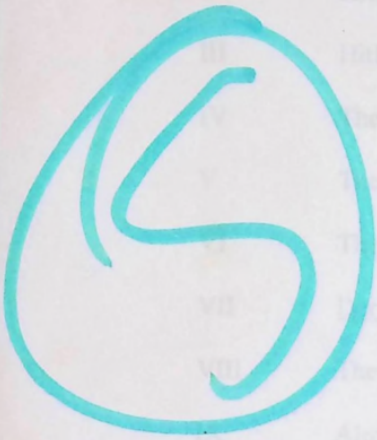


The Castle in the Forest

~~ADOLESCENT PHANTOM~~

A Novel

NORMAN MAILER



BOOKS

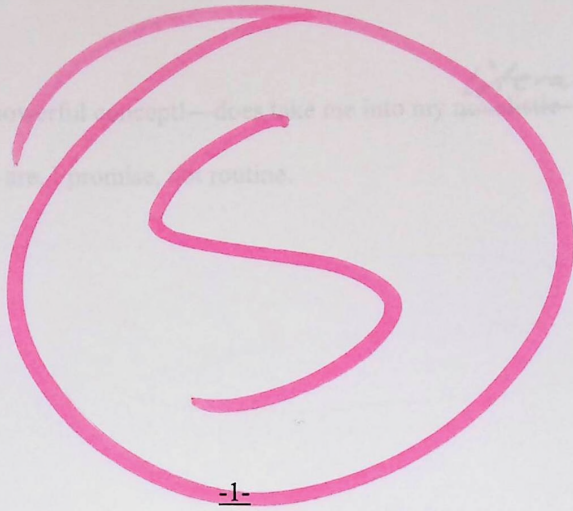
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BOOK I

THE SEARCH FOR HITLER'S GRANDFATHER

You may call me Dieter. For now, the name will serve—now that I am in America, this curious nation. If I draw upon reserves of patience, it is because time passes here without meaning for me, *I will say that does dispose one* *learn and display* toward rebellion. Can this be why I am ready to write a *book?* *small* Among my former associates, this was an activity we swore never to undertake. I was, after all, a member of a matchless Intelligence group. Its classification was SS, Special Section IV-2a, and we were directly under the supervision of Heinrich Himmler. Today, the man is seen as a monster, and I would not look to defend him—he turned out to be one half of a monster. All the same, Himmler did have an original mind, and one of his

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You may call me Dieter. For now, the name will serve—now that I am in America, this curious nation. If I draw upon reserves of patience, it is because time passes here without meaning for me, and I will say that does dispose one leaves one disposed toward rebellion. Can this be why I am ready to write a book? novel? Among my former associates, this was an activity we swore never to undertake. I was, after all, a member of a matchless Intelligence group. Its classification was SS, Special Section IV-2a, and we were directly under the supervision of Heinrich Himmler. Today, the man is seen as a monster, and I would not look to defend him—he turned out to be one hell of a monster. All the same, Himmler did have an original mind, and one of his

theses—a most powerful concept!—does take me into my ^{literary} ~~novelistic~~ intentions which are, I promise, not routine.

and was limited to

The room that Himmler used when speaking to us as an elite group was a small lecture hall with dark walnut panelling and a few rows raised upward in four rows of five. My emphasis will not often be, however, on such details, since I prefer to concern myself with Himmler's unorthodox concepts. (That does oblige me to begin a tale ^{unorthodox} that will be distasteful to conventional belief. Let me put the premise directly: I am ready to sail into a sea of turbulence even as I, an accomplished veteran of mendacity, must try to recount the truth. What a cacophony erupts in my spirit! As intelligence officers, we were ^{often positive} ~~always ready~~ to warp the truth. Mendacity, after all, possesses its own art. Now I am burdened with a contrary impulse.

and was limited to

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The room that Himmler used when speaking to us as an elite group, ~~was no more than~~ was a small lecture hall with dark walnut panelling and twenty seats raked upward in four rows of five. My emphasis will not often be, however, on such details, since I prefer to concern myself with Himmler's unorthodox concepts. That does oblige me to begin a ^{memoir} ~~tale~~ that will be distasteful to conventional belief. Let me put the premise directly: I am ready to sail into a sea of turbulence even as I, an accomplished veteran of mendacity, must try to recount the truth. What a cacophony erupts in my spirit! As intelligence officers, we ^{often prefer} ~~were always ready~~ to warp the truth. Mendacity, after all, possesses its own art. Now I am burdened with a contrary impulse:

the desire to tell it—as Americans say— straight out! But then, I no longer know exactly why I find myself where I am dwelling (other than for the gross fact that I am in America—good luck!)

Enough! Let me present Heinrich Himmler. You, the reader, must be prepared for no easy occasion. This man, whose nickname, behind his back, was Heini, had become by 1938 one of the four truly important leaders in Germany. Yet his most cherished and secret intellectual pursuit was the study of incest. It dominated our highest-level research, and our findings were kept to closed conferences. Incest, Heini would propose, had always been rife among the poor of all lands. Even our German peasantry had been much afflicted, yes, even as late as the Nineteenth Century. "Normally, no one in learned circles cares to speak of this matter," he would remark. "After all, there is nothing to be done. Who would bother to declare that some poor wretch is a certified offspring of incest? No, every establishment of every civilized nation looks to sweep ^{trash stuff} under the rug."

All ranking government officials in the world, that is, except for our Heinrich Himmler. He did have the most extraordinary ideas fermenting behind his unhappy spectacles. I must repeat that for a man with a bland

and chinless mug, he certainly had a mind of his own. To us who worked closely with him, his thought proved disruptive—such a frustrating mixture of brilliance and stupidity. He was not close to any comfortable category. For example, he declared himself to be a pagan. He predicted that there would be a healthy future for all when paganism took over the world. Everyone's soul would then be enriched with hitherto unacceptable pleasures. None of us could conceive, however, of an orgy where carnality would rise to such a pitch that you might find a woman ready to throw herself into a flesh-melting roll with Heinrich Himmler. No, not even in the most innovative spirit! For you could always see his face as it must once have been at a school dance, that bespectacled disapproving stare of the wallflower, tall, thin, a youth full of physical ineptitude. Already he had a small pot belly. There he was, ready to wait by the wall ^{while} ~~until~~ the dance ^{went on.} ~~was over.~~

Yet he grew obsessed over the years with matters others would hardly dare to mention aloud (which, I must say, is usually the first step to new thought!) In fact, he paid close attention to mental retardation. Why? Because Himmler subscribed to the theory that the best human possibilities

lie close to the worst. Remember that! I will repeat it often. The best lies close to the worst! So he was ready to assume that rare but most special situations could arrive when promising offspring ^{ch. schen} were ~~there~~ ^{offspring} to be found in low, nondescript families. Such ~~puppets~~ ^{his expression} were, all so often, incestuaries. The word in German, as he coined it, was Inzestuarier. He did not like the more common term of such disgrace, Blutschande, (blood-scandal), or as it is sometimes employed in polite circles, Dramatik des Blutes, (blood-drama).

