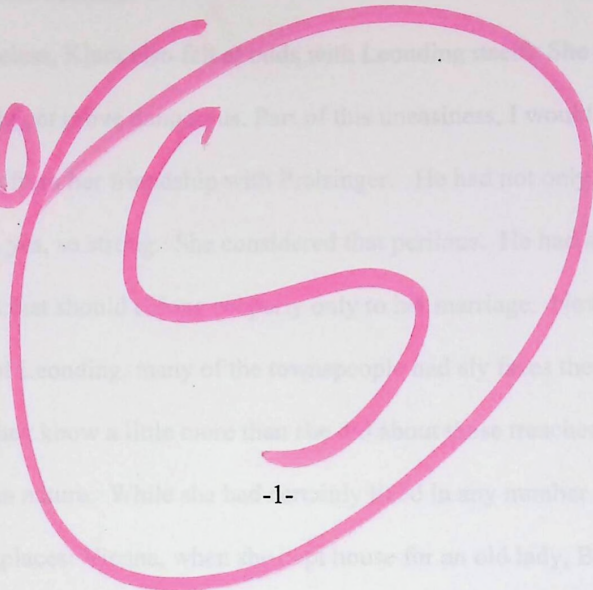


4.18.06



-1-

Leonding was only five miles from Linz which enabled Alois to feel that he was near again to the active life of a real city, a longing he has not allowed himself to indulge in Hafeld or Lambach.

For Klara, however, the house would have been more attractive if it had not been situated across the street from the town cemetery, yet this was the only reason they could afford it.

On the other hand, their village church was just across the way, and their new home sat within a fine garden bordered by maples and oaks whose

limbs had grown into such artful shapes that a godly spirit must have been present. So Klara decided.

Nonetheless, Klara also felt at odds with Leonding itself. She feared the move could yet prove dangerous. Part of this uneasiness, I would warrant, came from her friendship with Preisinger. He had not only been nice, but also, yes, so strong. She considered that perilous. He had aroused an excitement that should belong properly only to her marriage. Now, on these streets of Leonding, many of the townspeople had sly faces thereto suggest that they know a little more than she did about these treacherous sides of human nature. While she had certainly lived in any number of more sophisticated places: Vienna, when she kept house for an old lady, Braunau with Alois, and then Passau, she had never looked for a life in any way outside her duties or her family. Now, she might be ready for something more. Only that was not permissible. So, for a time, she kept close to the new house. Forays out of her kitchen and garden were restricted to visiting the shop of Josef Mayrhofer who not only owned a fine grocery, but was a fine man and the Mayor of Leonding. There she bought vegetables two or three times a week, dressed neatly for the occasion and was always friendly to Herr Mayrhofer, but invariably, she would say, "I can't stay. There's so much work waiting for me."

She was living with the conviction that she had given herself over to the Devil in the terrifying moment when she believed that Alois had just killed Alois-Junior. With the smallest prompting, that she could see the boy on the ground again—Devil, save Alois' son, and I will be yours!

Such vows, taken by pious people, retain some value to us even when the oaths become, in time, analogous to radioactive compounds that deteriorate to a half-life. We do, however, keep such assets on reserve. Klara, thereby, still feels her soul is imperiled.

No matter, she is quite attracted to Mayrhofer. He is more worldly than Preisinger and that could prove tempting. If they grew too friendly, she might ruin a good man.

I was witnessing a comedy. I knew nothing would happen. Mayrhofer was as proper as Klara. Moreover, he had already met Alois and both men had formed a quick friendship. Alois was drawn to a man who was smart enough to be Mayor, and practical enough to own a prosperous store. In turn, Mayrhofer respected Alois's years of service in Customs, particularly his promotions. Before long, they were drinking together at the tavern.

All the same, this subdued flirtation between Mayrhofer and Klara remained alive, and I continued to enjoy it. Now that Mayrhofer, a man of

honor, had become friends with Alois, he could not even smile too often when Klara was near. In turn, that was acceptable to her. Mayrhofer had a jealous wife. Alois had told her that the woman was a shrew who was always pointing her finger. "All of these women who come to the store," Frau Mayrhofer had already told her husband, "are just waiting to throw themselves at you." Indeed, Mayrhofer confessed to Alois that ^{years ago} ~~when he was~~ ~~younger~~, he did have a small affair. Just one. Then, his wife found out. His life had been a misery since. In turn, Alois was wise enough not to suggest that in this regard, his own life may have been more agreeable.

At first, they did drink only in the local tavern, but Mayrhofer soon confessed that given his position as Mayor, the premises were a little too raw for his office, and after some deliberation, he even invited Alois to a Burger-Abend, an evening for the town burghers, which was an occasion that took place on four separate evenings each week. The members could attend regularly or rarely, but it was a lively occasion for the substantial individuals in Leonding to get together. These gatherings, explained Mayrhofer, rotated among the best four inns of the town, and were held for the sole purpose of good talk with good prosperous company. The object, as Mayrhofer explained tactfully, was not to get drunk, but to exchange good conversation. In fact, he did murmur that they had a few members

who turned out unhappily, and sooner or later, "these tipplers were not asked to come back. We did it politely—as much as possible, under the circumstances—but it is essential, Alois, that a man must never appear to be even a hint unbalanced on these occasions. Merriment is certainly acceptable, but good manners are paramount."

"I have to agree," said Alois. "That is always the essence of fine and decent company."

So Alois was introduced, and went through the considerable tension of sitting in with the local gentry. He most certainly did not get unbalanced, and he did return several times a month to keep up his friendship with Mayrhofer who would go to the tavern no longer because of one dreadful occasion when a drunken lout tried to insult him. The malcontent had been told to leave by the tavern owner, and did, but the place was spoiled for the Mayor.

During the day, Alois now spent his time working in the garden, or at his new bee-hive. He had purchased one Langstroth box, and to it added only a small population. As he explained to Mayrhofer, "Some honey for my family's use and gifts for friends—that will be sufficient." He was determined not to become involved again with apiary commerce. At Hafeld,

the venture had taken over all of his thoughts. "It is equal to being enslaved by a force larger than oneself."

"So is the Mayoralty," replied Mayrhofer.

Soon enough, Alois grew so impressed by the Burger-Abends that he bought a book of Latin quotations which he looked to memorize. But, retaining the phrases was a treacherous enterprise. His greatest problem these days had been boredom. Now he had discovered its loyal assistant—poor memory!

The greatest counterbalance he found against the yaws of long, eventless afternoons at home was to play with Edmund. The little boy was more charming at four years of age than any of his other children had been, and Edmund stayed so close to him at the beehive that Klara had to make a littleveil and sew up white pants to go with a white shirt and white gloves. Klara protested: "The boy is too young." But Alois insisted, and so the two were out at the hive a great deal.

Before long, Alois had fallen in love again, a charming love, indeed, for he knew it was bound to be his last true romance. He adored Edmund. It was not only that his little son was so clever, but that he was, in addition, tender and sweet. "If I had ever met a woman so perfect, I would have married her for forever," he would repeat to himself as a joke. He did like

humor that was bifurcated. He could picture the look of woe—would it even be jealousy?—on Klara's face if he ever told her this, and yet he also laughed for his own tenderness—for the boy and for Klara, too. So much of all that was good in her that he was never about to declare (not to her—never spoil a good woman.) was part of why the boy was so nicely balanced. He had, as Alois measured it, his father's intelligence and his mother's capacity for loyalty. An excellent mixture.

Yes, so bright. And Edmund loved the bees. He did not even squeak too much when some of the sluggards crawled over his gloves on their way back to the hive entrance. Once he even received a bite inside his glove but didn't cry, after Alois said, "Oh, we must keep this a secret. Your mama won't let you play here again if she knows."

"No, father," said Edmund, "she will listen to you."

"It could cause trouble," said Alois.

"That is true," said Edmund and sighed. "Too bad," he said, "it hurts. I would really like to cry."

At which they both laughed.

Once, back in the house, they would play Customs. Alois even put on his old uniform (although he could hardly close the waist) and they

pretended that Edmund was trying to smuggle a valuable coin past a border inspector.

"Why is my coin so valuable?" asked Edmund.

"Because it was owned by Napoleon," said Alois. "He used to keep this guilder in his pocket."

"He did not," said Edmund. "You are teasing me."

"No, I am not. It is part of the game."

"I like that."

"Yes, but just you try to hide that coin from me."

"I will if you promise not to undress me."

"No. I will just tickle you. Then you are bound to confess."

"I won't," said Edmund, giggling already, and stepped into the parlor closet to hide the guilder. Struggling beneath the coats hanging in there from the rack, he knew where to put the coin. He wedged it into the cuff of his boot. That way, he didn't have to undo the laces.

When he came out, Alois stared at him with a fair share of the malevolence he used to direct at suspects who were being interviewed.

"Are you ready to confess?" he asked.

Edmund was hardly frightened. He began to giggle.

"Very well. Since you are so insolent," said Alois, "I will have to pat you down," and proceeded to tickle him under the arms and on the belly until Edmund dropped to the floor in a puddle of pure helpless mirth. "Stop it, Daddy, stop it," he cried out, "or I will have to pee."

Alois desisted. "But you are not ready to confess."

"That is because I am not smuggling anything."

"You are. We know. You have Napoleon's coin."

"Try and find it," said Edmund and began to giggle again.

"Oh, I will," said Alois, and with a quick move pulled off Edmund's boots, shook them, and watched the guilder fall out. "Now, you are under arrest," he said.

Edmund was furious. "You cheated," he said, "you cheated. You did not obey the rules."

"State your case."

"You said you would just tickle, but you took off my clothes."

"These are not your clothes," said Alois, picking up a boot. "Clothes are garments. This is footwear."

"You just changed the rules."

Alois made a face. "That," he said in a deep voice, "is what we like to do in Customs."

For a moment, Edmund was uncertain. Then he began to laugh. Alois laughed so hard and so long that once again, he began to cough which, at first, was fine—he could clear some phlegm—but then his coughing did not halt for many seconds, then a minute of paroxysms which brought Klara over to the parlor from the kitchen. Alois rolled his eyes at her and took a tentative breath. Had he come close, he wondered, to a hemorrhage of his lungs?

Now Edmund had begun to weep. "Oh, Papa," he cried out, "you must not die, you must not die," and the sound of his voice kept all response away from both his parents—he had seemed so certain of the outcome.

"Papa, I know you will not die," he now said in amendment. "I will ask God to forbid that and He will listen. I pray to Him every night."

"I don't pray," Alois almost said. Still cautiously in balance from the reverberations of attack, he did not speak but he did shake his head at Klara. These pious women were the real smugglers—to steal across the border of a young boy's mind, especially when he was so bright. Some day, Edmund might be a legal eminence in Vienna, one of the wealthiest and most powerful barristers in Austria, and yet his mother had to offer this religious pap, good oats for horses.

All the same, Alois was not yet ready to correct her. Religion was necessary, perhaps, for the very young. For now, he would leave it at that. There was so much beauty, Alois decided, in the boy's love for his mother, and yes, most certainly, his father.

Up in his bedroom with the door locked, ~~Adolf~~^{Adolf} took his revenge on the sounds of laughter he had to hear from below. He chose to masturbate. The image he held in his head was a picture of Luigi Lucheni that he had seen in the Linz Tages Post. It was the assassin's small mustache, fixed to his upper lip just below his nostrils, a dark little daub of a mustache. That certainly excited Adolf. Once, at a time when he and Angela had still been sleeping in the same room, he had caught a glimpse of her pubic hair just as it had begun to manifest itself, no more than a patch of dark down, and Luigi's postage-stamp of a mustache was close in resemblance.

The combination had to excite him—that small peek-a-boo into Angela's privacy so much like the mad murderer's upper lip—he grew twice excited when he heard his father coughing away like still another maniac.

-2-

On one of his occasional visits to the Burger-Abends, Alois, no longer willing to remain a quiet presence, prevailed on himself to speak. This was after listening to the "Atheist-in-Residence," a member who delighted in assuring all the others that "I am the only brave man in our ranks since I have been blessed. I do not have to believe in God." To Alois' critical eye, he was a scrawny chap, but a long-invested member—his grandfather had been one of the founders of the society. Nonetheless, it did seem that the man had little else to offer. So, Alois decided to speak up and declared that each intelligent human had to decide for himself whether the Deity did exist, but he, for one, was certainly opposed to the sanctimony of all those pietists who would run to church at every drop of rain in their

lives. He would attend on one day only of the year and that was the Emperor's birthday. "In my opinion, it is Franz Josef who is to be celebrated. Especially after Sisi's death."

He soon discovered that he was dealing with a class of people who had a special attitude about such matters. While they did seem to feel superior to unseemly devotion in religion, yet they were prepared to be formally observant. They were church-goers.

If Alois had been a client, I could have alerted him. To be privately superior to religion may be a privilege of the upper classes, but going to church is the keel to maintain social life in the community.

One of the older gentry did reprove Alois by saying, "I would agree that it can prove unsettling to be among those who become over-enthusiastic about every last Saint's Day observance. So often these rites become a haven for unhappy women. But let us recognize that without religion, we would suffer chaos. It is the most dependable deterrent to madness in all of world history."

Alois was ready to take up the argument. "Nonetheless, good sir," he said, "permit me to suggest that religion does offer its own kind of madness. Just think of such highly immoral Popes as"—he knew the list—"Sixtus IV, Innocent VII, Alexander VI, Julius II, Leo X, and Clement VII. Simony was

not only their daily practice, but a cardinal's hat was waiting for every one of their illegitimate sons. Some of them even killed their enemies. I would declare that to be madness. Yes, good sir, that was madness in the opposite direction, I would go so far as to assert."

He sat down, pleased that there was at least a modicum of courteous applause from a portion of the burghers, but then had to recognize that the applause was formal—every speaker would receive at least, a minimal response—but indeed a chill had come upon the room. He had been too outspoken. It made him decide, most unhappily, that he should not return soon to the Burger-Abends, and when a month later he did come back, he chose to be silent.

In compensation, the evenings were diversions. These gentry certainly knew more than he did about high styles of living. They were knowledgeable about everything from gourmandize and antique collecting to interesting innovations that would soon appear in indoor plumbing and electric lighting. Again, he had to feel the insufficiency of his own experience.

No surprise, then, if at the Burger-Abends, he thought often of the young officers for whom he made boots when he was working in Vienna, dreaming all the while of a beautiful young woman who would put together

exquisite lady's hats before sharing his bed in the evening. Now, on the way home from a Burger-Abend, a wealth of pity could pass through him for what had never come to pass.

Let me suggest that the intensity of such feelings can charm the heart of a saint. Self-pity is able to reach the finest operatic heights—if at considerable expense to oneself—and Alois was paying too much. In compensation, his dreams at night had begun to bother him. He had now developed the fearful intuition that sleep was a marketplace where the dead could return in order to remind you of your personal debt to them. So he thought of Johann Nepomuk and his mother, and then he had to brood over his two dead wives. What if they met in this marketplace of sleep? What if they came to agree with each other concerning their former husband? He would then be facing a cabal. "That might even be more dangerous," he told himself, "than for two of a man's former mistresses to become friends, and be ready to compare accounts."

One of the gentry had made that remark at the Burger-Abends, and it occasioned the heartiest burst of laughter. Of course, the fellow was an old roué from one of the best families in town. Alois had enjoyed those words enough to make them his own, and even served them up at the tavern. He did notice that the louts laughed at this with as much gusto as the gentry.

