-Senior would find something to yell about every day.

Now, all this sweet talk from his father, so full of fraud. He had no desire to work like a slave. Not for three years. Too many good things were waiting ~~for him~~. The moment he was ready, he would leave them and go to Vienna. The more suddenly, the better. He had hardly forgiven Klara for being so rude ~~to him~~ last week. *No, he would never forgive that*

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

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

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

He had now arrived at the obstacle that stood between them like a fence. Yesterday, for the first time, he had taken a jump with Ulan. It had

been a low hedge, but not that low. It could have thrown them. But he had known. He had had to take the jump. Now, he did again.

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

Alois nodded profoundly in order not to show his annoyance.

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

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

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

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

"I must tell the truth. It is."

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

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

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

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

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

"Father, in all respect, I cannot agree. You have said it yourself. He knows more on this subject than we do." The illumination that came from

vaulting the hedge with Ulan was with him again. A direct sense of exultation. It was as if his blood not only insisted that he speak, but that he be ready to insult his father. That would be equal to taking your horse over a real big jump. "You must face it," he said, "we are not ready for Der Alte. He would steal us blind."

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

"Well, you are always getting stung."

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

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

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

"Boy," he said to his son, "you are not equipped to go out in the world. You have no schooling. You have no money. And you think you will be able to talk your way into money? That is rotten nonsense. All you can do is to get your ugly little farmgirls to flap their tits at you and spread

their legs. Why? Maybe they believe they will get lucky and pick up a husband as lazy as themselves. Maybe they will, and then I will have to look at grandchildren as ugly as your girlfriends, and you will have to work on her father's farm."

He had gone too far. He knew it. The fear he had been forming, that fear which he had been storing in every center where fear is secreted ^{all the way} from the mind ^{down} to the bowels, there in the ^{midst of the} heart and the lungs ⁱⁿ and the nerves of the stomach, each developing their own particulars of ~~the~~ fear, even ^{as} that overall fear which ^{that seeped} had been seeping ^{and sweats} into his pores, ~~was~~ ^{was} as loose by now as his temper. It had been a large mistake to speak his mind.

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

"So, I am now stupid? Is that what you are saying? Maybe I am," he repeated. "Like father, like son. You flunked out of school. Then you lied about it. What a stupidity! I have lived with this foul and rotten news for

too long. I can come to only one conclusion. The only answer to why you lied to us and wrote your counterfeit letter is that you are indeed an idiot."

"Yes," said Alois, Junior, "and you are different. You have beautiful children. Do you know why?" The boy's breath was coming so quickly that his voice went up in pitch. He was all but ^{singing (high-pitch)} ~~screaming~~ his way through the next words, "Yes, you find your women, you fuck them, and then you forget them. And my mother dies. Maybe I am just like you."

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

-14-

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

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

To be knocked down was bad enough, but to be assisted to his feet? By a youth with an open pimple on his face and the beginnings of a ridiculous little brown mustache which had sprouted but a few lank hairs? The mustache was an insult all by itself. He now struck Junior again and the success of the blow illumined him. He began to beat upon Junior until the boy fell to his knees, whereupon Alois kept pummeling him further even as his son lay on the ground.

Klara had come out of the house by now. ~~She screamed.~~ She begged Alois to stop. *she waited.* (And that was just as well. For now, Junior did not move. He lay motionless on the ground and Klara kept screaming.

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

I saw a rare opening. She was without her Guardian Angel—not a Cudgel near. Angels flee from people who scream *(so loudly—)* they know at such moments how close the man or woman is to us, and they feel outnumbered. For devils rush in to attend ~~such~~ *these* outcries. To add to the tumult, there was Adi giving vent to the most penetrating set of shrieks.

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

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

She was a true gain. When Alois-Junior began to stir, she was convinced that there had been a direct response ^{to her prayer} ~~to her prayer~~, and felt the full responsibility of an oath. Unlike so many with whom we traffic, she was the essence of responsibility. She would never betray an oath. In consequence, she felt damned on the spot. And she was full of grief at the

pains she must be rousing now in God. What a nun she would have made.

A rare one.

Our most significant gain was with Adi. He had seen his father beat young Alois into the ground. He had then heard his father utter a groan *when* *finally he stopped, and the groan was* remarkable for fullness of its woe. Then as *his brother* ~~he~~ began to stir, Adi saw his father stagger off into the woods. ~~But that was the smallest part of~~ *Senior* ~~it~~ Alois-Senior was fleeing ~~beyond the view of the house~~ to a glade in the woods where he could retire in full horror at how it had turned out, and was at once given a whole taste of Klara's apple strudel as it extruded through his nostrils. In consequence, unable to breathe, he felt as if he must evacuate a cannon ball from his esophagus. For the rest of the midday dinner was surging up and down in his gullet with almost as much force as the blows he had struck.