None of us felt sufficiently qualified to say that his theory could be dismissed. Even in the early years of the SS, Himmler had recognized that one of our prime needs was to develop exceptional research groups. We had a duty to search into ultimates. As Himmler put it, the health of National Socialism depended on nothing less than these letzte Fragen (last questions). We were to explore problems that other nations did not ~~expect~~ ~~nor~~ dare to go near. Incest—count on it—was at the head of the list. The German mind had to re-establish itself again as the leading inspiration to the learned world. In turn—so went his unstated coupling—much recognition might be given to Heinrich Himmler for his profound attack on problems

originating in the agricultural milieu. He would emphasize the underlying point: Husbandry could hardly be investigated without comprehending the peasant. Yet to understand this man of the earth was to speak of incest.

Here, I promise you, he would hold up his hand in precisely that little gesture Hitler used to employ—one prissy flip of the wrist. It was Heinrich's way of saying: "Now comes the meat. And with it—the potatoes!" Off he would go on a peroration. "Yes," he would say, "incest! This is one very good reason that old peasants are devout. We need not even refer to our special studies. We know! An acute fear of the sinful will display itself by one of two extremes: Absolute devotion to religious practice! Or nihilism! I can recall from my student days that the Marxist Friedrich Engels once wrote: 'When the Catholic Church decided adultery was impossible to prevent, they made divorce impossible to obtain.' A brilliant remark even if it comes from the wrong mouth. As much can be said for blood-scandal. That is also impossible to prevent. So, the peasant looks to keep himself devout." He nodded. He nodded again as if two good pumps of his head might be the minimum necessary to convince us that he was speaking from both sides of his heart.

How, he asked, could the average peasant of the last century avoid these blood temptations? After all, peasants, as we all knew, were not the most attractive people. If born with good features, the early advantage was soon worn away by hard labor. Moreover, they reeked of the field and the barn. Their personal odors were at the mercy of hot summers. Under such circumstances, how could basic impulses not be subject to bestial inclinations? Moreover, there was the paucity of their social life. How, then, were they to acquire the ability to stay away from entanglements with brothers and sisters, fathers and daughters?

He did not go on to speak of the propinquity of limbs and torsos ^{formed} ~~when~~
^{by} three ^{or} ~~and~~ four children ~~are~~ in a bed, nor the ham-handed naturalness of the most agreeable work of all—that hard-breathing feverish meat-heavy run up the hills of physical joy. ^("That is why") ~~Thus and exactly so,~~ he declared, "more than a few in the agricultural sector come, willy-nilly, to see incest as an ~~available~~
option. Who, after all, is more likely to find the honorable work-hardened features of the father or the brother particularly attractive? The sisters, of course! Or the daughters. Often they are the only ones. The father, having created them, remains the focus of their attention."

Hand it to Himmler. He had been storing theories in his head for two decades. A great believer in Schopenhauer, he would also carry on about a word still relatively new in 1938—genes. These genes, he said, were the biological embodiment of Schopenhauer's Will to Power. They had to be the seeds of this mysterious Will. "We know," he said, "that certain instincts are passed on from one generation to the next. Why? Because the nature of the Will is to remain true to its origins, to what I would call its primal Vision. Yes, gentlemen, its Innate Originating Vision.

This
That Vision is at the core of our *human* existence. *It is not language but Vision* that separates us from the animals.

Hear me! From the beginning of our time on earth, we humans have been seeking to rise to *the ungrateful* greater heights of glory. *that* Unseen heights that lie ahead.

The noble and aspiring Will has been given to us by nothing less than Creation itself." A profound nod.

"Of course, there are impediments to such a great goal. And they are countless. ~~For~~ *I* it is not always possible to protect what is best in oneself. The most exceptional of our genes will only achieve their highest purpose by rising above the privations, humiliations, and tragedies the Vision must suffer, even as these genes are transmitted from father to child, generation

after generation. Great leaders, I would tell you, are not the product of one father and one mother, but are to be seen as the rare descendant who succeeded in breaking through the carapace of ten frustrated generations. So, we have the right to ask—has the Originating Vision been warped by life's cruelties? Has it been lost forever? For most humans, yes.

Unhappily, yes. The Vision is usually abandoned in the face of too many ~~torturous~~ agonies of spirit as it journeys from one generation to the next.

Yet, this high road is the only one available to ~~a~~ ^{the exceptional person who} would be great spirit.

"I will say that I have not arrived at these concepts by personal experience, but from scrupulous observation. I, Heinrich Himmler, would never suggest that I qualify as an Uber-Mensch. I will never be able to claim that I am a genius of the people. That honor belongs to Adolf Hitler.

That is why the The only life-achievement that ~~can resonate~~ ^{resonates most} in our hearts with absolute awe is the heroic rise of the Fuehrer. He issues, as we know, from a long line of the most modest peasant stock. Let us never lose sight of so super-human an achievement. *Absolute awe overwhelms us.*

As intelligence agents, we were smiling within. This had been the peroration. Now, our Heinrich was ready to enter what Americans call the

Who among ^{us} ~~our cohort~~ could not see where Heinrich was leading ^{us?} ~~us?~~

Incest offered the nearest possibility for such unity of purpose.

"Yes," said Himmler, as if to forestall all argument, "to be reasonable, we must also agree that life is not always ready to certify such a formula. It is debased human products who usually come our way from these intra-family fornications. ^{we have to} Yes, ~~we~~ recognize that products of incest ^{usually} suffer a host of childhood ills and early deaths. Anomalies abound, even exhibitions of physical monstrosity."

He stood there, sad and stern. "That is the price. Not only are the strongest tendencies likely to be present in an incestuary, but ^{the} ~~unhappy ones~~ ^{inclinations are} can be reinforced as well. Instability is to be expected, therefore, as a common product of incest. Idiocy waits in the wings. And when a vital possibility exists for the development of a great spirit, such rare humans must still overcome a host of frustrations profound enough to unhinge the brain or induce early death." So spoke Heinrich Himmler.