-3-

Adolf liked the new school in Leonding. It was a short walk from the Garden House, and less strict than the monastery. While he was, once more, an excellent student, he could hardly wait each day for school to end. The Kumberger Forest outside Leonding was full of small caves and wooded draws and glens—splendid enclosures where one could prepare an ambush. So, he began to recruit schoolmates to join the battles, and they even began small encounters in the late afternoon, although the major event every week was reserved for Saturday morning.

Adi was also reading the novels of Karl May, and that altered many of his techniques. Of late it had been the Boers versus the English, but Karl May had wrote about a brave man named Shatterhand who was always ready to protect white settlers against American Indians.

Not all of his recruits chose to be on Shatterhand's side. That was because an Indian could steal up on a settler from behind, get an arm around the other boy's neck, and declare, "You are scalped." Then the Indians could run back to their dens in the forest before the white settlers responded by charging into any copse where they might or might not be hiding. The settlers had long sticks to serve as rifles and any Indian touched with a stick was dead for the rest of the game and would have to go home.

On the other hand, Adolf was scalped once by a boy quick enough to dart around his protectors. Adolf declared it illegal. "You do not attack leaders," he said. "You are an Indian and they believe in the vengeance of the war-gods. So they do not attack high officers like myself. They do not dare. A terrible vengeance would fall on them."

Nonetheless, he was also discovering a fair amount of difficulty at keeping recruits who were his age under his service. They wished to be on a more equal footing. He had to let them slip away even as he brought in younger boys.

He even took Edmund along, Edmund who was now five years old and certainly the youngest to participate. Nonetheless, the older kids liked him, even if Edmund could hardly be worth much when attacks began. Still, Adolf gave him special training. He liked having him alone in the forest. He could command Edmund then, which, of course, he was not able to do at home. There, Klara would protect Edmund, Angela would protect him, and Alois certainly did.

Adi could remember that they used to safeguard him from Alois-Junior, but that had been more justifiable. After all, Alois-Junior had once planted a turd on the end of his nose. He didn't do such things to Edmund.

But he did giggle at the thought that if he could do it, what a joy it would be to hear Edmund scream. Once, out in the forest, he even ~~shot~~ ^{poked} Edmund from

~~back with a stick,~~ ^{in the} ~~behind with his air rifle,~~ and told him it was a hornet, which, of course,

Edmund mentioned to Klara. ~~He knew it was not a hornet.~~

The story worried her. She could sense the animosity in Adi. Was it worse than Alois-Junior's spite? Yes, she decided, it was worse. Adolf and Edmund were blood brothers.

By now, Adi was having trouble with some of the stronger kids. One or two even gave promise that it could end in a fight. He had never had a fist-fight, he had always known how to avoid them, but now he took a vow

that he would not allow anyone to beat him. He would do what was necessary, even if that meant he had to do it with a rock in his hand.

Visions came to him on the edge of sleep. He saw a boy he truly feared staring at him with a blood-spattered head. Could that happen? ~~Some~~ ^{Several} of the soldiers who had quit his army were now back. Were they ready to give him trouble?

Tough kids were afraid of real superiors like their father, their mother, their older brother, or their enemies—anybody who was stronger than them. Yet they were not often. That was the secret to their weakness. They were not smart enough. So, they could not trust the quickness of their thoughts. A leader had to be ready for the treachery of others. He would make that point clear. A leader would have to face jealousy.

Meanwhile, soldiers continued to leave his army. Soon there would be snow in the forest.

Then an episode occurred which ended these wars for the rest of the winter. On a day when no one felt warm enough to hide motionless in ambush, one troop declared that he was able to start a fire by rubbing twigs together. The others jeered, but Adolf said, "If you can make a real fire, then I give you the order to proceed."

The boy did. Once the fire was lit, all went off to find fallen branches dry enough to burn. Soon the fire was not only blazing but ready to advance into the surrounding brush. Since there was no water handy, they tried to stomp it out. They couldn't. Smoke rose into the sky.

They quit the fire one by one, they retreated, then they ran until they were a quarter of a mile away. Adolf began to explain to the others, all twenty-odd, that they must not tell anyone.

He needed me then. I was offering the power to look into a compatriot's eye and decide whether he would be strong enough not to give them away. "Yes," said Adolf, "if any one of you tells anybody about this fire, we will all have to pay for it. And then we will want to find out who told. And there will be consequences. A brave soldier does not betray his own comrades."

One by one, two by two, they left the forest. By now, the fire had grown to a size visible enough to bring teams of horses, fire-men and water wagons out from Leonding.

On the way home, Edmund said that he would tell one person, their father. "If you do," said Adolf, "I will be severely punished. And then you will have to pay for it."

"I do not believe you," said Edmund. "Our father would never permit it. So, don't you try to hit me."

"It is not me you have to fear. It is everybody else who was there and will be punished. They will be waiting for you. All of them. If necessary, I will be the one to let them know you couldn't keep your mouth shut."

"I have to tell our father. I promised."

"What did you promise?"

"I promised that I would tell him about anything that bothered me."

"All right. That is all right for you to do on other matters. But not on this. I tell you, the others will beat you up. I will not be able to protect you. I won't even want to!"

"I feel sick."

"You always were a snot-nose. Go throw up."

-4-

Alois had his own suspicions about the fire. He held Edmund on his lap and looked tenderly into his eyes, but before he could ask a question, Edmund threw up again. Alois decided to let it go. He was convinced that Adolf had had something to do with the blaze, but Edmund's life could become be a misery if he forced him to talk about it.

Moreover, there might be repercussions. If he knew that Adolf was one of the malefactors, it would be expected of him, as a good citizen, to inform the authorities. Once he did, however, they could fine him. So, Alois wiped Edmund's spew off his own shirt and hugged him tenderly.

He also made a point over the next few days of not looking Adolf in the eye too closely.

A week passed with no further consequences, and Adolf began to feel close to Shatterhand, the man who could rise above crisis and catastrophe.

~~Now, when he headed to the cemetery to shoot rats,~~ ^{jobs} ~~he would have~~ ^{dealing} short conversations with Shatterhand. "A fine shot, pard," would be the ~~whisper in his ear whenever he knocked down a rodent.~~ ^{his side was a battle} That was the ~~highest praise for it came from a hero so fearless that he lived in a special~~ ^{he} ~~heaven.~~ ^{thought of the battles he won before the} ^{five} ^{had} ^{happened.} ^{that} ^{was} ^{the}

That winter, Adolf came to read a book by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, an author who spoke of a force that could shape history. This force depended on the presence of a "Fuehrer cast of Iron and Fire. The people will honor him as a savior and forgive all his sins."

Of course, Adolf's class had also been offered Kant and Goethe and Schleiermacher, but he felt that most of these authors showed too much respect for reason. Which bored him. His father, for one, was always speaking favorably of the virtues of reason. "Human nature is undependable," he would tell his family at the kitchen table. "It is not to be relied upon for government. What enables stable societies to work is the power of the law, not the people." He looked around at the table and

decided this might yet be of interest to his son. "It is legal constitutions that are needed, Adolf, and then only when constructed by the finest people. It does not matter if it is a democracy or a monarchy. What is important is that reason receives the profound respect it deserves."

Adolf preferred Jahn. Reason, he decided, was like the sirens that swim in the Rhine and lead you to your death. Even while you drown, they sing sweet songs to bewitch your head. Personal strength was of more importance than laws. Great strength could enable you to become a savior of your people. That would take care of your sins. All sins could be forgiven, yes, if you were a great savior. Smaller matters would disappear.

Whereupon, he rejected Goethe and Schiller. Their humor annoyed him. It was too personal—as if they were much too pleased with what they were doing. Not serious enough, Adolf decided. The other two, Kant and Schleiermacher, he simply could not read. After Jahn, his highest pleasure came from the fairy tales of the Grimm brothers, also assigned to his class. Those were good stories, and deep! He delighted in acting them out for Edmund who was too young to read but always ready to listen. He explained to Edmund that the Grimm Brothers had written tales to show children how important it was to obey their parents and their older brother, even—hemmed in by the logic of it, he had to add—and their older sister.

Then he spoke of one story called The Girl Without Hands for which he made up whatever dialogue he could not remember. "This is about a father who has been ordered by the Devil to cut off the hands of his young daughter." When Edmund shrieked, Adolf spoke in the voice of the father, explaining it to his daughter. "I don't want to do this, dear daughter. But I must. These are orders. It is not for me to question orders that have been given by a very high authority. So, I must obey."

"What does the daughter say?" Edmund asked.

"Oh, she is obedient. Very obedient. She says, 'Father, do with me what you will. For I am your child.' Then she puts her hands right up on the chopping block. Her father picks up a big cleaver and he does it."

"That is so awful," said Edmund. "He chops off her hands?"

"With one big whack! But she lives happily ever after."

"How?" asked Edmund.

"Her father takes care of everything." Adolf nodded. "I could tell you a worse story but I won't."

"Tell me."

"It is about a girl who was so disobedient that she died."

"What did she do?" asked Edmund.

"It doesn't matter," said Adolf. "She was disobedient. That is enough. They bury this disobedient girl, and what do you think? It is hard to believe, but she remains disobedient even after she is dead. One of her arms keeps pushing up out of her grave right into the air."

"Is she very strong?" asked Edmund.

"The devil is helping her. What else—that is the way it happens. So when her relatives see that arm up in the air, they come out to her grave and try to force it down again. They can't. The arm is too strong. So they start to cover it with a mound of dirt. But her arm knocks all the dirt off. Then, her mother goes back to the house and picks up the heaviest poker in the fireplace. When she returns to her daughter's grave, she starts beating on the arm until it is broken. That way, the arm can be folded back under the dirt and the girl is able to find some rest."

Edmund was shivering. He was crying and laughing at once. "Would you do something like that to me?" he asked Adolf.

"Only if you should die and I would see your arm sticking out from your grave. Then, I would have to do it to you. I certainly would."

"Oh," said Edmund, "I don't like that."

"It does not matter what you would like. It would have to be done."

"Tell me one more story."

"It would take too long. I'll just give you the end: It's about a queen who boils a child to death. Then, she eats the body."

"You have to be a queen to be able to do something like that," said Edmund. "Isn't this so?"

"Yes, you probably have to be a queen. Especially if it is your own child that you are boiling," Adolf replied, "but nobody can take these matters for granted."

"My mother would never do that to me."

"Maybe not our mother, but I cannot say what Angela would do."

"Oh, no," said Edmund, "Angela would never do something like that to Paula or to me."

"Don't be so certain."

Edmund shook his head. "I know you are wrong."

"Do you want another story?"

"Maybe not."

"This one is the best," said Adolf.

"Is it truly the best?"

"Yes."

"Then maybe I don't want to hear it."

"It's about a young man who is ordered to sleep with a corpse. In time to come you, too, may have to sleep next to a dead man."

At this point, Edmund shrieked. Then he fainted.

Unfortunately for Adolf, this last conversation was overheard by Angela. She was standing now in the doorway shaking her head. Adolf had time to think that his luck was foul.

Angela knelt, and patted Edmund's face until he could sit up again. Then she went to tell Klara.

His mother now called him Adolf on every occasion when she had to scold him. "Adolf. This was dreadful. You are going to be punished."

"For what? I did nothing bad. Edmund loves the stories. He kept asking me for more."

"You knew what you were doing. So, I am going to tell your father. I have to. He will decide on your punishment."

"Mother, this is not something to bring father into."

"If I don't tell him, then I will be the one to look for a worse punishment. And maybe I will. Maybe I will buy you no present at Christmas."

"This is so unfair," said Adolf. "I try to entertain my kid brother. But he is a brat."

“Do you accept what I say? No gift for Christmas?”

“Yes. If you think that is fair, I have to accept. But, Mother, please look into your heart when the time comes. See if you will still see me as guilty then.”

Klara was furious. This was even worse. He was certain that she would change her mind and buy him a good present after all.

So, that evening, she did tell Alois.

His father had no doubts. He chose to give Adolf a severe whipping. It was the worst since they moved into the house in Leonding. But this time, Adolf was determined to make no outcry. He thought of Preisinger all the while. He made no sound. He stiffened his body.

Alois was beginning to feel as if he had Junior back on his hands. Another criminal to deal with!—which excited even more rage.

Between each blow, Adolf was thinking of how Alois-Junior had run away. That was one memory he could use. He would make no sound. He could be as strong as Alois-Junior. If he did not cry, then his own strength might become great enough to justify whatever he might yet want to do. Strength created its own justice. He called upon the force of command that had been with him after the fire in the forest when he ordered them all never to speak of it. Yes, he had been full of fear then, but he had called on his

force of command. Then he had lived for days in the fear someone would talk. I had been with him, of course, through that turmoil. Adolf's confidence was so fragile that I had to maintain his ego then at full erection. (Egos are prey to the same weakness that hardons exhibit when unsure of what comes next.)

So, yes, I was there to monitor the whipping of Adolf, and fortify his resolve. If it was most important to him that he not weep, I had to be ready to diminish the intensity of Alois' blows whenever I thought the boy might break. Equally, I was ready to increase his father's force, whenever it flagged. There were moments when Alois' fear of over-straining his heart was in direct opposition to my desire to salt Adolf's will. Let his hatred for Alois become intense enough to serve many an uncommon purpose ahead.

Nonetheless, balance is also crucial to our activities. I could not allow antipathy to his father to become ~~over~~ excessive. Immense hatreds in childhood which find no dependable outlet can leave a client unstable. While high imbalance was altogether acceptable for me in Luigi Lucheni, that would not do for Adolf. We had put in too much effort on the boy. We did not care to have to deal in the future with endless errant impulses and blind rages. Indeed, one product of this heavy whipping was bound to be detestation of Edmund. That made me uneasy. Edmund had remained in

such a sorry state after hearing the tales of the Grimm Brothers that Klara had had to lull him to sleep with lullabies. Adolf, lying in the next cot, felt as bruised thereby as if he had fallen out of a tree, indeed, his feelings were outraged by Klara's apparent indifference to him that he decided to run away. Right there laying on his cot he so decided—aching bones and all. He even made a point of telling this to Edmund as soon as Klara had left the room.

"It is all your doing," said Adolf. "So, I must go."

Immediately, Edmund leaped out of bed and ran to tell his father. Yet, when Alois came up the stairs to collar the potential runaway, Adolf said, "It's a lie! My brother is always telling lies. This one I will not forgive him for. This lie is atrocious! I'll get him for this!"

"You'll get him, will you?"

Alois was not ready to give another beating. His arms were aching more than Adolf's. Still, he was sufficiently concerned to lock the boy in a room on the ground floor whose only window had bars. Alone, Adolf tried to squeeze his way through. He soon discovered, however, that his clothing, particularly the metal buttons on the shirt, seemed to make the difference. They keep getting caught on the bars. So he took off his clothes, rolled them up in an overcoat, put them just outside the bars, and

stark naked, attempted to wriggle through once more. He was so overheated with fury and righteousness that he did not feel the cold of the open casement window nor hear the sound of his father's boots returning to the room. Only at the sound of the door being unlocked did he pull away from the bars, seize a table cloth and wrap it around himself. Alois, entering, the brass key still in his hand, took in the situation, and roared with laughter. He yelled for Klara.. When the boy began to move, he was kept in place by a look until Klara came through the door. Then Alois pointed to Adolf with a masterly scorn and said, "Look at the toga boy, our Toga Boy!" Klara shook her head and left the room. That roused Alois to a full harangue: "So, you were trying to run away. I tell you, it would not be such a loss. All the same, I forbid it. Not because I would miss you, Toga-Boy. I would not. I forbid it because I would have to call in the police to tell them you are missing, and they might put me in jail." Alois knew this was an outright exaggeration, but he was full of momentum. "How your mother would weep! Her son is lost and her husband is in prison. Shame has come upon the Hitler family! All because of Toga-Boy!"