That was enough time to spend on Alois-Senior. My attention was for Adi. The boy had voided everything, urine, feces, food. He was half out of his senses with fear that his father would return and beat his head into the ground.

That was an opportunity for

~~How much I used my skills!~~ At that moment, I began to engrave the

plenitude of this beating into Adi's memory. Again and again, I returned the

images to his mind, until—given his certainty that it would all be done to

him as well so soon as his father would return, I ^{managed} ~~did manage~~ to brand one

thought upon his mind. He ^{now} had a clear image of himself lying close to dead

from the beating his father had ^{already} ~~just~~ given him. He ^{not only} ~~did not~~

^{ached now in his limbs, and his head hurt,} ~~ached~~

^{PP 59 in} In later years, at the height of his power, Adolf Hitler would actually

believe that he was the one who received the beating. On many a

night [/] during the Second World War, he would tell the tale to his secretaries

and to his military adjutants as they sat ^{at table after} ~~around~~ the remains of the evening

^{mess,} ~~meal.~~

He would be eloquent. "Of course, I deserved a whipping," he would

say. "I gave real trouble to my father. My mother, I recall, was ^{disastrous} ~~screaming~~.

She loved me so, my dear mother." He would remember himself as being

just as brave as Alois-Junior, yes, he had stood up to his father. "I think that

is why he had to beat me. I must have deserved it. I said terrible things to

him, words so awful I cannot repeat them. Probably, I deserved this good

beating. My father was a fine strong decent man, one Austrian who was a

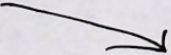
but he had a clear impression that he had to get up from the ground where he had been beaten down, and had done so.

real German. Still, I do not know that a father should ever beat a son so close to death."

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

Given my developed instincts ~~as a devil~~, I had known that this fiction had to be perfect ~~and all-pervasive~~. Only then could I use the implant to develop his incapacity to tell the truth. By maturity, he possessed an elaborate artwork of lies to support even his smallest response. He became able to shade the truth by a hair or, equally, could subvert it altogether. At need, he could fill each and every one of the spaces between a truth and a lie with a reasonable ~~transition~~ ^{substitut.}

Done properly, it is, as I say, a slow process, and I worked ~~so~~ ^{many a year} ~~to convert~~ ^{scalding of his psyche/} ~~elaborate~~ (that initial branding) into a full installation. Over many a year, I

 ~~succeeded~~ The grown man would have been ready to die in the belief that he was telling the truth when he declared that his father had almost ~~beaten~~ ^{pounded} him to death. From time to time, I still took pains to reinforce the keel of this one absolute lie. It was worth it. For the Maestro often pointed to my work on this matter: "There is no better way to usurp the services of a high political leader," he would tell us, "than by this ^{direct} method. Such figures are of considerably more use to us when they do not know that they are lying."

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

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

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

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

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

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

There had been no wind that night, which was just as well, ^{for his house,} but there were also no ^{more than remaining} remains but ash of his three Langstroth boxes, nor any sign of bees except for those poor thousands who had been roasted to a microscopic crisp, as well as a startling sense of gloom clinging to the ^{walls of his home,} house itself. He felt ~~at once something close to~~ terror.

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

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

Detail by detail, she told him what had happened. The sum was even worse than the sight before him. The boy had ridden off on the horse—of

course—and then he had come back when they were all asleep, or pretending to be—she would admit that they were by now afraid of him—and he had gathered together his clothing, tied it in a sack, attached it to the saddle of the horse and had gone off again, allowing them to breathe.

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

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

She had not been able, Klara informed him, to put out the blaze. She and Angela had done what they could, which was to throw pails of water on

the walls of the house closest to the conflagration. More than that would have required the presence of a man.

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

Worst of all—Spartaner had been poisoned. In all the hubbub, they did not look at him too closely that night, but by morning he was obviously ill, and then, to make matters worse, he did not even die until the end of the week.

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

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

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

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

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

any need to weigh the boxes, no more ponderings on whether enough pollen had been collected by the foragers to provide sufficient protein for them through the winter, and no Queen to locate. There were not even any Langstroths to repaint, nor records to be brought up to date. He was done. Done with all of it.