I think all of us present knew the subtext underlying these remarks. Back in 1938, we were looking (in greatest secrecy, you may be certain) to determine whether our Fuehrer was a first or second-degree incestuary. Or,

nitty-gritty. "How," he asked, "can the brilliance of the Vision not be dulled

by commingling? That is implicit in the ~~very~~ process of so-called normal

reproduction. ~~Consider the~~ ^{are given the} near to infinite combinations ~~possible, the very~~

^{Yes} presence of multi-millions of sperm. ~~Consider their duty.~~ Each of these

^{knowledge of It is to travel} spermatazoa has been given the mission of travelling all the way up to the

^{of the females} ovum, that highly-developed and reclusive ovum of the female. To each

^{will soon} lonely sperm-cell swimming in the ovarian sea, that ovum is as large as a

^{battle-cruiser."}

~~battleship.~~ He paused before he nodded. "Yet, what, then, is the response

of Creation? I would propose that Creation would say, 'No difficulty exists

which cannot find its exceptional solution.' So, I also maintain that this

multi-million of sperm in one man's ejaculation can be compared in spirit to ~~one~~

regiment of infantry. A first-rate regiment. The same readiness for self-

sacrifice that will carry such men through an uphill attack on a forbidding

^{must healthy Its essence} ridge ~~also~~ exists in the sperm. The essence of sperm is that it is ready to

^{that this immense} commit itself to just such immolation in order one of his numerous brothers

^{cohort}

^{will reach the ovum!"}

He stared at us. Could we share his excitement? "Now," he said, "the

next question is before us. Will the genes of the woman be compatible with

which reaches her?
 the visionary semen of the man? (Or will these separate elements be in
 dispute? ^(Are they about to) ^{can} Will they act like unhappy husbands and wives? Will the ovum
 look to ^(dominate) ^{sperm cell} reduce the male gene who reaches her? Yes, I would answer,
 dispute is the prevailing case. ^(The two may prove) They were sufficiently compatible for
 procreation to occur, but the future intent of their genes ^{are not} ~~can be driven as far~~
^{likely to be in harmony,}
 apart as separate families differ in character.

"When we begin to speak, therefore, of our ^{human desire} hope to create a
^{who can embody the Vision}
 Superman, we must be humble. Consider the odds. Not even one in a
 million families can present us with a husband and a wife who are close
 enough in the inclination of their genes to bring forth a miraculous child.
 Not even one, perhaps, in a hundred million. No!"—again the upraised
 hand—"let us say, closer to a million million. In the case of Adolf Hitler,
 the numbers may approach the awesome distances we encounter in
 astronomy.

"So, gentlemen, logic would propose that any Superman who
 embodies the Vision, can only come forth from a mating of exceptionally
 similar genetic ingredients. Only then will these separate embodiments of
 The Vision ^{Reinforcement} reinforce each other. ^{that} ~~That~~ is prerequisite."

neither. If not, if neither, then Himmler's theory would remain no more than a theory. But if our Fuehrer was a true product of incest, then he was more than a glowing example of the likelihood of the thesis, he might be the proof itself.

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Now I am ready to speak of the obsession we shared with Himmler.

It revolved around Adolf Hitler, who, I confess, lived often in the center of our thoughts. But then, what brings a dark cloud ~~down~~ ^{to} upon the mind more quickly than ~~the need to live~~ ^{living} with a question that will not return an answer?

~~One's spirit is rendered numb.~~ ^{then} Not only for us in Special Section IV-2a but for most Germans, ~~the first obsession~~ ^{today} ~~even today~~ ^{remains} is Adolf Hitler. Who among us does not try to understand him? Yet, where ~~is~~ ^{can you find a} the man or woman

~~who is~~ content with the answer?

^{offer a} Let me surprise you. ~~But~~ I do not have this particular trial. I live with the confidence that I am in a position to understand Adolf. For the fact is that I

know him. I must repeat. I know him top to bottom. To borrow from the Americans, given their rough grasp of reality, their instinctive, even lemming-like approach to vulgarity, I am prepared to say: "Yes. I know him from asshole to appetite."

Nonetheless, I am obsessed. But by an altogether different problem.

When I think of relating how I know what I do know, I am seized by an

anxiety comparable to diving at night ~~for~~ a long way down into black water.

(there are) that in the beginning I had no more than
 Let it be understood ~~that~~ that I must at first proceed with what ~~is~~
~~was~~ *(then) the SS. (I have yet to develop*
 available to others ~~the courage to tell it all.)~~

Concerning his actual family roots, there are particulars to offer. In

Special Section IV-2a—as already explained—we preserved an immaculate secrecy concerning our findings. We had to. We were the ones most ready to look into the most unpalatable questions, and thereby had to contend with the fear of finding answers ~~deadly~~ *poisonous* enough to imperil the Third Reich.

On the other hand, we had our special confidence. Once we obtained our facts, even should they prove nauseating, we would still be able to choose the mistruths that would ~~best~~ *best* serve patriotic feelings in the populace. Of course, it could not be guaranteed in advance that every finding would

be manageable. We might uncover ^{an explosive} fact that was explosive. As one example: Had Adolf Hitler's paternal grandfather been a Jew?

almost as alive
That was one nice possibility. There was others. For a period, we considered an inquiry into a more delicate matter. Menarchidism. Did our Führer belong to that group of unhappy and hyperactive men who possess only one weapon? It was true that he invariably covered his groin with a protective hand whenever a photo was about to be taken, a classic gesture, understandably, if you are ready to shield the remaining testicle. But it is one thing to note such a vulnerability, or other to verify it. While results would be obtained easily enough by interviewing the few women who had had intimate relations with Der Führer and were still alive, how were we to control the repercussions? What if word got back to Hitler that a couple of

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That was one ~~dire~~ ^{almost as dire,} possibility. There were others. For a period, we considered an inquiry into a more delicate rumor. Monorchidism. Did our Fuehrer belong to that group of unhappy and hyperactive men who possess only one testicle? It ^{is} ~~was~~ true that he invariably covered his groin with a protective hand whenever a photo was about to be taken, a classic gesture, understandably, if you are ready to shield the remaining testicle. But it is one thing to note such a vulnerability, another to verify it. While results could be obtained easily enough by interviewing the few women who had had intimate relations with Der Fuehrer and were still alive, how were we to control the repercussions? What if word got back to Hitler that a couple of

officers in the SS were, so to speak, fingering his genital(s)? We had to give up the project. That was Himmler's decision: "If our Esteemed Leader proves to be a first-degree incestuary, then all questions of monorchidism are subsumed. Monorchidism is, after all, a likely byproduct of first-degree incest."

It was obvious. We ~~were being told~~ ^{had just been} to go back to the best explanation for the legendary Will-of-the-Fuehrer—Blood-Scandal!

Moreover, we all detested the possibility that Adolf Hitler's paternal grandfather might have been a Jew. That would not only destroy Himmler's thesis, but oblige us to bury a major scandal. Our uneasiness derived in part from a rumor ~~which~~ ^{that} had begun to stir among us eight years ago, back in 1930, when a most personal letter ~~had~~ arrived at Hitler's desk. The young man who penned it was named William Patrick Hitler, and he turned out to be the son of Adolf's older half-brother, Alois Hitler, Jr. The nephew's letter offered its hint of blackmail. It referred to shared circumstances in our family history. (The fool had gone so far as to underline the words.)