Adolf had stood up to the whipping, but now he was in tears. My work on his ego would have to be redone.

mayor." Alois said that on purpose. It would serve as an explanation if it were to come out that he had struck Adolf.

In truth, however, it was even becoming more difficult to scold him. The boy now had a way of sliding and twisting, a perfect portrait of his skill at the bar games. Usually, he succeeded in getting away from Alois after one off-handed slap on the rump. And for those times when his father did manage to catch him over his knee, there was no great use left to give the whiplash. How could one use Alois' heart on such occasions. It had been much more willing to talk him verbally, so directly enjoyable to call him "Adolf." Alois kept the monkey in play over the next few weeks, and mostly ended by talking down with a look of himself.

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Alois did have regrets. That night he woke up worrying whether Alois-Junior had been a product of too many beatings, and the next day he was walking with Mayrhofer, the subject came up of parental punishment. Alois declared that he never engaged in corporeal chastisements. (He even said to himself, "Oh, you are lying like a thief.") But Mayrhofer's good opinion was crucial to him, so on he went: "I never strike my kids. I must admit, however, that I bawl them out frequently." How could a parent not? "Adolf," says Alois, "is the one I have to scold most. I tell him his behavior is bad. He can be a miserable urchin. Sometimes I say to myself, 'I'll bash

him yet." Alois said that on purpose. It would serve as an explanation if it were to come out that he had struck Adolf.

In truth, however, it was even becoming more difficult to seize him. The boy now had a way of sliding and turning, a product perhaps of his skill at the war games. Usually, he succeeded in getting away from Alois after one off-centered slap on the rump. And for those times when his father did manage to turn him over his knee, there was no great arm left to give the whipping. How sodden was Alois' heart on such occasions. It had been much more enjoyable to lash him verbally, so directly enjoyable to call him "Toga-Boy." Alois kept the mockery in play over the next few weeks, and Adolf reacted by coming down with an attack of measles.

Such a connection is, of course, much too simple. In Leonding, at this time, others his age were also in bed with the disease. It was certainly contagious, but Adolf had, in effect, been physically lowered by the last small host of unfortunate events. His army had to cease operations after the fire in the forest, and now the jeers about Toga-Boy rankled his skin. The worst news for him, however, was to hear that Der Alte had died. An obituary had even appeared in the Linz Tages Post, such news forwarded all the way from Hafeld, but then, the event could be seen as sufficiently unusual to be worth a description in newsprint. By the time his body had

been found, he was in a sad state of decomposition. "Such," observed the Post, "is often the fate of lonely hermits." To make matters worse, his bees had perished in the cold.

Adolf truly mourned him. The old man had always been so gracious to him. Other than his mother, Der Alte had been the only adult to treat him as if he were important.

In turn, Alois retained enough sour feeling about Der Alte's masterful lectures to be rewarded now with a keen trace of pleasure—a most unseemly reaction to have, after all. So, to compensate—he hardly knew why—he did buy Adolf an air-gun for Christmas. It was a solid gift, ready to pump out pellets with enough power to drop a squirrel or a rat, and so would yet prove its value to the boy, but not as yet. Most definitely, as Alois could note, Adolf was still mourning Der Alte. Indeed, Alois had the impression that his son might even be crying in his sleep. He did look frightful in the morning. Then he came down with the measles.

Klara kept the house in a rigid quarantine. No one was allowed to visit Adolf in the hitherto unoccupied maid's room on the second floor. Only Klara, wearing a gauze mask, would come in to look after him, and she would wash her hands afterward with a hideous-smelling antiseptic.

He had a rash, he had red eyes, he was not allowed to read, he suffered boredom, he complained endlessly to his mother of the monotony of his existence, yet was almost glad when she went out again. The odor of the antiseptic that she brought into the room was near to intolerable.

It worked itself out, however, as a mild case. The white spots in his throat and on his tongue disappeared in a few days, his rash lessened, his disquiet increased. He was obsessed with how filthy he felt, for was that not exactly the way they all thought of him? Diseased and therefore filthy. He worried about where Der Alte might be now that he was not only dead, but had been left alone to rot.

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A last word about Der Alte might be fitting. Adolf still hoped that Der Alte, rot or not was on his way to Heaven. Such a sentiment in my client impressed me because I was not ready to believe we had carried him over to Hell in high style. In truth, I do not know much about Hell. I am not even certain it exists. The Maestro has kept us, after all, in enclaves. They are well-sealed. We are not supposed to know what we do not need to know.

To keep up our morale, therefore, we are reminded constantly of how much cosmic pretension there is in human affairs. We are frequently brought back to Nietzsche's immortal remark, "All priests are liars."

"How could it be otherwise?" the Maestro says. "The Dummkopf is not about to open His secrets to individuals distorted enough to choose the ministry or the priesthood, to dominate gullible audiences with descriptions of how the Lord will reward their belief when they die. Priests are, indeed, liars. They do not know a thing about the highest matters. Nor, for that matter, do any of you."

Leave it then that I know nothing of the final destination of Der Alte. I do suspect he was the sort of long-term client that we are often obliged to ignore by the end. Certainly his use for us had dissipated. So, it is possible that he was ready to beseech Heaven to grant him final acceptance, and who knows—the Dummkopf, from what we are told, does accept some of our clients for reincarnation. As I have mentioned, the Maestro is not vigorously opposed to this. "Let us have the pleasure of picking up this piece of small fry again if the Dummkopf is so foolish as to give Der Alte another chance to pump up his vanities."

In contrast, all throughout his illness, Adolf did think often of Der Alte and of Edmund. He was certainly not as generous in feeling for his brother. After Adolf recovered from the measles, Edmund came down with a severe case. I will save the reader from too detailed a description of the turmoil and then the agony that reverberated—that is the word—through the

Garden House as Edmund's condition worsened. His face swelled. He became incoherent. The doctor warned the family that he might yet suffer from encephalitis.

In their bedroom, Alois knelt beside Klara, and they began to pray for Edmund's life. Alois even said, "I will believe in God if Edmund is spared. May I die if I do not obey this vow."

We will never know whether Alois would have been true to such a promise—a lifetime of mental positions fortified one by one over the years would have been ready to sally forth and attack the vow at every future turn. Still, at one point he did say, "God, take my life, but spare the boy," and he meant it.

Then, Edmund died.

Prayer is an expedition beset by peril to those who pray. We, for example, have a power—which can prove most expensive to call upon—that enables us to block even the most essential, heartfelt, and desperately important prayers, and we will exercise such powers when the stakes demand it.

Cheap prayer, on the contrary, we encourage. We see all that as adding to the Dummkopf's Fatigue, adding to the Dummkopf's Indifference.

Cheap prayer wearies Him. Cheap patriotism enrages Him. (Cheap patriotism is is, after all, one of our most successful provenances.)

The point is that despite Alois and Klara's prayers, blocked or not, Edmund did die on February 2, 1900, and the family was left in indescribable condition. I even felt as if I were one of the mourners.

Edmund was the first child for which I had entertained so curious a set of sensations as love (or at least some representation of what might be wholehearted liking) sufficient to explain the warmth that inhabited me when in the presence of that child. I had not known what I might be feeling. I only knew that even as Adolf was not ready to contemplate his brother's death (for, indeed, he had a secret to bury as direct and powerful as the arm that protruded from the grave) so was I not ready to contemplate it either. I, too, had been culpable.

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On the day of Edmund's funeral Alois told Klara that he would not go. At first, he could not even give a reason. He stood there like a pillar of stone.

Then, he began to weep. "I cannot control my feelings today," he said. "Would you have me break down in church? A church that I hate?" For the first time in their marriage, she raised her voice in anger. "Yes," she said, "this church that you hate. But I go to it for peace. For a little

peace, a little consolation. I am able to speak to our Gustav then, and to Ida and Otto, and now"—it was her turn to burst into tears—"to Edmund."

They did not quarrel. They wept together. She said at last, "You must stop being so hard on Adolf. He is now your only hope for a good son. Why must you beat him into the ground?"

Alois nodded. "I will make a promise," he said. "That is, if you will stay here with me today. For I cannot go to the funeral. I will not be able to keep myself together." Before he could finish speaking, he was weeping again. He hugged her. "I need you," he said. "I need you to stay with me in this house." He had never said that to her before. He could hardly believe he was saying it. "Yes," he declared, "I will take a solemn promise. I will not strike Adolf again."

It is a mistake to interrupt a husband and wife who are in pain, but I cannot resist remarking that in my experience, few marriages exist where a vow is not countermanded by a secret covenant.

Yes, that is our Alois, he has already told himself, "No, I will not strike Adolf again unless he does something awful," but then, Klara was not of one piece now either. She was beginning to wonder if it was the fate of her family to be destroyed. Indeed, she was not ready for the funeral. This once, let God pay attention to her.

So, Klara told Angela that she must represent the family. "If people ask, just say that your parents are stricken. This is true," said Klara. "I don't trust myself to go, and your father cannot. I have never seen him weep before. He is near to out of his mind. Angela, it is so terrible for him. I cannot leave the man alone. I must not! So today, you will act as the woman of the family. For today at least, you must be the woman."

Angela said, "You have to go to church with Adolf and me. It will be a scandal if you don't."

"You," said Klara, "are much too young to worry about scandal. Tell them we are ill. That has to be sufficient."

"Will you stay here at least, will you promise to stay in the house?" asked Angela. "I am afraid he will want to go out. He will want you to bring him to the tavern. He will get drunk so it doesn't hurt so much. You must not leave the house."

"It depends on your father."

"You are his slave."

"Silence yourself!" Klara said.

So to Adolf's surprise, he and Angela went to church by themselves. When asked for a reason, all Angela said was, "Before we go, you must take a bath. You smell awful again."

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Alone with Alois, Klara could not bear to think of each and every death in her family, not only her children, but the deaths of her brothers and sisters. "Cannot God have mercy?" she asked herself. She felt a frightening exhaustion, as if she were standing in an old house and the floor was about to give way and she had no interest in saving herself. She was tired of believing that the fault must be her own.

I have to admit that I was tempted to approach her, but I knew this would be refused by the Maestro. What, after all, could be gained by looking to pick up a client like Klara? We could put the Cudgels in disarray

for losing her. But what labor there would be to train so new and difficult a client.

Indeed, I soon recognized that Klara was having no more than a rebellion is common among pious people. Piety, ~~after all, is often a dead~~ *can also serve as a* wall there to keep the pious from recognizing how profoundly angry they are at God—this God who has failed to treat them by what they see as their proper right. Since this illicit wrath is usually submerged in pestilential waters of modesty and guilt, they do not make sterling clients for us, although, in the event, we do use some. Pious people can derange those in their family who are less pious. Repetition ~~does~~ *kill* the soul.

On this long day, Klara and Alois stayed at home. Given the cleavage left in his ego, he felt so savaged by the loss of Edmund that he had to look into the fact of his incest. He wondered whether he and Klara were polluted people. If so, Edmund might be better off dead. Again he wept.

When, at one point, Klara began to have second thoughts and said, "Maybe we should go to the church after all," he was seized with fear. "For me to break down in public," he said again, "that is worse than death." Now Klara asked herself, "What is wrong with weeping in church when one's heart is broken?" She began to wonder. Was Alois evil? Did he belong to

the Evil One? Did she? What of the vow she had taken when Alois-Junior seemed lifeless on the ground? Perhaps it was better, yes, actually better, that they did stay away. For evil people to attend a funeral might hurt the departed. Slowly, over that long day, as they remained at home, she felt an awful flush in her breast. Was that her fury with God? She, too, was now afraid to go to church. Yes, how could one ever dare to bring such fury into a holy place? That would be like taking another vow of allegiance to the foul one.

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At the funeral, Adolf heard none of the words. His head was ablaze. In the hour that Edmund died, Alois had said to him, "You are now my only hope."

"Yes," Adolf said to himself, "it is true, my father used to see Edmund as the only hope. That is what he really was saying. But actually, he hates me. He thinks I was cruel to Edmund."

Yet Adolf refused to agree that he might have mistreated Edmund. "It was no more," he told himself, "than the way Alois-Junior used to treat me." All too soon, however, he began to feel full of dread. How deep and unrelenting might be the anger of the angels!

Just a few days before he had been the first to come down with measles, he had taken Edmund for a walk in the woods. Still fearing then that the fire might yet have its consequences, he was uneasy about Edmund's loyalty. So he picked up a twig on the path and scalped him with a slow, ritual move. One drew a short stick in a circle around the captured soldier's head just above the forehead, above the left ear, under the back of the head, and then back above the right ear to return to the forehead. Adolf did this to Edmund and said, "Now, I own all that is in your head. Your brain is mine."

"How can you say that?" said Edmund. "That is stupid."

"Don't be a fool," said Adolf. "Why do you think Indians wanted scalps? It was because that was the way to own the mind of the person they had just captured."

"But you are my brother."

"It is better for you that your brother owns your brain than some stranger. A stranger could throw it away."

"Give it back to me," said Edmund.

"I will when the time comes. But only when the time comes."

"When will that be?"

"When I tell you. Not before."

"I don't believe you. I don't believe you own my brain. It feels the same."

"Oh, you will see a difference. You will yet feel little headaches. They will bother you. That is the first sign."

Edmund was ready to cry but he would not, he did not, and they walked home in silence.

Now, in church, Adolf's heart was beating in time, step by step, with the pace they had taken all those weeks ago on returning from the woods.

It can be said that he was now feeling a most peculiar pain in his heart from this recollection. It was as sharp as a splinter driven under one's fingernail.

Looking to lose such pain, he told himself not to think about Edmund any more. Not on this day. Indeed, he prayed to God to be able to cease thinking of Edmund and (with my help) succeeded to the degree that one can remove nearly all of a splinter that is under the nail. The fragment that remains, however, has now become a root ready to offer more constant discomfort.

I can say that Adolf was absolutely not ready to think of the very last time he had seen Edmund, and so that memory festered in his heart.

It was his turn now to be ready to weep. He thought of how Klara used to call him "Ein Liebling Die Gotter." "Oh," she used to tell him in those years, "you are so special." He remembered how she said he was "a beloved of God." That was true, he told himself. He had survived. He had not been like Gustav and the others. Perhaps he had been selected by Destiny for some special purpose.

I could see the extent of the reconstruction that now lay before me. I would have to bring all of Klara's once-loving words back to Adolf; restore him once more to what he knew when he was three. Yes, he, Adolf, had been the one selected to go on living.

Now, to the contrary, he had begun to feel that his mother would be ready to abandon him, just as she had abandoned Edmund. Why, then, must he feel so guilty? Let her be the one to feel these pains. She had pretended to love Edmund and yet she was not here in church. How awful. So unfeeling!

-10-

the brother and sister

Even as ~~they~~ came away from the grave, the accompanying mourners did pay attention to Angela who was embarrassed at knowing how red-faced she was when she tried to speak of how terrible were her parents' feelings. "It is so frightful a day for them—they are both in bed. They are too weak to stand." On she went, embarrassed, red-faced, and yet excited to be the center of this occasion.

Once they were alone, however, and could walk off into the forest, he did say, "Why do I know that my mother will not come to my funeral?"

Angela berated him: "Klara is the finest person I have ever known. The kindest. No one is more good! How can you say something like that? She is suffering for your father. He loved Edmund so much!" And when in

payment for this remark, Adolf looked venomous, she added, "As well he should. Edmund was a beautiful child. I cannot say that of you. Even on this day of your brother's funeral"—she had to repeat it!—"you still have an unpleasant body odor."