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

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

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

history can be shaped, as was true at the Coronation of Nicholas II, we live reflexively. We, too, can be in need of fallow periods. So, a quiet summer for the Hitler family went by for me like a passage of sleep. I tended more to my other clients.

Alois, meanwhile, was living in the pall of a long and lackluster meditation.

He was worrying to a modest degree (modest for Alois!) about the value of the farm. If he were to sell it, could the price match what he had paid? Or would a potential buyer recognize the beginnings of neglect? That became the focus of his attention. Nothing, he decided, is more subtle than the ^{onset} ~~beginnings~~ of neglect. While he did feel more relaxed than in many a year, it did nag at him that he was leaving all too many chores to the women—certainly those which did not call for a man's strength. He did nothing with the ~~chickens or the~~ vegetable garden. He thought of buying a new dog; instead, he examined the paint on poor dead Spartaner's dog house. Was it was ready to peel in the summer heat?

They did not need a new dog in any ~~great~~ hurry. With young Alois gone, there was no need to entertain any fears of an irate father somewhere

in the neighborhood. No parent of Greta-Marie Schmidt was likely to appear on the doorstep—he could give thanks that that particular young lady was not pregnant, for if she were, he would by now have known all about it. And the smuggler who lived on the other side of Fischlham hardly entered his thoughts. Given the absence of Alois-Junior, he, too, seemed far away.

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

Such peace could prove expensive. A farm that was not worked—no matter how tidy one kept the house and the yard—might never look right. Not to a potential buyer. *Wouldn't sharp eyes detect* ~~Couldn't such a fellow be feeling~~ the mute reproach of the fields? A small part of Alois continued to run uphill in his sleep.

The economic facts (which he calculated over and over on separate pieces of paper using separate stubs of pencil) was that no matter how

observant he and Klara might be with expenses—and they were!—sooner or later, they would be obliged to spend more each quarter than his pension.

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

That would not happen quickly. These days, the less work one did, the more time it took for anything to get done. Moreover, very much against his will, he was beginning to feel remorse about Alois-Junior. What an insidious ungovernable emotion! Was it incumbent upon him as a father to forgive his son? Yet what if Alois-Junior was also full of remorse? He could not bear the thought of that boy alone in a poor room. Would he be sitting on a mean cot, his eyes full of sadness?

Like an amputated arm whose nerve-endings are still alive in one's shoulder-socket, Alois-Senior began to think again of Hitler and Sons, Apian Products. Because he could invest no essential belief in the notion,

the thought, perversely, was sweeter than before. It might be unrealistic, but it did feel pure.

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

No such drama ^{was going to} would develop, however. A letter without a return address came a few days later from Vienna, a vile letter. "You killed my mother." The phrase was repeated several times. Then, the letter declared that the son would yet be famous, and the father would twist in his grave.

Alois could not believe what he read. The rest was worse. "You were a terrible farmer, and the reason is clear. You are, as I happen to know, half-Jewish. No wonder you cannot be a farmer." And there were so many misspellings in the letter that out of a sense of shame for his son,

Alois-Senior had to write it out all over again before he felt able to show it to Klara. As he wrote, his hand shook so badly that the arthritis which would later bind the movements of his fingers made an early appearance on this day.

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

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

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

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

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

"But that does not make me Jewish."

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

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

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

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

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

"He," said Alois, "suggested this information to me. He did state that he knew who my father was. And then he said, 'This man was not Jewish.' He did not have to say more. It was clear. There was only one way he could know. So, that was that. The next time a boy called me a Jew, I gave him a good poke in the face and broke his nose. That was one fellow who was left with an ugly mug." Alois began to laugh at the recollection. Then he laughed even more as if to signify that he was not heartsick. "And all these years you thought the opposite?"

She nodded. She hardly knew whether ~~she~~ to be relieved or disappointed. She had always felt a sneaky excitement ^{being} to be wed to a man with such blood. Jews did forbidden things in bed, she had so often heard. Maybe Alois and she had even done ^{these} those same forbidden things. And Jews were reputed to be intelligent. So, she had heard. Now, if Alois was not half-Jewish, she was truly confused.

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

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The reader may recall that when I presented myself as the narrator of this novel, I did appear as an SS man. Indeed, I was. Over that period in the late Thirties, I was invested ~~altogether—that is to say~~, corporeally—in a particular SS officer. I lived and functioned at the time within a person named Dieter. At a price. We do not engage in total investiture unless high stakes require it. For the cost is direct. One must relinquish the stimulation of living in more than one consciousness at once. Of necessity, demonic power is then diminished. One becomes ^{the} simulacrum of a human.