That would have been a dangerous letter to send if the nephew lived in Germany, but ~~he~~ ^{at the time} ~~he~~ was dwelling in England.

What, then, were these shared circumstances? William Patrick Hitler was speaking of Der Fuehrer's grandmother, Maria Anna Schicklgruber. She had given birth in 1837 to a son, Alois Schicklgruber. Living then and thereafter in a miserable place called Strones, a wretched hamlet in the Austrian province of Waldviertel, she used to receive small but regular sums of money. Those near to her were ready to assume it had to come from the unnamed father of her boy. Yet this Alois, newborn in 1837, was no less than the man who, at the age of 52, became Adolf Hitler's father. That would not be until 1889, yet for the fifty-two years between, one story *did* managed to stay alive among the peasants in Strones. It was that the stipend came from a well-to-do Jew who lived in the provincial city of Graz, ~~a~~, ~~distance away~~. According to the legend, Maria Anna Schicklgruber had worked as a maid in this Jew's house, had become pregnant, and so had to return to her hamlet. When she took the baby to be baptized, the parish priest listed the birth as "Illegitimate," a common declaration in those parts. The Waldviertel was known, after all, as the poorhouse of Austria. One hundred years later, following the Anschluss in 1938, I was even sent down to the region, and my findings proved, in fact, fascinating. While it would

still be premature to explain how I learned what I did, I can, however, offer my conclusions. For now, that must suffice. *I hope and* I expect to have the courage to say more later.

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Raabs, Rosenberg, Rappottenstein, Hardegg, Rosenau, Heidenreichstein and Litschau are castles in the Waldviertel. This province, situated north of the Danube, is a land of tall beautiful pines. Indeed Waldviertel can be translated directly as the "wooded quarter," and the silences of the forests are dark in contrast to the green of an occasional field. The soil, however, does not welcome agriculture. So the castles are, for the most part, modest. The Hiedlers (who later became Hitlers) lived in Spital, a village of sorts, and the Schicklgrubers, their cousins, lived nearby in the aforesaid Strones. In those years an Austrian hamlet in the backwoods confirmed the meaning of dirt-poor. Strones was mud-deep along its one

lane, and, of course, had no inn, just a few dozen huts with roofs of thatch. If Strones was profuse in pig wallows around each dwelling, cow flop was more prominent in the town meadows, ^{and} ~~but the rare~~ redolence of horse manure was valued. This was, after all, an area where many a peasant had to pull his own plow. When no snow covered the ground, one churned through various grades of mud. There was gumbo thick as lava, rivulets of silt, gravel washes, muck and slops, clods, rocks, common clay. Most of the peasants had never been near any of the Waldviertel castles just listed.

Even the nearest, Weitra, was twenty-five miles away. For that matter,

Strones did not even have a church. The locals had to go to another hamlet, ^{Doellersheim}

^{Doellersheim} ~~and~~ there in the parish registry, the name of Maria Anna's son was inscribed

as "Alois Schicklgruber, Catholic, Male,"—and, as we know—

"Illegitimate."

Maria Anna, born in 1795, was forty-two when Alois was born in 1837. Coming from a family of eleven children of whom five were already dead, she certainly could have cohabited with any one of several of her brothers. (Himmler had, of course, no objection to that, since her bastard Alois was, I repeat, Adolf's father.) In any event, despite the abysmal

poverty of Maria Anna's parents, the mother and her son dwelt for the next five years in one of her father's two small rooms. The mysterious money that came in small but dependable installments helped to support these Schicklgrubers.

We were ready, even eager, to find a trove of intra-family copulations, but that did not allow us to dismiss the Jew from Graz. Already, eight years ago in 1930, inquiries had been made. As Himmler related it, Hitler on reading his nephew's letter, had sent it on immediately to his lawyer, Hans Frank. Our Fuehrer, as some may no longer recall, did not become Chancellor until 1933, but three years earlier, Hans Frank was already looking to worm his way ^{into} ~~in a little closer to~~ the inside circle around the Leader.

Frank had unhappy news to deliver, however, about Maria Anna's pregnancy. The likelihood, he declared, was that the father had been a nineteen-year-old, the oldest boy of a prosperous merchant named Frankenberger who was, yes, a Jew. It made sense. In those years, the scion of many a well-to-do family found his first carnal outings with a housemaid. Nor did she have to be anywhere near his age. Such

provenance was accepted by the good bourgeois mores of a provincial city like Graz as reasonable if undiscussed practice. It was seen as a good deal better than allowing a well-to-do lad to consort with whores or settle too early on a sweetheart.

Frank claimed to have seen some conclusive evidence. He told Hitler that he had been shown a letter ^{written by} from Herr Frankenberger, the father of the young man who had bedded down with Maria Anna. This letter promised regular payments to take care of Alois until he would be fourteen years old.

Our Adolf, however, told Hans Frank that the true story, imparted to him by his own father, Alois, was that the real grandfather had been Maria Anna's cousin, Johann Georg Hiedler, who had finally come around to marry her five years after Alois' birth. "All the same," said Hitler to Hans Frank, "I am ready to examine this letter from the Jew to my grandmother."

Frank told Hitler that ^{he did not as yet possess} the letter was not available. The man who ^{held} possessed it was asking much too high a price. Besides, the letter ^{must} could have ^{have certainly} been photographed. If so, acquisition was worth little.

"You have seen the original?" Hitler asked.

"I was able to look at it while in his office. He had two big fellows standing beside him. He also had a pistol on the table. What must he have been expecting?"

Hitler nodded. "One cannot even wish a sudden end for a man like that. The letter, after all, will be in one place and the photographic copy in another."

One more concern for Hitler to carry with him.

By 1938, however, our search had delivered alternatives. It no longer seemed certain that Maria Anna was still receiving steady money,

after Alois was born.

Following her marriage in 1842, she and her husband, Johann Georg

Heidler, had been much too poor to have a home of their own. For a time

they had *had to sleep* ~~actually slept~~ in a battered old trough once used to feed cattle in a

neighbor's barn. Of course, that did not prove no money was ~~being~~ sent.