"What do you mean?" he answered. "I took a bath. You know that. You even forced me to. You said, 'Going to the funeral, smelling as you do. Get into the tub,' and I told you it would take too long to boil the water. What did you care?"

He had had to use cold water. It had been a splash and a wipe, no more. Maybe he still did smell. "No," he said now, "I forbid you to speak that way to me. I do not have an unpleasant odor. I did take a bath."

Angela said, "Bath or no bath, Adolf. You just may not be a very good person."

He was so furious with her that he stepped off the forest trail into the snow. She, just as upset, just as angry, followed him. The moment they were out of earshot of any person who might have been at the service, she yelled at him so loudly that he ran off, "Not a good person. An awful one. You are a monster."

Alone in the forest, Adolf began to have fears of his own death. It was so cold in the snow. He had pictures of Gustav and Ida and Otto and

Edmund. And, now in his mind, he saw Edmund's arm rise out of the grave. He recalled the look of terror in Edmund's eyes as he listened to the Grimm Brothers fairy tales.

When Angela caught up with him, they walked home silently to find their father with a red and swollen face. Alois turned to him, weeping, and said, "You are now my life." He embraced Adolf and began to weep all over again. How false were his words, thought Adolf. Alois still believed that Edmund was the only hope. He could not even pretend that anything else was true. "I hate my father," Adolf said again to himself.

-11-

Several nights after the funeral, I prepared a dream-etching where an angel spoke to Adolf long enough to tell him that his cruelties to Edmund would yet be justified. Why? Because Adolf's life had been spared in infancy. There was a special purpose yet to come. He need only remain loyal to every command he received from above. In this manner, he could escape all ordinary death. He would yet become God's gift to the people, fierce as fire and as strong as steel.

It was a carefully worked-up dream, but I did ask myself whether such a belief was being implanted too soon. It did suggest that he would never die. Of course, that is not at all impossible to believe. It is indeed difficult for any human to picture his or her own death. In secret, the soul does expect to be immortal, and to a degree, this may even be true. Many humans are born again. I would not wish to suggest that they are born again by way of a church ceremony under the passing hand of a priest or reverend, nor born again by being upended in the river, no, they are born again through reincarnation. The Maestro has stated that this is part of a conceptual scheme developed by the D.K. "He does see Himself as an artist—as the Divine Artist. ~~Among the galactic gods, the D.K. is not all that well regarded. He is certainly not seen as one of the most talented. He~~ ^{But he is} is, indeed, a blunderer—so many of His creations are botched. A good many are disasters which He then plows back into the food chain ^{That is} His only means of removing His multitudinous meaningless spawnings from choking the existence of the rest. Indeed, there is more art in his food chain than in the rest of His creation. Yet, I will admit, He is dogged. He is still looking to improve His previous creations." As the Maestro describes it, the Dummkopf is bound to try over and over, even with many of His most unsatisfactorily developed humans. And that is why few men and women

really believe that they will cease to exist. They would say it aloud if not for their fear of appearing ridiculous. Indeed, their real anxiety is that the new life, because of the ways in which they wasted the last one, might bring them closer to the cloud of the Dummkopf's Wrath, closer than any previous incarnation. One's new position in life might well be a reflection of how badly the last life was lived, and so the rebirth would offer a pure example of human Hell. While the Maestro does not impart such answers to us, I am convinced that there is a region in the unconscious of every human being where belief does exist that one is immortal, ^{part} ~~part~~ of the scheme, so to speak, that conceived of life in the first place.

I may as well add that this conviction of personal immortality does cause us considerable difficulty. Many of our clients, particularly late in life, come to the conclusion that if they atone for their sins, they will be reborn. That can play havoc with hitherto dependable men and women. They are not, after all, completely unbalanced on this certainty. No matter how abominable and unrepentant are a few of the humans chosen by Him to be born again, he probably does feel there is something exceptional present even if it failed to develop properly on the last time out.

At this point, I even began to wonder whether the Maestro had developed his own species of reincarnation and so might have input on

some of the D.K.'s councils. It is, obviously, too large a question for me, but the Maestro does seem to know which of our clients have been chosen for rebirth. Yet to speak of this with greater authority, I would have to know how the D.K. envisions the future of His Creation. Is it comparable to the ruthlessness of our Maestro? Is ruthlessness indeed a necessary passion in these divine matters?

-12-

A few months after Edmund's death, Klara began to have fearful thoughts. Was it possible that Adolf's attitude to Edmund had been more than cruel, even unforgivable? Angela told her that when the brothers played together she had overheard Adi terrifying Edmund with fairy tales from Grimm, the very worst ones.

From her bedroom window, Klara could see Adolf shooting at rats, while sitting on the cemetery wall. She would flinch each time she heard

the popping sound of the discharge. For her, the air-gun was equal to an ugly voice. She felt as if she could hear disaffected spirits coming up to her from the cemetery. When someone is not a client, we can still exert a modest everyday influence on them, and in this case, I certainly did not wish Klara to be impelling Adolf more deeply into his depression so I did lay atmospheres upon her sleep to suggest that Adi was not evil, but suffering terribly. This technique is always there to work with any mother who retains some love for her child, and so, over a period, the situation did improve. Klara came to recognize once again how great was the need to soften Alois' feelings. The boy's dreadful mood, she told her husband, was even beginning to affect his marks at the little school in Leonding and all this after he had been doing so well there. Since Adolf was very bright, she said, the explanation had to be that he was mourning for Edmund. "But he is also afraid of you," Klara dared to say, "he hates disappointing you. Alois, you must become again a good man to your son."

Those were heartfelt words, but they only succeeded in reminding him of Edmund. Adolf, alas, was not Edmund. All the same, he nodded.

"I will do what I can," he said. "Sometimes my heart slams shut like a door."

Once aroused, however, she was not about to close off her own feelings. She must find a way to be near again to Adolf. His heart could also shut like a door. So, she chose to remind him that the year was 1900—they were in a new century. “Adolf, this will be your century,” she told him. “This century will belong to you. I know it. You will do wonderful things in time to come.”

He did feel important that she spoke in such a tone. Of course, he hardly knew whether to believe her. How could it be his century? At this point, he felt incapable of accomplishing anything of high worth. So, he nagged her. “Is it really so?” he kept asking. Perhaps he went on for too long. At last, her tongue slipped enough to uncover the truth, “You are the one I must love,” she said. “And I do. I must love you, and I do.” He brooded over her phrasing. He was aware for the first time that women were not there just to love you because that was their duty. Instead, they could offer love that was real, or a substitute that was not as dependable.

Here, the Maestro intervened. “Do not,” I was told, “encourage any undue interest in women. Let him remain fearful.”

-13-

On late overcast afternoons in early spring, when there was a fog, and the odors of moss and mold rose from many a tombstone, Adolf would sit in the damp of the low cemetery wall and wait in the dusk for rats to come out. When they faced to the west, their eyes would shine in the sunset, even in a clouded sunset, and so would offer sharp targets. When he was able, however, to hit one with his air gun, he did not feel up to approaching the corpse. It was too close to evening for him to be ready to step down into the cemetery from the low wall.

Early morning, however, before he was off to school, he would go by, and if no dogs or cats had been ready to dare the graveyard at night, and the

cadaver of the rat was still intact, he would inhale a first hint of the aroma of carrion and that would stir his mood. He wondered whether comparable manifestations had gone on in Edmund's flesh.

Even by spring, he did not feel ready to go back to the forest. He kept to his perch on the cemetery wall.

In turn, I had decided not to discourage Adolf's guilt. Indeed, this instinct was soon corroborated. While the Cudgels were partial to guilt since they were invariably looking for more atonement in their clients, we usually chose to calcify guilt, leave it, so to speak, bone-dry, even if that did raise a risk that we were narrowing their future possibilities, a delicate choice in this situation, but I had to be ready to raise Adolf from his depression before it grew too extreme. Depression can descend into aberration. On many an evening, Adi sat on the cemetery wall wondering what he would do if Edmund's arm were to rise suddenly out of the grave. Would he run? Would he attempt to talk to Edmund? Would he ask for forgiveness? Or would he pelt the limb with his air gun?

All through the winter, the spring, and the summer of 1900, the memory of Edmund's illness remained like a dead weight on his chest.

It was not hard to discern the reason. Adolf still possessed some funds of conscience. Even as self pity is the lubricant we use most often to

smooth the entrance of the heart into uglier emotions so does conscience become our most determined antagonist. The Cudgels whip their people into shape by way of their conscience. We, in turn, when dealing with the most advanced of our clients, do our best to extirpate conscience altogether. Once accomplished, we then proceed to build up a good substitute for conscience, ready and able to justify most of the passions that the Cudgels seek to repress: greed, lust, envy, gluttony—no need to list the sacred seven. The point is that when a facsimile of a working conscience is properly developed by us, our clients' ability to justify their ugliest acts becomes exceptionally strengthened. We have then succeeded in releasing conscience from the shameful memories that obliged it to develop in the first place, and I can add that we are most successful when the all-but emptied remains of the old conscience are stubborn enough to vie with one's new sense of strength, and so are felt to be a useless scourge, an enemy to one's well being. (Murderers who take pride in their daring have usually succeeded in banishing all conscience.) Or, to put it otherwise, a good deal of the dread that humans feel when the angels wish to punish them, can now be obviated by violent acts, particularly by killing others. So we benefit from war. Our work is easier then. It is calm periods that call upon the skills of advanced devils like myself. I will say that it is not at all routine to

convince a man or woman to slay another. Left to themselves, they worry that murder may be the most selfish of the acts. Primitives certainly know that to be true. Ready to sacrifice an animal for one of their feasts, they are wise enough to ask forgiveness before they raise the knife.

In turn, I was now ready to fortify Adi's sense of the power that murder can offer the murderer. Of course, he was too young for our developed techniques, but I did work up a dream-etching where Adolf was a hero in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. This entailed the suggestion that he had been there in his previous life almost two decades before he was born in 1889. It was not difficult to bring him to believe he had massacred a platoon of French soldiers who had made the signal mistake of attacking his lonely outpost. Of course, such a dream-etching was gross, but it did prepare a ~~track~~^{base} on which to lay more sophisticated impulses later. Standing by itself, the Franco-Prussian dream-etching was a pure wish-fulfillment.

May I say that we knew all about wish-fulfillment long before Doctor Freud had anything to say on the matter. Our approach to human psychology must of necessity go far beyond all those good Viennese doctors. Indeed, we smile at the superficiality of so many of Dr. Freud's analyses. That is his fault. He wanted nothing, after all, to do with angels

or demons, and was willfully determined not to recognize the engagement of the Dummkopf and the Maestro in large or small human matters.

On the other hand, a small portion of praise can still be given to Freud for his delineation of the ego. That concept has become one of the tools by which humans have become almost as adept as we are at assessing shifts of self-worth within.

Be it said that the state of Adolf's ego had become the focus of my attention. It would do no good to keep raising his estimate of his own worth if, at the same time, he was terrified that he had helped to kill Edmund. Because he did not wish to believe it, he most certainly did feel guilty and the worst of it was that I hardly knew the answer. Had he, or had he not?

The facts were simple—which is to say that the deed was clear, but the consequences were not. ~~In the last days of his own measles,~~ on a morning when Angela was working with Klara and Paula in the garden and Alois was out for his walk, Adolf found Edmund playing alone in the room that they had shared until Adolf's illness.

Adolf walked over and kissed Edmund. Simple as that. I must admit that I was impelling him. If, personally, I certainly did feel something comparable to affection for Edmund, there was little I could do about it in

this situation. In those days, I was not prepared to defy any order given directly by the Maestro.

"Why are you kissing me?" asked Edmund.

"Because I love you."

"You do?"

"I love you, Edmund."

"Is that why you scalped me?"

"You must forget that. You must forgive me. ~~I have suffered~~
~~for scalping you. That must be why I caught the measles.~~
I think that is

"Can that be the real reason?"

~~Yes~~, I think so. Yes. And that is why I must kiss you now.

That is the way I can give you back the scalp I took."

"You do not need to do that. So far I have no headaches"

"We cannot take a chance. Let me kiss you again."

"Isn't that bad to do now that you have ~~had~~ these measles?"

"Between brothers and sisters, yes, but not between brothers. It has been established medically that brothers can kiss even when one has ~~had~~ measles."

"Momma said we must not kiss you. None of us."

"That is because she is a woman and does not understand that it is all right between brothers."

"You swear?"

"I swear."

"Let me see your fingers when you swear."

Adolf was impelled most definitely by me then. He held up his hands, fingers out-stretched. "I swear," he said, and kissed Edmund repeatedly, a boy's kiss full of slobbering, and Edmund kissed him back, full of his own slobbering. He was so happy that Adi did love him after all.

Edmund came down with the measles. And the disease did prove fatal. We were responsible for his death or we were not. I knew no more than Adolf. So I buried such questions under the powers of wish-fulfillment. Night after night a new platoon of French soldiers was massacred in Adolf's sleep, and if there had not been all the other problems with which he had to contend, I think he might have been ready to move his psychic strengths over to rigorous belief that murder offers power to a murderer.

BOOK XII

EDMUND, ALOIS AND ADOLF

Leonding was only five miles from Linz ^{and that} which ~~gave~~ ^{gave} Alois to feel that he was near again to the active life of a real city, a longing he had not allowed himself to indulge in Haid or Lambach.

For Alois, however, the house would have been more attractive if it had ^{not} been ~~shared~~ ^{shared} across the street from the town cemetery, ^{but, then, that was} ~~just as it was~~ ^{just as it was} ~~they could afford it.~~ ^{they could afford it.}

^{Adolf's} ~~On the other hand,~~ ^{near by,} their village church was ~~just across the street~~ ^{just across the street} and ~~the~~ ^{the} new house set within a fine garden, bordered by shrubs and some white

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Leonding was only five miles from Linz ^{and that} which enabled Alois to feel that he was near again to the active life of a real city, a longing he had not allowed himself to indulge in Hafeld or Lambach.

For Klara, however, the house would have been more attractive if it had not been situated across the street from the town cemetery. ^{But then that was} ~~yet this was the~~

~~was a nice house because the~~
~~the~~ only reason they could afford it.

^{Nevertheless,} ^{nearby,}
 On the other hand, their village church was just across the way, and ^{the} their new home sat within a fine garden bordered by maples and oaks whose

limbs had grown into such artful shapes that a godly spirit ^{while} ~~must~~ have been present. So Klara decided. ^{Klara decided} ~~that was to the good,~~
~~I must add that Klara still felt~~
 Nonetheless, Klara also felt at odds with Leonding ~~itself~~. She feared the

move could ~~be~~ prove dangerous. Part of this uneasiness, I would warrant, ~~was~~
~~was due to an aftermath of~~
 came from her friendship with Preisinger. He had ~~not only~~ been nice, ~~but~~ and

also, yes, so strong. ~~She considered that perilous.~~ He had aroused an

excitement that should belong properly only to ~~her~~ marriage. Now, on these

streets of Leonding, many of the townspeople had sly faces ~~there to suggest~~
~~which suggested,~~ ^{who nodded as they passed}
~~that they know a little more than she did about these treacherous sides of~~ ^(and perilous)

human nature. While she had certainly lived in any number of more

sophisticated places: Vienna, when she kept house for ~~an~~ ^{the} old lady, Braunau

with Alois, and then Passau, she had never looked for a life in any way outside

her duties ^{and} ~~or~~ her family. Now, she might be ^{just a little inclined to a little} ready for something more. Only,

~~that was not permissible.~~ So, ~~for a time~~ she kept close to the new house.