So, as Dieter, I did make the inquiries in Graz described earlier ~~and~~
~~although~~ ^{however} I only learned ^{that} the true father of Alois was Johann Nepomuk
 by information I received from the Maestro.

At the time in 1938, I was not able, however, to ^{describe my} ~~source~~.
^{source,}

(In the SS IV-2a, we were obliged, like any other intelligence organization,
 to be credible, at least, to ourselves, and there was no way to explain to
 Himmler what the real origin of my information could be.

Moreover, our exceptional ^{sources} ~~level~~ of information is ~~obviously not~~
 identical to the sort of Time that humans seek to comprehend. Our Time
 allows ^{in Time} us to inhabit ~~to some degree~~ two places ^{yet many} at once. That state we do not
 often enter, ^{than} for many complications would beset us. If, for example, living
 as Dieter, I had ^{also} been aware from the beginning of the ~~earlier~~ actual events in
 Strones and Spital ^{then} (the letter that came in from the son of Alois- Junior to
 Adolf Hitler would have presented no problem in and of itself. I would
 have known that Hitler was not Jewish. But I would have been at an
 impasse ^{such a fact} in trying to prove ~~the news~~ to Heinrich Himmler. ~~I needed a means~~

of information-gathering like his ^{in order} to make it credible, ^{I need in range}

Some indeterminate Time ago, I believe the Maestro came to a conclusion that he must quarantine the memories of his devils if he wished to keep order in his ^{regions} ~~quarter~~ of the universe. So, as I ~~have~~ just indicated, we do not live often in two periods at once. ^{But we} ~~Be it said, this deprivation is not~~ ~~wholly restrictive.~~ We do have instincts that reach beyond human intuitions. I would warrant that the memories we are not permitted to recall are there nonetheless to serve as guides for our instincts.

I mention ^{thus} ~~condign~~ matter because the question whether Jewish blood is present in Alois-Senior has reared up so suddenly in the bedroom of Alois and Klara in Hafeld.

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

Senior was, indeed, in the moil of such an inner storm that he could not stay in bed with Klara. For the first time in all the years that they had lain side by side in the dark, he had to get up on this night, dress, pace the

floor, try to sleep on the couch, try to sleep on the floor, and succeeded, of course, in keeping both of them awake.

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

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

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

privacy with herself—whom could she talk to about this?) that she was with a half-Jewish man and they did have three living children, saved in good part by their Jewish blood.

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

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

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

would not ever. And the fury of repelling such a fury in herself lived in her heart—which is to say, in her breast—with such force and such detestation that, yes, it is possible—this could have been the night when the breast cancer which would yet burn with hell's pains in her chest, might have begun. If it were crucial to know, I would have consulted one or another passing demon of a doctor I knew, but, to repeat, we do not request ^{5th ed} ~~any~~ disbursements on Time ~~merely~~ to satisfy a whim.

I prefer to take us back to Alois.

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

^{Junior}
If ~~the boy~~ had turned out badly, it was his fault, his fault alone. By such a light, he was among the worst of human beings, a father who was

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

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

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

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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 ^{when working} ~~that can prove~~ effective with

manic-depressives. If we ~~are~~ look ~~to~~^{ed} 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 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 was being given a purview of the anguish that attaches itself to ineradicable melancholia.

These are well-established foundations for ^{*seeding a future*} ~~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 ^{succeeded} ~~been 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 ^{Edmund} ~~Alois~~

in 1900, of Alois-Genius

(^{or} 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 ^{a generous} ~~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 ^{prom}prominence and there seemed no sign ^{now}of such exceptional ^{p-omnence}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~~ ^{test} Klara's feelings ~~toward him,~~ ^{of fairness.}

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

She was ~~hardly~~ ^{certainly} aware of his discomfort. The whistle had become a needle in her own ears.

"Adi, 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 for a little while 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. ^{And for} ~~For~~ him to feel weak is very bad. You cannot expect him to admit that he has ^a ~~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~~ ^{thoughts} ~~about himself now~~ ^{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~~ ^{his} word. ~~One~~ ^{You} must obey him. For the good of the family. ~~So, the father is right.~~ ^{always} Right or wrong, the father is ^{always} right. He must be. Otherwise, all is confusion."

Now, she referred to Alois-Junior. "He did not have ehre-fucht," she said. "You must ^B 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 Rostenmeier, the man who ran the local store and had once offered to purchase their honey. At the beginning of Fall, Rostenmeier 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 Rostenmeier.)

"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 Rostenmeier, 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.

But for Angela, this

~~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