Johann Georg could certainly have drunk up the funds. In Strones, he remained a legend due to the extent of his tippling. Indeed, his large intake of liquor had to be at odds with the assumption that they were that poor:

For why would a drunk like fifty-year-old Johann Georg marry a forty-seven-year-old with a five-year-old brat unless she had enough income to

lead him to drink? Moreover, the extent of his boozing would hardly suggest that he had been Alois' father. Indeed, this Johann Georg Hiedler made no objection when Maria Anna asked Johann's younger brother, also named Johann, (but, in this case, Johann Nepomuk Hiedler), to take the boy in and raise him. Johann Nepomuk was a sober, hard-working farmer with a wife and three daughters, but he did not have a son. Be it said, Johann Nepomuk did not drink, and could not have been more different from Johann Georg, the drunk.

So this younger brother, Johann Nepomuk, now stood out as a likely possibility. Might he not be the father? Yet, we were still not ready to discount the Jew.

Himmler sent me to Graz and I took some pains to examine the century-old records. I could find no man named Frankenberger in the ledgers. I pored over the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde of the Jewish Registry of Graz, and was confirmed. Back in 1496, the Jews had been expelled from the region. Three hundred and forty-one years later, in 1837 when Alois was born, the Jews had still not been permitted to come back. Such permission took another twenty years. Had Hans Frank been lying?

Himmler analyzed my findings. Frank was bold, he declared.

Indeed, he did not acquire his final nickname for too little. (By 1942, he would be known as the "The Butcher of Poland.") In 1930, at the time of William Patrick Hitler's letter, Frank ~~the nephew's letter, he was just one more lawyer, but already he was~~ ⁵²³ looking to install himself in the inner circle. As Himmler delineated it, ~~Hans Frank~~ ^{he} Herr Frankenberg's epistle had invented the existence of the letter in order to provide himself with a close relation to his leader. Given the absence of the document, Hitler could not know whether Frank was making it up, telling the truth, or, worst of all, might actually possess such a paper document the letter. (It could have been the end of Hans Frank, if Hitler had sent a researcher to Graz, but the lawyer must have been ready to wager that Hitler did not want to know.

Since Himmler was grooming me to become his close assistant, he also confided that he did not use my ⁽¹⁹³⁸⁾ research to tell Hitler that there were no Jews in Graz back in 1837. Rather, he told Hans Frank. We laughed in unison ~~together~~ for I understood immediately. Could there be one official within our ruling group who was not searching for a dominant ~~compelling~~ grip on any and all of the others? Frank was now in Himmler's grasp. Given this mutual understanding, he did serve Himmler well. ~~So~~ ^{III}, in 1942, when Hitler

seemed nervous again about the Jewish grandfather and asked us to send a good man to Graz, Himmler, looking to protect Hans Frank's ~~most useful~~ ^{continued} loyalty to him, told the Fuehrer that he had sent an agent and no tangible evidence ~~had been~~ ^{was} found.

Given everyone's preoccupation with the war, the matter could be put more or less to rest. Such was Himmler's advice to Hitler.

(S)

BOOKS 1 + 2

The Castle in the Forest

Revision: April 11, 2006

-1-

You may call me Dieter. For now, the name will serve—now that I am in America, this curious nation. If I draw upon reserves of patience, it is because time passes here without meaning for me, and I will say that so bleak a state does dispose one toward rebellion. Can this be why I am ready to write a book? Among my former associates, this was an activity we swore never to undertake. I was, after all, a member of a matchless Intelligence group. Its classification was SS, Special Section IV-2a, and we were directly under the supervision of Heinrich Himmler. Today, the man is seen as a monster, and I would not look to defend him—he turned out to be one hell of a monster. All the same, Himmler did have an original mind,

and one of his theses—a most powerful concept!—does take me into my literary intentions which are, I promise, not routine.

The room that Himmler used when speaking to us as an elite group was a small lecture hall with dark walnut paneling and was limited to twenty seats raked upward in four rows of five. My emphasis will not often be, however, on such details, since I prefer to concern myself with Himmler's unorthodox concepts. That does oblige me to begin a memoir that will be distasteful to conventional belief. Let me put the premise directly: I am ready to sail into a sea of turbulence even as I, an accomplished veteran of mendacity, must try to recount the truth. What a cacophony erupts in my spirit! As intelligence officers, we often prefer to warp the truth. Mendacity, after all, possesses its own art. Now I am burdened with a

a strong impulse. The state is all it is—no American say—straight still.
But then, I no longer know exactly why I find myself where I am dwelling
(other than for the gross fact that I am in America—good luck!)

Enough! Let me present Heinrich Himmler. You, the reader, must be
prepared for no easy occasion. This man, whose nickname, behind his back,
was Hitler, had become by 1938 one of the four truly important leaders in
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contrary impulse: the desire to tell it—as Americans say— straight out!

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Enough! Let me present Heinrich Himmler. You, the reader, must be prepared for no easy occasion. This man, whose nickname, behind his back, was Heini, had become by 1938 one of the four truly important leaders in Germany. Yet his most cherished and secret intellectual pursuit was the study of incest. It dominated our highest-level research, and our findings were kept to closed conferences. Incest, Heini would propose, had always been rife among the poor of all lands. Even our German peasantry had been much afflicted, yes, even as late as the Nineteenth Century. "Normally, no one in learned circles cares to speak of this matter," he would remark.

"After all, there is nothing to be done. Who would bother to declare that some poor wretch is a certified offspring of incest? No, every establishment of every civilized nation looks to sweep such stuff under the rug."

All ranking government officials in the world, that is, except for our Heinrich Himmler. He did have the most extraordinary ideas fermenting

behind his unhappy spectacles. I must repeat that for a man with a bland and chinless mug, he certainly had a mind of his own. To us who worked closely with him, his thought proved disruptive—such a frustrating mixture of brilliance and stupidity. He was not close to any comfortable category. For example, he declared himself to be a pagan. He predicted that there would be a healthy future for all when paganism took over the world. Everyone's soul would then be enriched with hitherto unacceptable pleasures. None of us could conceive, however, of an orgy where carnality would rise to such a pitch that you might find a woman ready to throw herself into a flesh-melting roll with Heinrich Himmler. No, not even in the most innovative spirit! For you could always see his face as it must once have been at a school dance, that bespectacled disapproving stare of the wallflower, tall, thin, a youth full of physical ineptitude. Already he had a small pot belly. There he was, ready to wait by the wall while the dance went on.

Yet he grew obsessed over the years with matters others would hardly dare to mention aloud (which, I must say, is usually the first step to new thought!) In fact, he paid close attention to mental retardation. Why?

Because Himmler subscribed to the theory that the best human possibilities lie close to the worst. Remember that! I will repeat it often. The best lies close to the worst! So he was ready to assume that rare but most special situations could arrive when promising children were to be found in low, nondescript families. Such offspring were, all so often, incestuaries. The word in German, as he coined it, was Inzestuarier. He did not like the more common term of such disgrace, Blutschande, (blood-scandal), or as it is sometimes employed in polite circles, Dramatik des Blutes, (blood-drama).