Forays out of her kitchen and garden were restricted to visiting the shop of

Josef Mayrhofer who not only owned a fine grocery, but was a fine man and

~~was~~ the Mayor of Leonding. ^{indeed he} ~~There she bought vegetables two or three times a~~
~~week, dressed neatly for the occasion and was always friendly to Herr~~
^{It was at his shop that}
^{she} ~~shopped twice a~~

~~although~~ ~~soon~~ ~~stay over as they had~~
Mayrhofer, but invariably, she would say, "I can't stay. There's so much work waiting for me."

She was living with the conviction that she had given herself over to the ~~Devil~~ ^{that awful and stricken} Devil in the terrifying moment when she believed that Alois had just killed Alois-Junior. With the smallest prompting, ~~that she could see the boy on the~~ ^{the boy she had prayed} ground again—Devil, save Alois' son, and I will be yours!

~~I must offer a command here on human nature~~
Such vows, taken by pious people, ~~retain~~ ^{often} some value to us even when the oaths become, in time, analogous to radioactive compounds that deteriorate to a half-life. ~~We do, however, keep such assets on reserve.~~ ^{and we invest} Klara ~~thereby~~ ^{after all} still ~~feels~~ ^{does (as if)} her soul is imperiled.

No matter, she is quite attracted to Mayrhofer. He is more worldly than Preisinger and ~~that could prove tempting.~~ ^{is} ~~If they grow too friendly, she might~~ ^{It is also fearful for if} ruin a good man.

I was witnessing a comedy. I knew nothing would happen. Mayrhofer was as proper as Klara. Moreover, he had already met Alois and both men ~~had~~ ^{sett ready for} formed a quick friendship. Alois was drawn to a man who was smart enough

to be Mayor, and practical enough to own a prosperous store. In turn,

Men
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All
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⊗ Note - ~~Cham~~ Burger-Abend to
Buerger-Abend

Mayrhofer respected Alois's years of service in Customs, particularly his promotions. Before long, they were drinking together at the tavern.

All the same, this subdued flirtation between Mayrhofer and Klara remained alive, and I continued to enjoy it. Now that Mayrhofer, a man of honor, had become friends with Alois, he could not even smile too often when Klara was near. In turn, that was acceptable to her. Mayrhofer had a jealous wife. Alois had told her that the woman was a shrew who was always pointing her finger. "All of these women who come to the store," Frau Mayrhofer had already told her husband, "are just waiting to throw themselves at you." Indeed, Mayrhofer confessed to Alois that years ago, he did have a small affair. Just one. Then, his wife found out. His life had been a misery since. In turn, Alois was wise enough not to suggest that in this regard, his own life may have been more agreeable.

At first, they did drink only in the local tavern, but Mayrhofer soon confessed that given his position as Mayor, the premises ^{could be seen as} were a little too raw for his office, ~~and~~ after some deliberation, he even invited Alois to a Burger-^{occasion} ~~Abend~~, an ^{evening} ~~evening~~ for the town burghers, ^{to meet} ~~which was an occasion that took place~~ on four separate evenings each week. The members could attend

Throughout!



regularly or rarely, but it was a lively occasion for ~~the~~ substantial individuals in Leonding to ^{come} get together. These gatherings, explained Mayrhofer, ^{were} ~~rotated~~ ^{a round} among the best four inns of the town, and were held for the sole purpose of good talk with good prosperous company. The object, as Mayrhofer explained tactfully, was not to get drunk, but to exchange good conversation. In fact, he did murmur that they had a few members who turned out unhappily, and sooner or later, "these tipplers were not asked to come back. We did it politely—as much as possible, under the circumstances—but it is essential, Alois, that a man must never appear to be even ^{one} hint unbalanced on these occasions. Merriment is ^{most} ~~certainly~~ acceptable, but good manners are paramount."

"I have to agree," said Alois. "That is always the essence of fine and decent company."

So Alois was introduced, and went through the considerable tension of sitting in with the local gentry. He most certainly did not get unbalanced, and he did return several times a month to keep up his friendship with Mayrhofer who would go to the tavern no longer because of one ^{ugly} ~~dreadful~~ occasion when a

^{was looking}
drunken lout ~~tried~~ to insult him. The malcontent had been told to leave by the tavern owner, and did, but the place was spoiled for the Mayor.

During the day, Alois now spent his time working in the garden, or at his new bee-hive. He had purchased one Langstroth box, and to it added only a small population. As he explained to Mayrhofer, "Some honey for my family's use and gifts for friends—that will be sufficient." He was determined not to become involved again with apiary commerce. At Hafeld, the venture had taken over all of his thoughts. "It is equal to being enslaved by a force larger than oneself."

"So is the Mayoralty," replied Mayrhofer.

Soon enough, Alois grew so impressed by the Burger-Abends that he bought a book of Latin quotations which he ^{expected} ~~looked~~ to memorize. But,

retaining the phrases was a treacherous enterprise. His greatest problem ^{since} ~~these~~

^{He told} ~~days~~ had been boredom. Now he ^{the} ~~had~~ discovered its loyal assistant—poor memory!

The greatest counterbalance he found against the yaws of long, eventless afternoons at home was to play with Edmund. The little boy was more charming at four years of age than any of his other children had been,

and Edmund stayed so close to him at the beehive that Klara had to make a ^{little} little veil and sew up white pants to go with a white shirt and white gloves.

Klara protested: "The boy is too young." But Alois insisted, and so the two ^{often} were out at the hive a ~~great deal~~.

Before long, Alois had fallen in love again, a charming love, indeed, for he knew it ^{had} ~~was bound~~ to be his last true romance. He adored Edmund. It was

not only that his little son was so clever, but that he was, in addition, tender ^{so} and ^{just as} sweet. "If I had ever met a woman ^{just as} perfect, I would have married her

for forever," he would repeat to himself as a joke. He did like humor that was bifurcated. He could picture the look of woe—would it even be jealousy?—on Klara's face if he ever told her this, and yet he also laughed ^{at} ~~for~~ his own

tenderness—for the boy and for Klara, too. So much of all that was good in her that he was never about to declare (not to her—never spoil a good woman!) was ^{part of} ~~part of~~ why the boy was so nicely balanced. ^{By Alois' measure,} ~~He had, as Alois measured~~

^{he had} his father's intelligence and his mother's capacity for loyalty. An excellent ^{combination,} ~~mixture~~.

Yes, so bright. And Edmund loved the bees. He did not even squeak too much when some of the sluggards crawled over his gloves on their way

back to the hive entrance. Once he even received a bite inside his glove but didn't cry, after Alois said, "Oh, we must keep this a secret. Your mama won't let you play here ~~again~~ if she knows."

"she will let me. She"
"No, father," said Edmund, "~~she~~ will listen to you."

"It could cause trouble," said Alois.

"That is true," said Edmund and sighed. "Too bad," he said, "it hurts. I would really like to cry."

At which they both laughed.

often
Once, ~~back in~~ the house, they would play Customs. Alois ~~even~~ put on his old uniform *(a classically close fit by now)* ~~(although he could hardly close the waist)~~ and they pretended that Edmund was trying to smuggle a valuable coin past a ~~border~~ inspector.

"Why is my coin so valuable?" asked Edmund.

"Because it was owned by Napoleon," said Alois. "He used to keep this guilder in his pocket."

"He did not," said Edmund. "You are teasing me."

"No, I am not. It is part of the game."

"You must"
~~I~~ like that.

Napoleon's
"Yes, but just you try to hide ~~that~~ coin from me."

"How are you going to find it?"
~~"How will you get it back?"~~
 "I will if you promise not to undress me."
~~"No."~~ *you on the belly until you confess."*
 "I will just tickle you. Then you are bound to confess."

"I won't," said Edmund, giggling already, and stepped into the parlor closet to hide the guilder. ~~Struggling beneath the coats hanging in there from the rack,~~ *hide the guilder,* he knew where to put the coin. He wedged it into the cuff of his boot. ~~That way, he didn't have to undo the laces.~~

When he came out, Alois stared at him with a fair share of the malevolence he used to direct at suspects who were being interviewed.

"Are you ready to confess?" he asked.

Edmund was hardly frightened. He began to giggle.

"Very well. Since you are so insolent," said Alois, "I will have to pat you down," and proceeded to tickle him under the arms and on the belly until Edmund dropped to the floor in a puddle of pure helpless mirth. "Stop it, Daddy, stop it," he cried out, "or I will have to pee."

Alois desisted. "But you are not ready to confess."

"That is because I am not smuggling anything."

"You are. We know. You have Napoleon's coin."

"Try and find it," said Edmund and began to giggle again.

"Oh, I will," said Alois, and with a quick move pulled off Edmund's boots, shook them, and watched the guilders fall out. "Now, you are under arrest," he said.

Edmund was furious. "You cheated," he said, "you cheated. You did not obey the rules."

"State your case."

"You said you would just tickle, but you took off my clothes."

"These are not your clothes," said Alois, picking up a boot. "Clothes are garments. This is footwear."

"You just changed the rules."

Alois made a face. "That," he said in a deep voice, "is what we like to do in Customs."

For a moment, Edmund was uncertain. Then he began to laugh. Alois laughed so hard and so long that once again, he began to cough which, at first, was fine—he could clear some phlegm—but then his coughing did not halt for many seconds, then a minute of paroxysms ^{followed} which brought Klara over to the parlor from the kitchen. Alois rolled his eyes at her and took a tentative breath. Had he come close, he wondered, to a hemorrhage of his lungs?

Now Edmund had begun to weep. "Oh, Papa," he cried out, "you must not die, you must not die," and ~~the sound of~~ ^{silenced their} his voice kept all response away ~~from both his parents~~ _{he} he had seemed so certain of the outcome.

"Papa, I know you will not die," he now said in amendment. "I will ask God to forbid that and He will listen. I pray to Him every night."

"I don't pray," Alois almost said. Still ^{holding his breath} cautiously in balance from the ~~reverberations of attack, he did not speak but~~ he did shake his head at Klara. These pious women ~~were the real smugglers,~~ _{to} steal across the border of a young boy's mind, especially when he was so bright. Some day, Edmund might be a legal eminence in Vienna, one of the wealthiest and most powerful barristers in Austria, and yet his mother had to offer this religious pap, good oats for horses.

~~so soon as he regained his breath~~
All the same, Alois ~~was not yet~~ ready to correct her. Religion was necessary, perhaps, for the very young. ~~For now, he would leave it at that.~~
There was so much beauty, Alois decided, in the boy's love for his mother, and yes, most certainly, his father.

Up in his bedroom with the door locked, Adolf took his revenge on the sounds of laughter he ^{heard} had to hear from below. He chose to masturbate. The

image he held in his head was a picture of Luigi Lucheni that he had seen in the Linz Tages Post. It was the assassin's small mustache, fixed to his upper lip just below his nostrils, a dark little daub of a mustache. That certainly excited Adolf. Once, at a time when he and Angela had still been sleeping in the same room, he had caught a glimpse of her pubic hair just as it had begun to manifest itself, no more than a patch of dark down, and Luigi's postage-stamp of a mustache was close in resemblance.

The combination had to excite him—that small peek-a-boo into Angela's privacy ^{but looked} so much like the mad murderer's upper lip—he grew twice excited when he heard his father coughing away like still another maniac.

-2-

On one of his occasional visits to the Burger-Abends, Alois, no longer willing to remain a quiet presence, prevailed on himself to speak. This was after listening to the "Atheist-in-Residence," a member who delighted in assuring all the others that "I am the only brave man in our ranks since I have been blessed. I do not have to believe in God." To Alois' critical eye, ^{thus} he was ^{not all the same} ~~one~~ A scrawny chap, but a long-invested member—his grandfather had been one of the founders of the society. ^{however} ~~Nonetheless, it did seem that the man~~ had little else to offer. So, Alois decided to speak up and declared that each intelligent

human had to decide for himself whether the Deity did exist, but he, for one, was certainly opposed to the sanctimony of all those pietists who would run to church ^{trying to escape} at every drop of rain in their lives. He would attend on one day only of the year and that was the Emperor's birthday. "In my opinion, it is Franz Josef who is to be celebrated. Especially after Sisi's death."

He soon discovered that he was dealing with a class of people who had a special attitude about such matters. ^{They seemed to be} While they did seem to feel superior to unseemly devotion ~~in religion~~, yet they were ~~prepared to be formally~~ observant. They were ^{to the logic beneath this paradox} church-goers.

If Alois had been a client, I could have alerted him ^{was} to be privately superior to religion ^{may be} a privilege of the upper classes, but going to church ^{was seen as} the ^{standards of} keel to maintain ^{the} social life in the community.

One of the older gentry did reprove Alois by saying, "I would agree that ^{one does not have to know} it can prove unsettling to be among those who become over-enthusiastic about every last Saint's Day ^{can} observance. So often these rites become a haven for unhappy women. But let us recognize that without religion, we would suffer chaos. It is the most dependable deterrent to madness in all of world history."

Alois was ready to take up the argument. "Nonetheless, good sir," he said, "permit me to suggest that religion does offer its own kind of madness. Just think of such highly immoral Popes as"—he knew the list—"Sixtus IV, Innocent VII, Alexander VI, Julius II, Leo X, and Clement VII. Simony was not only their daily practice, but a cardinal's hat was waiting for every one of their illegitimate sons. Some of them even killed their enemies. I would declare that to be madness. Yes, good sir, that was madness in the opposite direction, I would go so far as to assert."

He sat down, pleased that there was at least a modicum of courteous applause from a portion of the burghers, but then had to recognize that the applause was formal—every speaker would receive at least, a minimal response—but indeed a chill had come upon the room. He had been too outspoken. It made him decide, most unhappily, that he should not return soon to the Burger-Abends, and when a month later he did come back, he chose to be silent.

In compensation, the evenings ^{did he come} were ~~diversions~~. ^{He was not bored.} These gentry certainly knew more than he did about high styles of living. They were knowledgeable about everything from gourmandize and antique collecting to interesting

innovations that would soon appear in indoor plumbing and electric lighting. Again, he had to feel the insufficiency of his own experience.

No surprise, then, if at the Burger-Abends, he thought often of the young officers for whom he made boots when he was working in Vienna, dreaming all the while of a beautiful young woman who would put together exquisite lady's hats before sharing his bed in the evening. Now, on the way home from a Burger-Abend, a wealth of pity could pass through him for what had never come to pass.

Let me suggest that the intensity of such feelings ^{have rich enough to} charm the heart of a saint. Self-pity is able to reach ^{the finest} operatic heights—if at considerable expense to oneself—and ^{here, I must say,} Alois was paying too much. ^{in compensation,} his dreams ^{at night} had begun to bother him. He had now developed the fearful intuition that sleep was a marketplace where the dead could ^{reappear} return in order to remind you of your ^{personal} debt to them. So he thought of Johann Nepomuk and his mother, and then he ^{was obliged} had to brood over his two dead wives. What if they met in this marketplace of sleep? What if they came to agree with each other concerning their former husband? He would then be facing a cabal. ^{the day} "That might even be more dangerous," he told himself, "than for two of a

end of chapter

Delite par

man's former mistresses to become friends, and be ready to compare accounts."

One of the gentry had made that remark at the Burger-Abends, and it occasioned the heartiest burst of laughter. Of course, the fellow was an old roué from one of the best families in town. Alois had enjoyed those words enough to make them his own, and even served them up at the tavern. He did notice that the louts laughed at this with as much gusto as the gentry.

~~X~~

certainly ⁻³⁻ ~~Adolf~~ ^{Adolf was developing his own social life. He} liked the new school in Leonding. It was a short walk from the
 Garden House, and ^{not as} ~~less strict than~~ the monastery. While he was, once more,
 an excellent student, ^{his best pleasure came} ~~he could hardly wait~~ each day ^{after} ~~for~~ school to end. The
 Kumberger Forest outside Leonding was full of small caves and wooded draws
 and ~~glens~~ ^{for preparing}—splendid enclosures where one could prepare an ambush. So, he
 began to recruit schoolmates to join the battles, and they even ^{commenced having} ~~began~~ small
 encounters in the late afternoon, although the major event ^{each} ~~every~~ week was
 reserved for Saturday morning.

Adi was also reading the novels of Karl May, and that altered many of
 his techniques. Of late it had been the Boers versus the English, but Karl May
^{written} ~~had wrote~~ ^{it having many characters} about a brave man named Shatterhand who was always ready to
 protect white settlers against American Indians.

^{Adolf's wanted} Not all of his recruits ~~chose~~ ^{wanted} to be on Shatterhand's side. That was
 because an Indian could steal up on a settler from behind, get an arm around
 the other boy's neck, and declare, "You are scalped." Then the Indians could
 run back to their dens in the forest before the white settlers ^{were allowed to} ~~responded~~ by
^{Indians} charging into any copse where ~~they~~ might or might not be hiding. The settlers

had long sticks ~~to serve as~~ ^(a white-man's rifle) rifles and any Indian touched with a stick was dead for the rest of the game and would have to go home.

On the other hand, Adolf was scalped once by a boy quick enough to dart around his protectors. Adolf declared it illegal. "You do not attack leaders," he said. "You are an Indian and they believe in the vengeance of ~~the~~ war-gods. So they do not attack high officers like myself. They do not dare. A terrible vengeance would ~~fall on~~ ^{come to} them."

Nonetheless, he was ~~also~~ ^{some} discovering a fair amount of difficulty at keeping recruits who were his age ~~under his service~~ ^{serve}. They wished to be on a more equal footing. He had to let them slip away even as he brought in younger boys.

He even took Edmund along, Edmund who was now five years old and certainly the youngest to participate. ~~Nonetheless, the older kids liked him,~~ ^{the older kids} while he could even if Edmund could hardly be worth much when attacks began. ~~Still, Adolf gave him special training. He liked having him alone in the forest. He could~~ ^{being with him} ~~to~~ ^{he could not do} command Edmund then, which, of course, he was not able to do at home. ~~There, Klara would protect Edmund, Angela would protect him, and Alois, certainly did.~~

Adi could remember that they used to safeguard him from Alois-Junior, but that had been more justifiable. After all, Alois-Junior had once planted a turd on the end of his nose. He didn't do such things to Edmund. But he did *think* ~~giggle at the thought~~ that if he could do it, what a joy ~~it would be~~ to hear Edmund scream. Once, out in the forest, he even poked Edmund in the back with a stick, and told him it was a hornet, which, of course, Edmund mentioned to Klara. He knew it was not a hornet.

The story worried her. ~~She could sense the animosity in Adi.~~ Was it *Adolf's* *animosity* ~~worse than Alois-Junior's spite?~~ Yes, she decided, it was worse. Adolf and Edmund were blood brothers.

By now, Adi was having trouble with some of the stronger kids. One or two even gave promise that it could end in a fight. He had never had a fist-fight, he had always known how to avoid them, but now he took a vow that he would not allow anyone to beat him. He would do what was necessary, even if that meant he had to do it with a rock in his hand. Visions came to him on the edge of sleep. He saw a boy he truly feared staring at him with a blood-spattered head. Could that happen? Several of the soldiers who had quit his army were now back. Were they ready to give him trouble?

~~He~~ I was needed again to enrich his education on these matters. Reliable rules of

~~Even~~ kids were afraid of real superiors like their father, their mother, their older brother, or their enemies—anybody who was stronger than them.

Yet they were not often. That was the secret to their weakness. They were not ^{Another} was that they were usually not too ^{white} smart enough. So, they could not trust the quickness of their thoughts. *

a) leader had to be ready ^{always} for the treachery of others. ^{it was not a} He would make that point ^{had idea to make that point to malcontents,} clear. A leader would have to face jealousy, and all the ^{devils which ensued from that}

Meanwhile, soldiers continued to leave his army. Soon there would be ^{he was prepared to put those axioms into practice,} snow in the forest, but it was not necessary. Any

Then an episode occurred which ended these wars for the rest of the winter. On a day when no one felt warm enough to hide ⁱⁿ motionless in ambush, one ^{trooper} ~~troop~~ declared that he was able to start a fire by rubbing twigs together. The others jeered, but Adolf said, "If you can make a real fire, then I give you the order to proceed."

The boy did. Once the fire was lit, ^{they} all went off to find fallen branches dry enough to burn. Soon the fire was not only blazing but ready to advance into the surrounding brush. Since there was no water handy, they tried to stomp it out. They couldn't. Smoke rose into the sky.

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They ^(had to) quit the fire, one by one, they retreated, ^{near to half} then they ran until they were ⁼ a quarter of a mile away. Adolf began to explain to the others, all twenty-odd, that they must not tell ^{of this to} anyone.

He needed me ^{again} then, I was offering the power to look into a compatriot's eye and decide whether he ^{was} would be strong enough not to ^{spread of this} give them away.

"Yes," said Adolf, "if any one of you tells anybody about this fire, we will all have to pay ^{the name of the cone} for it. And then we will want to find out ^{then} who told. And there will be consequences. A brave soldier does not betray his ~~own~~ comrades."

One by one, two by two, they left the forest. By now, the fire had grown to a size visible enough to bring teams of ^{horses} horses, fire-men and water wagons out from Leonding.

^{Close to} On the way home, Edmund said that he would tell one person, their father. "If you do," said Adolf, "I will be severely punished. And then you will have to pay for it."

"I do not believe you," said Edmund. "Our father would never permit it. So, don't you try to hit me."

"It is not me you have to fear. It is everybody else who was there, ^{if} ~~and~~ ^{they are} ~~will be~~ punished. ^{they} will be waiting for you. All of them. If necessary, I will be the one to let them know ^{that you were such a fool} you couldn't keep your mouth shut."

"I have to tell our father. I promised."

"What did you promise?"

"I promised ^{that} ~~that~~ I would tell him about anything that bothers ~~me~~ ^{all} me."

"All right. That is all right for you to do on ^{all} other matters. But not ~~on~~ ^{will not} this. I tell you, the others will beat you up. I will not be able to protect you. I ^{won't} even want to!"

"I feel sick."

"You always were a snot-nose. Go throw up."

-4-

Alois had his ~~own~~ ^{yet} suspicions about the fire. He held Edmund on his lap and looked tenderly into his eyes, ~~but~~ ^{pass.} before he could ask a question, Edmund threw up again. Alois decided to let it go. He was convinced ~~that~~ ^{might} Adolf had had something to do with the blaze, but Edmund's life ~~could~~ ^{might} become ~~be a~~ ^{tried to make} a misery if he ~~forced~~ ^{could} him to talk about it.

Moreover, there ~~might~~ ^{for certain} be repercussions. If he knew ^{for certain} that Adolf was one of the malefactors, it would be expected of him, as a good citizen, to inform the authorities. Once he did, however, they could fine him. So, Alois wiped Edmund's spew off his own shirt and hugged him ~~tenderly~~. He also made a point over the next few days of not looking Adolf in the eye too closely.

A week passed with no further consequences, and Adolf began to feel *he was becoming more like* ~~close to~~ *be calm in the face of* Shatterhand, ~~the man who could rise above crisis and catastrophe.~~ *crisis. He began to*

He would have short conversations with Shatterhand. "A fine job, pardner," would be the whisper in his ear whenever he thought of the battles *or To Adolf that* ~~won before the fire had happened. That~~ was the highest praise, for it came from a hero so fearless that he lived in a special heaven. *Needless to add, I was the voice of Shatterhand,*

That winter, Adolf came to read a book by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, an author who spoke of a force that could ~~shape history. This force depended on~~ ~~the presence of~~ a "Fuehrer cast of Iron and Fire. The people will honor him as a savior and forgive all his sins."

Of course, ^{his} Adolf's class had also been offered Kant and Goethe and Schleiermacher, but ^{Adolf} ~~he~~ ^{such} felt that most of these authors showed too much respect ^{Father for reason} for reason. Which ~~bored him~~. His father, for one, was always speaking favorably of ^{its} ~~the~~ virtues of reason. "Human nature is undependable," he would tell his family at the kitchen table. "It is not to be relied upon for government." ^{depend on} ~~What enables stable societies to work is~~ the power of the law, not the people."

He looked around at the table and decided this might yet be of interest to his son. "It is legal constitutions that are needed, Adolf, and then only when

constructed by the finest people. It does not matter if it is a democracy or a monarchy. What is important is that ^{the law} reason receives the profound respect it ^{has} ~~earned~~ ^{when the king and} ~~deserves, because it is founded on reason~~ ^{logic and sound principles.}

Adolf preferred Jahn. Reason, he decided, was like the sirens ^{who} that swim in the Rhine and lead you to your death. Even while you drown, they sing sweet songs to bewitch your head. ^{It was} Personal strength ^{that} was of more importance ^{not only through} than laws. Great strength could enable you to become a savior of your people. ^{would have to} That would take care of your sins. All sins ^{just} could be forgiven, yes, if you were a great savior. Smaller matters would disappear.

Whereupon, he rejected Goethe and Schiller. Their humor annoyed him. It was too personal—as if they were much too pleased with what they were doing. Not serious enough, Adolf decided. The other two, Kant and Schleiermacher, he simply could not read. After Jahn, his highest pleasure came from the fairy tales of the Grimm brothers, also assigned to his class. Those were good stories, and deep! He delighted in acting them out for Edmund who was too young to read but always ready to listen. He explained to Edmund that the Grimm Brothers had written tales to show children how important it was to obey their parents and their older brother, even—hemmed

in by the logic of it, he had to add—and their older sister. Then he spoke of one story called The Girl Without Hands for which he made up whatever dialogue he could not remember. "This is about a father who has been ordered by the Devil to cut off the hands of his young daughter." When Edmund shrieked, Adolf spoke in the voice of the father, explaining ^{his purpose} ~~it to his daughter~~.

"I don't want to do this, dear daughter. But I must. These are orders. It is not for me to question orders that have been given by a very high authority. So, I ^{am obliged to} ~~must~~ obey."

"What does the daughter say?" Edmund asked.

"Oh, she is obedient. Very obedient. She says, 'Father, do with me what you will. ~~For~~ I am your child.' Then she puts her hands right up on the chopping block. Her father picks up a big cleaver and he does it."

"That is so awful," said Edmund. "He chops off her hands?"

"With one ~~big~~ whack! But she lives happily ever after."

"How?" asked Edmund.

"Her father takes care of everything." Adolf nodded ^{profoundly} ~~and~~ "I could tell you a worse story but I won't."

"Tell me."

"It is about a girl who was so disobedient that she died."

"What did she do?" asked Edmund.

"It doesn't matter," said Adolf. "She was disobedient. That is enough. They bury this disobedient girl, and what do you think? It is hard to believe, but she remains disobedient even after she is dead. One of her arms keeps pushing up out of her grave right into the air."

"Is she very strong?" asked Edmund.

"The devil is helping her. What else—that is the way it happens. So when her relatives see that arm up in the air, they come out to her grave and try to ^{push} ~~force~~ it down again. They can't. The arm is too strong. So ^{then think they} ~~they start to~~ ^{away} cover it with ~~a mound of~~ dirt. But her arm knocks all the dirt ~~off~~. Then, her mother goes back to the house and picks up the heaviest poker in the fireplace. When she returns to her daughter's grave, she starts beating on the arm until it is broken. That way, the arm can be folded back ~~under the dirt~~ and the girl is able to find some rest."

Edmund was shivering. He was crying and laughing at once. "Would you do something like that to me?" he asked Adolf.

"Only if you should die and I would see your arm sticking out from your grave. Then, I would have to do it ~~to you~~. I certainly would."

"Oh," said Edmund, "I don't like that."

"It does not matter what you would like. It would have to be done."

"Tell me one more story."

"It would take too long. I'll just give you the end: It's about a queen who boils a child to death. Then, she eats ^{it all} ~~the body~~."

"You have to be a queen to be able to do something like that," said Edmund. "Isn't this so?"

"Yes, you probably have to be a queen. Especially if it is your own child that you are boiling," Adolf replied, "but nobody can take these matters for granted."

"My mother would never do that to me."

"Maybe not our mother, but I cannot say what Angela would do."

"Oh, no," said Edmund, "Angela would never do something like that to Paula or to me."

"Don't be so certain."

Edmund shook his head. "I know you are wrong."

"Do you want another story?"

"Maybe not.

"This one is the best," said Adolf.

"Is it truly the best?"

"Yes."

"Then maybe I don't want to hear it."

"It's about a young man who is ordered to sleep with a corpse. In time to come you, too, may have to sleep next to a dead man."

At this point, Edmund shrieked. Then he fainted.

Unfortunately for Adolf, this last conversation was overheard by Angela. She was standing now in the doorway, ~~shaking her head~~⁵⁰. Adolf had time to think that his luck was foul.

Angela knelt, and patted Edmund's face until he could sit up again. Then she went to tell Klara.

His mother now called him Adolf on every occasion when she had to scold ~~him~~⁵⁰. "Adolf. This was dreadful. You are going to be punished."

"For what? I did nothing bad. Edmund loves the stories. He kept asking me for more."

"You knew what you were doing. So, I am going to tell your father. I have to. He will decide on your punishment."

"Mother, this is not something to bring father into."

"If I don't tell him, then I ^{must} be the one to look for a ^{serious} ~~worse~~ punishment. ~~And maybe I will~~ Maybe I will buy you no present at Christmas."

"This is so unfair," said Adolf. "I try to ^{make} ~~entertain~~ my kid brother, ^{laugh and} ~~But~~ ^{be happy, But} he is a brat."

"Do you accept what I say? No gift for Christmas?"

"Yes. If you think that is fair, I have to accept. But, Mother, please look into your heart when the time comes. See if you will still see me as guilty then."

Klara was furious. This was even worse. He was certain that she would change her mind and buy him a good present after all.

So, that evening, she did tell Alois.

His father had ^{few} ~~no~~ doubts. He chose to give Adolf a severe whipping. It was the worst since they ^{had} moved into the house in Leonding. But this time,

Adolf was determined to make no outcry. He thought of Preisinger all the while. He made no sound. He stiffened his body.

Alois was beginning to feel as if he had Junior back on his hands. Another criminal to deal with! ~~which~~ ^{That} excited even more rage.

Between each blow, Adolf was thinking of how Alois-Junior had run away. That was one memory he could use. He would make no sound. He would be as strong as Alois-Junior. If he did not cry, then his own strength might become great enough to justify whatever he might yet want to do. Strength created its own justice. He called upon the force of command that had been with him after the fire in the forest when he ordered them all ~~never~~ ^{not} to speak of it. Yes, he had been full of fear then, but he had called on his force of command. Then he had lived for days in the fear someone would talk. I had been with him, of course, through that turmoil. ^{I had to be.} Adolf's confidence was ~~so~~ ^{sufficiently} fragile ~~that I had~~ ^(Be it said; Egos are prey to the same weakness that hardens exhibit when unsure of what comes next.) to maintain his ego then at full erection. ~~(Egos are prey to the same weakness that hardens exhibit when unsure of what comes next.)~~

So, yes, I was there to monitor the whipping of Adolf, and fortify his resolve. If it was most important to him that he not weep, I had to be ready to diminish the intensity of Alois' blows whenever I thought the boy might break.

Equally, I was ready to increase his father's force, whenever it flagged. There were moments when Alois' fear of over-straining his heart was in direct opposition to my desire to salt Adolf's will. Let his hatred for Alois become intense enough to serve many an uncommon purpose ahead.