None of us felt sufficiently qualified to say that his theory could be dismissed. Even in the early years of the SS, Himmler had recognized that one of our prime needs was to develop exceptional research groups. We had a duty to search into ultimates. As Himmler put it, the health of National Socialism depended on nothing less than these letzte Fragen (last questions). We were to explore problems that other nations did not dare to go near. Incest—count on it—was at the head of the list. The German mind had to re-establish itself again as the leading inspiration to the learned world. In turn—so went his unstated coupling—much recognition might be given to Heinrich Himmler for his profound attack on problems originating

in the agricultural milieu. He would emphasize the underlying point: Husbandry could hardly be investigated without comprehending the peasant. Yet to understand this man of the earth was to speak of incest.

Here, I promise you, he would hold up his hand in precisely that little gesture Hitler used to employ—one prissy flip of the wrist. It was Heinrich's way of saying: "Now comes the meat. And with it—the potatoes!" Off he would go on a peroration. "Yes," he would say, "incest! This is one very good reason that old peasants are devout. We need not even refer to our special studies. We know! An acute fear of the sinful will display itself by one of two extremes: Absolute devotion to religious practice! Or nihilism! I can recall from my student days that the Marxist Friedrich Engels once wrote: 'When the Catholic Church decided adultery was impossible to prevent, they made divorce impossible to obtain.' A brilliant remark even if it comes from the wrong mouth. As much can be said for blood-scandal. That is also impossible to prevent. So, the peasant looks to keep himself devout." He nodded. He nodded again as if two good pumps of his head might be the minimum necessary to convince us that he was speaking from both sides of his heart.

How, he asked, could the average peasant of the last century avoid these blood temptations? After all, peasants, as we all knew, were not the most attractive people. If born with good features, the early advantage was soon worn away by hard labor. Moreover, they reeked of the field and the barn. Their personal odors were at the mercy of hot summers. Under such circumstances, how could basic impulses not be subject to bestial inclinations? Moreover, there was the paucity of their social life. How, then, were they to acquire the ability to stay away from entanglements with brothers and sisters, fathers and daughters?

He did not go on to speak of the propinquity of limbs and torsos formed by three or four children in a bed, nor the ham-handed naturalness of the most agreeable work of all—that hard-breathing feverish meat-heavy run up the hills of physical joy. “That is why,” he declared, “more than a few in the agricultural sector come, willy-nilly, to see incest as an option. Who, after all, is more likely to find the honorable work-hardened features of the father or the brother particularly attractive? The sisters, of course! Or the daughters. Often they are the only ones. The father, having created them, remains the focus of their attention.”

Hand it to Himmler. He had been storing theories in his head for two decades. A great believer in Schopenhauer, he would also carry on about a word still relatively new in 1938—genes. These genes, he said, were the biological embodiment of Schopenhauer's Will to Power. They had to be the seeds of this mysterious Will. "We know," he said, "that certain instincts are passed on from one generation to the next. Why? Because the nature of the Will is to remain true to its origins, to what I would call its primal Vision. Yes, gentlemen, its Innate Originating Vision. This Vision is at the core of our human existence. It is not language but Vision that separates us from the animals. From the beginning of our time on earth, we humans have been seeking to rise to the unseen heights that lie ahead. The noble and aspiring Will has been given to us by nothing less than Creation itself." A profound nod.

"Of course, there are impediments to such a great goal. And they are countless. It is not always possible to protect what is best in oneself. The most exceptional of our genes will only achieve their highest purpose by rising above the privations, humiliations, and tragedies the Vision must suffer, even as these genes are transmitted from father to child, generation

after generation. Great leaders, I would tell you, are not the product of one father and one mother, but are to be seen as the rare descendant who succeeded in breaking through the carapace of ten frustrated generations. So, we have the right to ask—has the Originating Vision been warped by life's cruelties? Has it been lost forever? For most humans, yes. Unhappily, yes. The Vision is usually abandoned in the face of too many agonies of spirit as it journeys from one generation to the next. Yet, this high road is the only one available to the exceptional person who would be a great spirit.

"I will say that I have not arrived at these concepts by personal experience, but from scrupulous observation. I, Heinrich Himmler, would never suggest that I qualify as an Uber-Mensch. I will never be able to claim that I am a genius of the people. That honor belongs to Adolf Hitler. That is why the life-achievement that resonates most in our hearts is the heroic rise of the Fuehrer. He issues, as we know, from a long line of the most modest peasant stock. Let us never lose sight of so super-human an achievement. Absolute awe overwhelms us."

As intelligence agents, we were smiling within. This had been the peroration. Now, our Heinrich was ready to enter what Americans call the nitty-gritty. "How," he asked, "can the brilliance of the Vision not be dulled by commingling? That is implicit in the process of so-called normal reproduction. Near to infinite combinations possible, the very presence of multi-millions of sperm. Yet, consider their duty. Each of these spermatozoa has knowledge of the mission. It is to travel all the way up to the ovum of the female, that highly-developed and reclusive ovum. To each lonely sperm-cell swimming in the ovarian sea, that ovum will loom as large as a battle cruiser." He paused before he nodded. "Yet, what, then, is the response of Creation? I would propose that Creation would say, 'No difficulty exists which cannot find its exceptional solution.' So, I also maintain that this multi-million of sperm in one man's ejaculation can be compared in spirit to one regiment of infantry. A first-rate regiment. The same readiness for self-sacrifice that will carry such men through an uphill attack on a forbidding ridge must exist in healthy sperm. Its essence of sperm is that it is ready to commit itself to just such immolation in order that one of this immense cohort will reach the ovum!"

He stared at us. Could we share his excitement? "Now," he said, "the next question is before us. Will the genes of the woman be compatible with the visionary semen which reaches her? Or can these separate elements be in dispute? Are they about to act like unhappy husbands and wives? Will the ovum look to dominate the sperm cell who reaches her? Yes, I would answer, dispute is the prevailing case. The two may prove sufficiently compatible for procreation to occur, but the future intent of their genes are not likely to be in harmony.

"When we speak, therefore, of our human desire to create a Superman who can embody the Vision, we must consider the odds. Not even one in a million families can present us with a husband and a wife who are close enough in the inclination of their genes to bring forth a miraculous child. Not even one, perhaps, in a hundred million. No!"—again the upraised hand—"let us say, closer to a million million. In the case of Adolf Hitler, the numbers may approach the awesome distances we encounter in astronomy.

"So, gentlemen, logic would propose that any Superman who embodies the Vision, can only come forth from a mating of exceptionally

similar genetic ingredients. Only then will these separate embodiments of The Vision reinforce each other. Reinforcement is the prerequisite."