Nonetheless, balance is also crucial to our activities. I could not allow antipathy to his father to become excessive. ^{In childhood, intense} ~~Immense~~ hatreds in childhood ^{hatreds that} which find no dependable outlet can leave a client unstable. While ^{I had} ~~high~~ ^{been there to encourage high} imbalance ~~was~~ ^{was} altogether acceptable for me in Luigi Lucheni, that would not

do for Adolf. ~~We had put in too much effort on the boy.~~ We did not care to ~~have to deal in the future with endless~~ errant impulses and blind rages. Indeed, ^{The immediate after-effect} ~~one product of this heavy whipping was bound to be~~ detestation of Edmund. ^{At over the next few days, I was most uneasy} ~~That made me uneasy.~~ Edmund had remained in such a sorry state after

hearing the tales of the Grimm Brothers that Klara had ~~had~~ to lull him to sleep

with lullabies. Adolf, lying in the next cot, felt as bruised thereby as if he had

fallen out of a tree, indeed, his feelings were ^{had become so} ~~outraged~~ by Klara's ~~apparent~~ ^{present}

^{Show of} ~~indifference to him~~ ^{lying} that he decided to run away. Right there ^{lying} ~~on~~ his cot

he so decided—aching bones and all. He even made a point of telling this to

Edmund as soon as Klara ~~had~~ left the room.

"It is all your doing," said Adolf. "So, I must go."

Immediately, Edmund leaped out of bed and ran to tell his father. Yet, when Alois came up the stairs to collar the potential runaway, Adolf said, "It's a lie! My brother is always telling lies. This one I will not forgive him for. This lie is atrocious! I'll get him for this!"

"You'll get him, will you?"

Alois was not ready to give another beating. His arms were aching more than Adolf's. Still, he was sufficiently concerned to lock the boy in a room on the ground floor whose only window had bars. Alone, Adolf tried to squeeze his way through. He soon discovered, however, that his clothing, particularly the metal buttons on the shirt, seemed to make the difference. They ~~keep~~ ^{kept}

getting caught on the bars. So he took off his clothes, rolled them up in an

~~(pushed this bundle~~
overcoat, ~~put them~~ just outside the bars, and stark naked, attempted to wriggle ^{again.} through ^{righteous/ toward his mother} once more. He was so overheated with ~~fury and righteousness~~ ^{that he} ~~that he~~

~~that he~~ ^{he} (did not feel the cold of the open casement window, ~~nor~~ ^{nor} hear the sound of his

father's boots returning to the room. Only at the ~~sound~~ ^{click} of the door being ~~—~~ ^{look in the}

~~door~~ ^{door} unlocked did he pull away from the bars, seize a table cloth and wrap it around

himself. Alois, entering, the brass key still in his hand, took in the situation,

and roared with laughter. He yelled for Klara.. When the boy began to move,
~~he was kept in place by a look~~ ^{that they wanted} until Klara came through the door. Then Alois
 pointed to Adolf with a masterly scorn and said, "Look at ^{our} the toga boy, our ^{Adolf}
^{is wearing a toga."}
~~Toga Boy!~~ (Klara shook her head and left the room. That roused Alois to a
 full harangue: "So, you were trying to run away. I tell you, it would not be
 such a loss. All the same, I forbid it. Not because I would miss you, Toga-
 Boy. I would not. I forbid it because I would have to call in the police to tell
 them you are missing, and they might put me in jail." Alois knew this was an
 outright exaggeration, but he was full of momentum. "How your mother would
 weep! Her son is lost and her husband is in prison. Shame has come upon the
 Hitler family! All because of Toga-Boy!"

Adolf had stood up to the whipping, but now he was in tears. My work
 on his ego would have to be redone.

-5-

Alois did have regrets. That night he woke up worrying whether Alois-Junior had been a product of too many beatings, and the next day he was walking with Mayrhofer, the subject came up of parental punishment. Alois declared that he never engaged in corporeal chastisements. (He even said to himself, "Oh, you are lying like a thief.") But Mayrhofer's good opinion was crucial to him, so on he went: "I never strike my kids. I must admit, however, that I bawl them out frequently." How could a parent not? "Adolf," says Alois, "is the one I have to scold most. Tell him his behavior is bad. He can be a miserable urchin. Sometimes I say to myself, 'I'll bash him yet.'" Alois said

that on purpose. It would serve as an explanation if it were to come out that he had struck Adolf.

In truth, however, it was even becoming ~~more~~ ^{catch him up} difficult to ~~seize him~~ ^{The} ~~The~~ ^{close. The} boy now had a way of sliding and turning, a product perhaps of his skill at the war games. Usually, he succeeded in getting away from Alois after one off-centered slap on the rump. And for those times when his father did manage to turn him over his knee, there was no great arm left to give the whipping. ~~How~~ ^{become} sudden was Alois' heart on such occasions. It had ~~been much~~ ^{and} more enjoyable to lash him verbally, ~~so~~ ^{and} directly enjoyable to call him "Toga-Boy." Alois kept the mockery in play over the next few weeks, and Adolf reacted by coming down with an attack of measles.

Such a connection ~~is~~ ^{may be} of course, much too simple. In Leonding, at this time, ~~others~~ ^{others} of his age were also in bed with the disease. ~~It~~ ^{Yet, if it} was certainly contagious, ~~but~~ ^{and} Adolf had, in effect, been physically lowered by the last small ~~host~~ ^{and} of unfortunate events. His army had to cease operations after the fire in the forest, and ~~now~~ ^{appellation of} the jeers about Toga-Boy rankled his skin. ~~The worst~~ ^{Then came} ~~the worst~~ ^{It} news for him, however, was to hear that Der Alte had died. An obituary had even appeared in the Linz Tages Post, ~~such~~ ^{the} news forwarded all the way from

Hafeld, but then, the ^{death had been} event could be seen as sufficiently unusual to ^{merit a} be worth a

^{short} (description in newsprint. By the time his body had been found, ^{only} ^{in an advanced} ~~he was in a~~ ^{sad} state of decomposition. "Such," observed the Post, "is often the fate of

lonely hermits." To make matters worse, his bees had perished in the cold.

~~If Now, he was gone~~

Adolf truly mourned him. The old man had always been so gracious to him. Other than his mother, Der Alte had been the only adult to treat him ^{always} as if

he were important. ^{Together they had mourned the death of the wingless bee, and memory of that sorrow allowed Adolf to weep silently in his}

~~in turn, Alois retained enough sour feeling about Der Alte's masterful~~ ^{the old man's}

lectures to be rewarded now with a keen trace of pleasure—a most unseemly reaction to have ^{after all} So, to compensate—he hardly knew why—he did

buy Adolf an air-gun for Christmas. It was a solid gift, ready to pump out

pellets with enough power to drop a squirrel or a rat, and ~~so~~ would ~~yet~~ prove

its value to the boy, but not ~~as~~ yet. Most definitely, as Alois could note, Adolf

was still mourning Der Alte. Indeed, Alois had the impression that his son

might even be crying in his sleep. He did look frightful in the morning. Then

he came down with the measles.

Klara kept the house in a rigid quarantine. No one was allowed to visit Adolf in the hitherto unoccupied maid's room on the second floor. Only Klara,

wearing a gauze mask, would come in to look after him, and she would wash her hands afterward with a hideous-smelling antiseptic.

He had a rash, he had red eyes, he was not allowed to read, ~~he suffered boredom~~, he complained endlessly to his mother of the monotony of his existence, yet was almost glad when she went out again. The odor of the antiseptic that she brought into the room was ~~near to~~ intolerable.

His measles worked themselves out
It worked itself out (however, as a mild case. ~~The white spots in his~~
After a few days, the white spots in his
throat and on his tongue disappeared in a few days, his rash lessened, his disquiet increased. He was obsessed with how filthy he felt, for was that not exactly the way they all thought of him? Diseased and therefore filthy. He worried about where Der Alte might be now that he was not only dead, but had been left alone to rot.

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A last word about Der Alte might be fitting. Adolf still hoped that Der ^{Alte} spirit might be on its way to Heaven. Such a sentiment in my client ~~that nothing~~ impressed me because I was not ready to believe we had carried him ~~over to~~ ^{the year over to} Hell in high style. In truth, I do not know much about Hell. I am not even ~~that are~~ certain it exists. The Maestro has kept us, after all, in enclaves. ~~They are well~~ well-sealed. We are not supposed to know what we do not need to know.

To keep up our morale, therefore, we are reminded constantly of how much cosmic pretension there is in human affairs. We are frequently brought back to Nietzsche's immortal remark, "All priests are liars."

"How could it be otherwise?" the Maestro says. "The Dummkopf is not about to open His secrets to individuals distorted enough to choose the

ministry or the priesthood, ^{out of the desire} to dominate gullible audiences with descriptions of how the Lord will reward their belief when they die. Priests are, indeed, liars. They do not know a thing about ^{higher} ~~the highest~~ matters. Nor, for that matter, do any of you."

Leave it then that I know nothing of the final destination of Der Alte. I do suspect he was the sort of long-term client that we are often obliged to ignore ^{at} ~~by~~ the end. Certainly his use for us had dissipated. So, it is possible that he was ready to beseech Heaven to grant him final acceptance, and who knows—the Dummkopf, from what we are told, does accept some of our clients for reincarnation. As I have mentioned, the Maestro is not vigorously opposed to this. "Let us have the pleasure of picking up this piece of small fry again if the Dummkopf is so foolish as to give Der Alte another chance to pump up his vanities."

In contrast, all throughout his illness, Adolf did think often of Der Alte and of Edmund. He was certainly not ^{feeling} ~~as~~ generous ^{concerning} ~~in feeling for~~ his brother. After Adolf recovered from the measles, Edmund came down with a severe case. I will save the reader from too detailed a description of the turmoil and then the agony that reverberated—that is the word—through the Garden House

as Edmund's condition worsened. His face swelled. He became incoherent.

The doctor warned ^{Klara} the family that he might yet suffer from encephalitis.

"What is that?" she asked. She moaned when told it was a disease of the brain.

In their bedroom, Alois knelt beside Klara, and they began to pray for

Edmund's life. Alois even said, "I will believe in God if Edmund is spared.

May I die if I do not obey this vow."

We will never know whether Alois would have been true to such a promise—a lifetime of mental positions fortified one by one over the years would have been ready to sally forth and attack the vow at every future turn. Still, at one point he did say, "God, take my life, but spare the boy," and he meant it.

~~Then~~, Edmund died, ~~however~~

Prayer is an expedition beset by peril ^{Devils,} to those who pray. ~~We~~, for

example, have a power—which can prove most expensive to call upon—that enables us to block even the most essential, heartfelt, and desperately important prayers, and we will exercise such powers when the stakes ^{call for} demand it.

Cheap prayer, on the contrary, we encourage. We see all ^{such entreaties} that as adding ^{and this vast and growing} to the Dummkopf's Fatigue, ~~adding to the Dummkopf's~~ Indifference. Cheap

prayer wearies Him. Cheap patriotism enrages Him. (Cheap patriotism is is, after all, one of our ~~most successful~~ provenances.)

The point is that despite Alois and Klara's prayers, blocked or not, Edmund did die on February 2, 1900, and the family was left in indescribable condition. I even felt as if I were one of the ~~mourners~~ ^{emotionally afflicted}. Edmund was the first child for which I had entertained so curious a set of sensations ^{that I am tempted to call it} as love (or at least some representation of what might be ^{a complete and} whole-hearted liking) sufficient to explain the warmth that inhabited me when ^{I was} in the presence of that child. ^{I do} ~~I had~~ ^{not know if I was aware then of how much} ~~not known what~~ I might be feeling. I only knew that even as Adolf was not ready to contemplate his brother's death (for, indeed, he had a secret to bury as direct and powerful as the arm that protruded from the grave) so was I not ^{live with his death} ready to ~~contemplate it either~~. I, too, had been culpable.

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~~but~~ ready to go

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On the day of Edmund's funeral Alois told Klara that he would not go. At first, he could not ~~even~~ give a reason. He stood there like a pillar of stone.

Then, he began to weep. "I cannot control my feelings today," he said. "Would you have me break down in church? A church that I hate?" For the first time in their marriage, she raised her voice in anger. "Yes," she said, "this church that you hate. But I go to it for peace. For a little ~~peace~~, a little ¹ consolation. I am able to speak to our Gustav then, and to Ida and Otto, and now"—it was her turn to burst into tears—"to Edmund."

They did not quarrel. They wept together. She said at last, "You must stop being so ~~hard on~~ ^{severe when you are with} Adolf. He is now your only hope for a good son. ["] Why ~~must you beat him into the ground?"~~

Alois nodded. "I will make a promise," he said. "That is, if you will stay ~~here~~ with me today. ~~For~~ I cannot go to the funeral. I will not be able to keep myself together." Before he could finish ~~speaking~~, he was weeping again. He hugged her. "I need you," he said. "I need you to stay with me in this house." He had never said ^{anything like} that to her before. He could hardly believe he was saying it. "Yes," he declared, "I will take a solemn promise. I will not strike Adolf again."

It is a mistake to interrupt a husband and wife who are in pain, but I cannot resist remarking that in my experience, few marriages exist where a vow is not countermanded by a secret covenant.

Yes, that is our Alois, ² he has already told himself, "No, I will not strike Adolf again unless he does something awful," ^{Of course} but then, Klara was not of one piece ^{Not in this hour} ~~now~~ either. She was beginning to wonder if it was the fate of her family to be destroyed. Indeed, she was not ready for the funeral. This once, let God pay attention to her.

So, Klara told Angela that she must represent the family. "If people ask, ^{you will} just say that your parents are stricken. This is true," said Klara. "I don't trust myself to go, and ^{I know that} your father cannot. I have never seen him weep before. He

is near to out of his mind. Angela, it is so terrible for him. I cannot leave the man alone. I must not! So today, you will act as the woman of the family. For today at least, you must be the woman."

Angela said, "You have to go to church ~~with Adolf and me~~. It will be a scandal if you ~~don't~~ *are not there with Adolf and me!*

"You," said Klara, "are much too young to worry about scandal. Tell them we are ill. That has to be sufficient."

"Will you stay here at least, will you promise to stay in the house?" asked Angela. "I am afraid he will want to go out. He will want you to bring him to the tavern. He will get drunk so it doesn't hurt so much. You must not leave the house."

"It depends on your father."

"You are his slave."

"Silence yourself!" Klara said.

So to Adolf's surprise, he and Angela went to church by themselves. When asked for a reason, all Angela said was, "Before we go, you must take a bath. You smell awful again."

-8-

Alone with Alois, Klara could not bear to think of each and every death in her family, not only her children, but the deaths of her brothers and sisters. "Cannot God have mercy?" she asked herself. She felt a frightening exhaustion, as if she were standing in an old house and the floor was ^{going} about to give way and she had no interest ^{to save} in saving herself. She was tired of believing that the fault must be her own.

I have to admit that I was tempted to approach her, but I knew this would be refused by the Maestro. What, after all, could be gained by looking ^{collect} to pick up a client like Klara? We could put the Cudgels in disarray for losing her. But what labor there would be to train so new and difficult a client.

Indeed, I soon recognized that Klara was having no more than a rebellion ^{that} is common among pious people. Piety can also serve as a wall, there to keep the pious from recognizing how profoundly angry they are at God—this God who has failed to treat them by what they see as their ^{justified} ~~proper~~ right. Since this illicit wrath is usually submerged in pestilential waters of modesty and guilt, they do not make sterling clients for us, although, in the event, we ~~are able to use most of them~~ ^{do use some}. Pious people can derange those in their family who are less pious. Repetition kills the soul.