Who among us could not see where Heinrich was leading? Incest offered the nearest possibility for such unity of purpose.

"Yes," said Himmler, as if to forestall all argument, "to be reasonable, we must also agree that life is not always ready to certify such a formula. It is debased human products who usually come our way from these intra-family fornications. We have to recognize that products of incest usually suffer a host of childhood ills and early deaths. Anomalies abound, even exhibitions of physical monstrosity."

He stood there, sad and stern. "That is the price. Not only are the strongest tendencies likely to be present in an incestuary, but the unhappy inclinations are reinforced as well. Instability is to be expected, therefore, as a common product of incest. Idiocy waits in the wings. And when a vital possibility exists for the development of a great spirit, such rare humans must still overcome a host of frustrations profound enough to unhinge the brain or induce early death." So spoke Heinrich Himmler.

I think all of us present knew the subtext underlying these remarks. Back in 1938, we were looking (in greatest secrecy, you may be certain) to determine whether our Fuehrer was a first or second-degree incestuary. Or, neither. If not, if neither, then Himmler's theory would remain no more than a theory. But if our Fuehrer was a true product of incest, then he was more than a glowing example of the likelihood of the thesis, he might be the proof itself.

that I know him. I must repeat. I know him top to bottom. To borrow from the Americans, given their rough grasp of reality, their instinctive, even lemming-like approach to vulgarity, I am prepared to say: "Yes, I know him from asshole to appendix."

Nonetheless, I am obsessed. But by an altogether different problem. When I think of relating how I know what I do know, I am seized by an anxiety comparable to diving at night for a long way down into black water.

Let it be understood therefore. -3- In the beginning I will proceed with no more than what was available then to the S.S.

Now I am ready to speak of the obsession we shared with Himmler. It revolved around Adolf Hitler, who, I confess, lived often in the center of our thoughts. But then, what brings a dark cloud to the mind more quickly than living with a question that will not return an answer? Not only for us then in Special Section IV-2a but for most Germans today, the first obsession remains Adolf Hitler. Who among us does not try to understand him? Yet, where can you find a man or woman content with the answer?

Let me offer surprise. I do not have this particular trial. I live with the confidence that I am in a position to understand Adolf. For the fact is

that I know him. I must repeat. I know him top to bottom. To borrow from the Americans, given their rough grasp of reality, their instinctive, even lemming-like approach to vulgarity, I am prepared to say: "Yes. I know him from asshole to appetite."

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Concerning his actual family roots, there are particulars to offer. In Special Section IV-2a—as already explained—we preserved an immaculate secrecy concerning our findings. We had to. We were the ones most ready to look into the most unpalatable questions, and thereby had to contend with the fear of finding answers poisonous enough to imperil the Third Reich.

On the other hand, we had our special confidence. Once we obtained our facts, even should they prove nauseating, we would still be able to choose the mistruths that would serve patriotic feelings in the populace. Of course, it could not be guaranteed in advance that every finding would be

manageable. We might uncover an explosive fact. As one example: Had Adolf Hitler's paternal grandfather been a Jew?

back to Hitler that a couple of officers in the SS were, so to speak, fingering his genitalia? We had to give up the project. That was Himmler's decision. "If our Esteemed Leader proves to be a first-degree monorchid, then all questions of monorchidism are subsumed. Monorchidism is, after all, a likely byproduct of first-degree incest."

It was obvious. We had just been told to go back to the best explanation for the legendary -4- ~~Der Fuehrer~~ -- Blood-Scandal!

Moreover, we all detected the possibility that Adolf Hitler's paternal

That was one possibility. There were others almost as dire. For a period, we considered an inquiry into a more delicate rumor.

Monorchidism. Did our Fuehrer belong to that group of unhappy and hyperactive men who possess only one testicle? It is true that he invariably covered his groin with a protective hand whenever a photo was about to be taken, a classic gesture, understandably, if you are ready to shield the remaining testicle. But it is one thing to note such a vulnerability, another to verify it. While results could be obtained easily enough by interviewing the few women who had had intimate relations with Der Fuehrer and were still alive, how were we to control the repercussions? What if word got

back to Hitler that a couple of officers in the SS were, so to speak, fingering his genital(s)? We had to give up the project. That was Himmler's decision: "If our Esteemed Leader proves to be a first-degree incestuary, then all questions of monorchidism are subsumed. Monorchidism is, after all, a likely byproduct of first-degree incest."

It was obvious. We had just been told to go back to the best explanation for the legendary Will-of-the-Fuehrer—Blood-Scandal!

Moreover, we all detested the possibility that Adolf Hitler's paternal grandfather might have been a Jew. That would not only destroy Himmler's thesis, but oblige us to bury a major scandal. Our uneasiness derived in part from a rumor that had begun to stir among us eight years ago, back in 1930, when a most personal letter arrived at Hitler's desk. The young man who penned it was named William Patrick Hitler, and he turned out to be the son of Adolf's older half-brother, Alois Hitler, Jr. The nephew's letter offered its hint of blackmail. It referred to shared circumstances in our family history. (The fool had gone so far as to underline the words.) That would have been a dangerous letter to send if the nephew lived in Germany, but at the time he was dwelling in England.

What, then, were these shared circumstances? William Patrick Hitler was speaking of Der Fuehrer's grandmother, Maria Anna Schicklgruber. She had given birth in 1837 to a son, Alois Schicklgruber. Living then and thereafter in a miserable place called Strones, a wretched hamlet in the Austrian province of Waldviertel, she used to receive small but regular sums of money. Those near to her were ready to assume it had to come from the unnamed father of her boy. Yet this Alois, newborn in 1837, was no less than the man who, at the age of 52, became Adolf Hitler's father. That would not be until 1889, yet for the fifty-two years between, one story did manage to stay alive among the peasants in Strones. It was that the stipend came from a well-to-do Jew who lived in the provincial city of Graz. According to the legend, Maria Anna Schicklgruber had worked as a maid in this Jew's house, had become pregnant, and so had to return to her hamlet. When she took the baby to be baptized, the parish priest listed the birth as "Illegitimate," a common declaration in those parts. The Waldviertel was known, after all, as the poorhouse of Austria. One hundred years later, following the Anschluss in 1938, I was even sent down to the region, and my findings proved, in fact, fascinating. While it would still be

premature to explain how I learned what I did, I can, however, offer my conclusions. For now, that must suffice. I hope and I expect to have the courage to say more later.

-5-

Raabs, Rosenberg, Rappottenstein, Hardegg, Rosenau, Heidenreichstein and Litschau are castles in the Waldviertel. This province, situated north of the Danube, is a land of tall beautiful pines. Indeed Waldviertel can be translated directly as the "wooded quarter," and the silences of the forests are dark in contrast to the green of an occasional field. The soil, however, does not welcome agriculture. So the castles are, for the most part, modest. The Hiedlers (who later became Hitlers) lived in Spital, a village of sorts, and the Schicklgrubers, their cousins, lived nearby in the aforesaid Strones. In those years an Austrian hamlet in the backwoods confirmed the meaning of dirt-poor. Strones was mud-deep along its one

lane, and, of course, had no inn, just a few dozen huts with roofs of thatch. If Strones was profuse in pig wallows around each dwelling, cow flop was more prominent in the town meadows, and the redolence of horse manure was valued. This was, after all, an area where many a peasant had to pull his own plow. When no snow covered the ground, one churned through various grades of mud. There was gumbo thick as lava, rivulets of silt, gravel washes, muck and slops, clods, rocks, common clay. Most of the peasants had never been near any of the Waldviertel castles just listed. Even the nearest, Weitra, was twenty-five miles away. For that matter, Strones did not even have a church. The locals had to go to another hamlet, Doellersheim. There in the parish registry, the name of Maria Anna's son was inscribed as "Alois Schicklgruber, Catholic, Male,"—and, as we know—"Illegitimate."

Maria Anna, born in 1795, was forty-two when Alois was born in 1837. Coming from a family of eleven children of whom five were already dead, she certainly could have cohabited with any one of several of her brothers. (Himmler had, of course, no objection to that, since her bastard Alois was, I repeat, Adolf's father.) In any event, despite the abysmal

poverty of Maria Anna's parents, the mother and her son dwelt for the next five years in one of her father's two small rooms. The mysterious money that came in small but dependable installments helped to support these Schicklgrubers.

We were ready, even eager, to find a trove of intra-family copulations, but that did not allow us to dismiss the Jew from Graz. Already, eight years ago in 1930, inquiries had been made. As Himmler related it, Hitler on reading his nephew's letter, had sent it on immediately to his lawyer, Hans Frank. Our Fuehrer, as some may no longer recall, did not become Chancellor until 1933, but three years earlier, Hans Frank was already looking to worm his way into the inside circle around the Leader.

Frank had unhappy news to deliver, however, about Maria Anna's pregnancy. The likelihood, he declared, was that the father had been a nineteen-year-old, the oldest boy of a prosperous merchant named Frankenberger who was, yes, a Jew. It made sense. In those years, the scion of many a well-to-do family found his first carnal outings with a housemaid. Nor did she have to be anywhere near his age. Such provenance was accepted by the good bourgeois mores of a provincial city

like Graz as reasonable if undiscussed practice. It was seen as a good deal better than allowing a well-to-do lad to consort with whores or settle too early on a sweetheart.

Frank claimed to have seen some conclusive evidence. He told Hitler that he had been shown a letter written by Herr Frankenberger, the father of the young man who had bedded down with Maria Anna. This letter promised regular payments to take care of Alois until he would be fourteen years old.

Our Adolf, however, told Hans Frank that the true story, imparted to him by his own father, Alois, was that the real grandfather had been Maria Anna's cousin, Johann Georg Hiedler, who had finally come around to marry her five years after Alois' birth. "All the same," said Hitler to Hans Frank, "I am ready to examine this letter from the Jew to my grandmother."

Frank told Hitler that he did not as yet possess the letter. The man who held it was asking much too high a price. Besides, the letter must have certainly been photographed. If so, acquisition was worth little.

"You have seen the original?" Hitler asked.

"I was able to look at it while in his office. He had two big fellows standing beside him. He also had a pistol on the table. What must he have been expecting?"

Hitler nodded. "One cannot even wish a sudden end for a man like that. The letter, after all, will be in one place and the photographic copy in another."

One more concern for Hitler to carry with him.

By 1938, however, our search had delivered alternatives. It no longer seemed certain that Maria Anna was still receiving steady money five years after Alois was born. Following her marriage in 1842, she and her husband, Johann Georg Heidler, had been much too poor to have a home of their own. For a time they had had to sleep in a battered old trough once used to feed cattle in a neighbor's barn. Of course, that did not prove no money was sent. Johann Georg could certainly have drunk up the funds. In Strones, he remained a legend due to the extent of his tippling. Indeed, his large intake of liquor had to be at odds with the assumption that they were that poor: For why would a drunk like fifty-year-old Johann Georg marry a forty-seven-year-old with a five-year-old brat unless she had enough income to

lead him to drink? Moreover, the extent of his boozing would hardly suggest that he had been Alois' father. Indeed, this Johann Georg Hiedler made no objection when Maria Anna asked Johann's younger brother, also named Johann, (but, in this case, Johann Nepomuk Hiedler), to take the boy in and raise him. Johann Nepomuk was a sober, hard-working farmer with a wife and three daughters, but he did not have a son. Be it said, Johann Nepomuk did not drink, and could not have been more different from Johann Georg, the drunk.

So this younger brother, Johann Nepomuk, now stood out as a likely possibility. Might he not be the father? Yet, we were still not ready to discount the Jew.

Himmler sent me to Graz and I took some pains to examine the century-old records. I could find no man named Frankenberger in the ledgers. I pored over the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde of the Jewish Registry of Graz, and was confirmed. Back in 1496, the Jews had been expelled from the region. Three hundred and forty-one years later, in 1837 when Alois was born, the Jews had still not been permitted to come back. Such permission took another twenty years. Had Hans Frank been lying?

Himmler analyzed my findings. Frank was bold, he declared. Indeed, he did not acquire his final nickname for too little. (By 1942, he would be known as the "The Butcher of Poland.") In 1930, at the time of William Patrick Hitler's letter, he, Frank, was just one more lawyer, but as Himmler delineated it, he had invented Herr Frankenbereger's epistle in order to provide himself with a close relation to his leader. Given the absence of the document, Hitler could not know whether Frank was making it up, telling the truth, or, worst of all, might actually possess such a paper. It could have been the end of Hans Frank, if Hitler had sent a researcher to Graz, but the lawyer must have been ready to wager that Hitler did not want to know.

Since Himmler was grooming me to become his close assistant, he also confided that he did not use my 1938 research to tell Hitler that there were no Jews in Graz back in 1837. Rather, he told Hans Frank. We laughed in unison for I understood immediately. Could there be one official within our ruling group who was not searching for a dominant grip on any and all of the others? Frank was now in Himmler's grasp. Given this mutual understanding, he did serve Himmler well. In 1942, when Hitler seemed nervous again about the Jewish grandfather and asked us to send a

good man to Graz, Himmler, looking to protect Hans Frank, told the Fuehrer that he had sent an agent and no tangible evidence was found. Given everyone's preoccupation with the war, the matter could be put more or less to rest. Such was Himmler's advice to Hitler.