On ~~this~~ ^{the} long day, Klara and Alois stayed at home. Given the cleavage ^{at few hours} left in his ego, ⁱⁿ he felt so savaged by the loss of Edmund that he had to look ^{eye} into the ~~fact~~ of his incest. He wondered whether he and Klara were polluted, ^{if they were polluted people} ~~people~~. If so, Edmund might be better off dead. Again he wept.

When, at one point, Klara began to have second thoughts ^{even} and said, "Maybe we should go to the church after all," he was seized with fear. "For me to break down in public," he said again, "that is worse than death." Now Klara asked herself, "What is wrong with weeping in church when one's heart is broken?" She began to wonder. Was Alois evil? ^{was she?} Did he belong to the Evil One? Did she? What of the vow ^{lay} she had taken when Alois-Junior ~~seemed~~

lifeless on the ground? Perhaps it was better, yes, actually better, that they did stay away. For evil people to attend a funeral might hurt the departed.

~~Slowly, over that long~~ ^{the} day, as they remained at home, she felt an awful flush in ^{develop}

her breast. Was that her fury with God? She, too, was now afraid to go to church. Yes, how could one ever dare to bring such fury into a holy place?

That would be like taking another vow of allegiance to the foul one.

-9-

At the funeral, Adolf heard none of the words. His head was ablaze. In the hour ^{after} that Edmund died, Alois had said to him, "You are now my only hope."

"Yes," Adolf said to himself, "it is true, my father used to see Edmund as the only hope. ^{So, how is it that ~~that~~ what he says now he true?} ~~That is what he really was saying.~~ But actually, he hates me. He thinks I was cruel to Edmund."

Yet Adolf refused to agree that he might have mistreated Edmund. "It was no more," he told himself, "than the way Alois-Junior used to treat me."

^{a full weight of}
All too soon, however, he began to feel ~~full of~~ dread. How deep and
unrelenting might be the anger of the angels!

Just a few days before he ~~had been~~ ^{came} the first to come down with measles,
he had taken Edmund for a walk in the woods. ^{and then passed} Still fearing then that the fire
~~by the burned-out clearing left by the fire,~~
~~might yet have its consequences, he was uneasy about Edmund's loyalty.~~ So
^{had} he picked up a twig on the path and scalped him with a slow, ritual move. One
~~had been established early in the fall. One~~
~~drew a short stick in a circle around the captured soldier's head just above the~~
~~forehead, above the left ear, under the back of the head, and then back above~~
~~the right ear to return to the forehead.~~ ^{now} Adolf did this ^{to} Edmund and said,
~~"Now,~~ ^{then passing then} I own all that is in your head. Your brain is mine."

"How can you say that?" said Edmund. "That is stupid."

^{such} "Don't be a fool," said Adolf. ^{always} "Why do you think Indians ^{they could} wanted
scalps? It was because that was the way to own the mind of the person they
had ~~just~~ captured."

"But you are my brother."

"It is better for you that your brother owns your brain than some
stranger. A stranger could throw ^{your scalp} it away."

^{it} "Give ~~it~~ back to me," said Edmund.

Yes, I will.
 "I will when the time comes. ~~But~~ only when the time comes."

is that?
 "When ~~will~~ that be?"

^
 "When I tell you. ~~Not before.~~"

I no
 "I don't believe ~~you~~. I don't believe ~~you~~ own my brain. It feels ~~the~~
~~different.~~
~~same.~~"

the change
 "Oh, you will see a ~~difference~~. You will ~~not~~ feel little headaches. They
 will bother you. That is the first sign."

Adolf could see that
He just kept walking
 Edmund was ready to cry but ~~he would not~~, he did not, ~~and they walked~~
and they went all the way
 home in silence.

Now, in church, Adolf's heart was beating in time, step by step, with the
 pace they had taken ~~all those weeks ago~~ on returning from the woods.

It can be said that he was now feeling a most peculiar pain in his heart
 from this recollection. It was as sharp as a splinter driven ~~under one's~~
 fingernail.

7-53
 Looking to lose such pain, he told himself not to think about Edmund
 any more. Not on this day. Indeed, he prayed to God, *He prayed that he would*
 thinking of Edmund and (with my help) succeeded to the degree that one can
some
 remove nearly all of a splinter that is *lodged* under the nail. The fragment that

remains, however, has now become a root ready to offer ~~more~~ constant discomfort.

I can say that Adolf was absolutely not ready to think of the very last time he had seen Edmund, and so ~~that~~ ^{the} memory festered in his heart.

It was his turn now to be ready to weep. He thought of how Klara used to call him "Ein Liebling Die Gotter." "Oh," she used to tell him ~~in those~~ ^{— and it} ~~was~~ ^{was now years ago!} — "Oh, you years, ~~you~~ are so special." He remembered how she said he was "a beloved of God." That was true, he told himself. He had survived. He had not been like Gustav and the others. Perhaps he had been selected by Destiny ~~for some~~ [—] special purpose.

I could see the extent of the reconstruction that now lay before me. I would have to bring all of Klara's once-loving words back to Adolf; restore him once more to ~~what he knew~~ ^{the warmth he felt for himself} when he was three. Yes, he, Adolf, had been the one selected to go on living.

Now, to the contrary, he had begun to feel that his mother would be ready to abandon him, just as she had abandoned Edmund. Why, then, must he feel ~~so~~ guilty? Let her ~~be the one to feel these pains~~ ^{be the one to feel these pains} ~~She had pretended to~~ ^{this pain in his heart.} love Edmund and yet she was not here in church. How awful. So unfeeling!

-10-

Even as the brother and sister came away from the grave, the mourners did pay attention to Angela who was embarrassed at knowing how red-faced she was when she tried to speak of how terrible were her parents' feelings. "It is so frightful a day for them—they are both in bed. They are too weak to stand." On she went, embarrassed, red-faced, and yet ^{so} excited to be the center of this occasion.

Once they were alone, however, and could walk off into the forest, he did say, "Why do I know that my mother will not come to my funeral?"

Angela berated him: "Klara is the finest person I have ever known. The kindest. No one is more good! How can you say something like that? She is suffering for your father. He loved Edmund so much!" And when in payment for this remark, Adolf looked venomous, she added, "As well he should.

Edmund was a beautiful child. I cannot say that of you. Even on this day of your brother's funeral"—she had to repeat it!—"you still have an unpleasant body odor."

I think it comes from all your bad feelings, y

"What do you mean?" he answered. "I took a bath. You know that. You ~~even~~ forced me to. You said, 'Going to the funeral, smelling as you do, get into the tub,' and I told you it would take too long to boil the water. What did you care?"

He had had to use cold water. It had been a splash and a wipe, no more. Maybe he still did smell. "No," he said now, "I forbid you to speak that way to me. I do not have an unpleasant odor. I did take a bath."

Angela said, "Bath or no bath, Adolf. You just may not be a very good person."

He was so furious with her that he stepped off the forest trail into the snow. She, just as upset, just as angry, followed him. The moment they were

out of earshot of any person who might have been at the service, she yelled at him so loudly that he ran off, "Not a good person. An awful one. You are a monster."

Alone in the forest, Adolf began to have fears of his own death. It was so cold in the snow. ~~He had pictures of Gustav and Ida and Otto and Edmund.~~ *Even the trees seemed to be shivering.*

And, now in his mind, he saw Edmund's arm rise out of the grave. He recalled the look of terror in Edmund's eyes as he ~~had~~ ^{had} listened to the ~~Grimm Brothers~~ fairy tales.

When Angela caught up with him, they walked home silently to find their father with a red and swollen face. Alois turned to him, weeping, and said, "You are now my life." He embraced Adolf and began to weep all over again. How false were his words, thought Adolf. ~~Alois still believed that Edmund was the only hope. He could not even pretend that anything else was true.~~ "I hate my father," Adolf said again to himself.

-11-

Several nights after the funeral, I prepared a dream-etching where an angel spoke to Adolf long enough to tell him that his cruelties to Edmund would yet be justified. Why? Because Adolf's life had been spared in infancy. There was a special purpose yet to come. He need only remain loyal to every command he received from above. In this manner, he could escape all ordinary death. He would ~~not~~ become God's gift to the people, fierce as fire and as strong as steel.

It was a carefully worked-up dream, but I did ask myself whether such a belief was being implanted too soon. It did suggest that he would never die.

Of course, that is not at all impossible to believe. It is indeed difficult for any human to picture his or her own death. In secret, the soul does expect to be immortal, and to a degree, this may even be true. Many humans are born again. I would not wish to suggest that they are born again by way of a church ceremony under the passing hand of a priest or reverend, nor born again by being upended in the river, no, they are born again through reincarnation. The Maestro has stated that this is part of a conceptual scheme developed by the D.K. "He does see Himself as an artist—as the Divine Artist. But he is a blunderer—so many of His creations are botched. A good many are disasters which He then plows back into the food chain. That is His only means of removing His multitudinous meaningless spawnings from choking the existence of the rest. Indeed, there is more art in his food chain than in the rest of His creation. Yet, I will admit, He is dogged. He is still looking to improve ~~his~~ previous creations." As the Maestro describes it, the Dummkopf is bound to try over and over ^{again} _N even with many of His most unsatisfactorily developed humans. And that is why few men and women really believe that they will cease to exist. They would say it aloud if not for their fear of appearing ridiculous. Indeed, their real anxiety is that the new life, because of the ways

in which they wasted the last one, might bring them closer to the cloud of the Dummkopf's Wrath, ~~closer than any previous incarnation~~. One's new position in life might ~~well be~~ ^{then he lived out as} a reflection of how badly the last life was ~~lived~~ ^{spent} and so the rebirth would ~~offer a pure~~ ^{became an ongoing} example of human Hell. While the Maestro does not impart such answers to us, I am convinced that there is a region in the ~~unconscious~~ ^{all-but-buried mind} of every human being where ~~belief~~ ^{the} does exist that one is immortal, part of the scheme, so to speak, that conceived of life in the first place.

I may as well add that this conviction of personal immortality does ~~cause us considerable~~ ^{for us,} difficulty. Many of our clients, particularly late in life, come to the conclusion that if they atone for their sins, they will be reborn. That can play havoc with hitherto dependable men and women. They are not, after all, completely unbalanced on this certainty. No matter how abominable and unrepentant are a few of the humans chosen by Him to be born again, he probably does feel there is something exceptional present even if it failed to develop ~~properly~~ ^{properly} on the last time out.

At this point, I even began to wonder whether the Maestro had developed his own species of reincarnation and so might have input ~~on some~~ ^{within}

~~the~~ the D.K.'s councils. It is, obviously, too large a question for me, but the Maestro does seem to know which of our clients have been chosen for rebirth. Yet to speak of this with greater authority, I would have to know how the D.K. envisions the future of His Creation. Is it comparable to the ruthlessness of our Maestro? Is ruthlessness indeed a necessary passion in these divine matters?

~~Left to answer this question by myself, I would probably say that ruthlessness is yet a very large part of existence~~

-12-

A few months after Edmund's death, Klara began to have fearful thoughts. Was it possible that Adolf's attitude to Edmund had been ^{so cruel} more than ~~that it and was~~ ^{cruel} even unforgivable? Angela told her that ~~when the brothers played together~~ she had overheard Adi terrifying Edmund with fairy tales from Grimm, the ~~very~~ worst ones.

From her bedroom window, Klara could see Adolf shooting at rats, ^{he sat} while ~~sitting~~ on the cemetery wall. She would flinch each time she heard the ^{short pop of the} popping sound of the discharge. For her, the ^{burp} ~~air-gun~~ was equal to an ugly ^{voice} voice. She felt as if she could hear disaffected spirits coming up to her from

~~the cemetery. When someone is not a client, we can still exert a modest~~
~~I did not like that at all,~~
~~everyday influence on them, and in this case, I certainly did not wish Klara to drive~~
~~he is compelling~~ Adolf more deeply into his depression so I did lay atmospheres
 upon her sleep to suggest that Adi was not evil, but suffering terribly. This
 technique is always there to work with any mother who retains some love for
 her child, and so, over a period, the situation did improve. Klara came to
 recognize once again how great was the need to soften Alois' feelings. The
 boy's dreadful mood, she told her husband, more than once was even beginning to affect his
 marks at the little school in Leonding ~~and all this after he had been doing so~~
~~well there~~. Since Adolf was very bright, she said, the explanation had to be
 that he was mourning for Edmund. "But he is also afraid of you," Klara dared
 to say, "he hates disappointing you. Alois, you must become again a good
 man to your son."

Those were heartfelt words, but they only succeeded in reminding him of Edmund. Adolf, alas, was not Edmund. All the same, he nodded.

"I will do what I can," he said. "Sometimes my heart slams shut like a door."

Once aroused, however, she was not about to close off her own feelings. She must find a way to be near again to Adolf. His heart could also shut like a door. So, she chose to remind him that the year was 1900—they were in a new century. “Adolf, this will be your century,” she told him. “This century will belong to you. I know it. You will do wonderful things in time to come.”

He did feel important that she spoke in such a tone. Of course, he hardly knew whether to believe her. ^{How could} How could it be his century? ^{she begin to know?} At this point, he felt incapable of accomplishing anything of high worth. So, he nagged her. “Is it really so?” he kept asking. Perhaps he went on for too long. At last, her tongue slipped enough to uncover the truth, “You are the one I must love,” she said. “And I do. I must love you, and I do.” He brooded over her phrasing. He was aware for the first time that women were not there just to love you because that was their duty. Instead, they could offer love that was ^{as easily found} real, or a substitute that was not ~~as~~ dependable.

Here, the Maestro intervened. “Do not,” I was told, “encourage any undue interest in women. Let him remain fearful of them.”

-13-

On late overcast afternoons in early spring, when there was a fog, and the odors of moss and mold rose from many a tombstone, Adolf would sit in the damp of the low cemetery wall and wait in the dusk for rats to come out. When they faced to the west, their eyes would shine in the sunset, even in a clouded sunset, and so would offer sharp targets. When he was able, however, to hit one with his air gun, he did not feel up to approaching the corpse. It was too close to evening for him to be ready to step down into the cemetery from the low wall.

Early morning, however, before he was off to school, he would go by, and if no dogs or cats had been ready to dare the graveyard at night, and the cadaver of the rat was still intact, he would inhale a first hint of the aroma of carrion and that would stir his mood. He wondered whether comparable manifestations had gone on in Edmund's flesh.

Even by spring, he did not feel ready to go back to the forest. He kept to his perch on the cemetery wall.

In turn, I had decided not to discourage Adolf's guilt. Indeed, this instinct was soon corroborated. While the Cudgels were partial to guilt since they were invariably looking ^{to stimulate} for more atonement in their clients, we usually chose to calcify guilt, leave it, so to speak, bone-dry, even if that did raise a risk that we were narrowing ~~their~~ future possibilities, a delicate choice in this situation, but I had to be ready to raise Adolf from his depression before it grew too extreme. Depression can descend into aberration. On many an evening, Adi sat on the cemetery wall wondering what he would do if Edmund's arm were to rise ~~suddenly~~ out of the grave. Would he run? Would he ^{try} attempt to talk to Edmund? Would he ask for forgiveness? Or would he pelt the limb with his air gun?

All through the winter, the spring, and the summer of 1900, the memory of Edmund's illness ^{sat in} remained like a dead weight on his chest.

It was not hard to discern the reason. Adolf still possessed some funds of conscience. Even as self pity is the lubricant we use most often to smooth the entrance of the heart into uglier emotions, so does conscience become our most determined antagonist. The Cudgels whip their people into shape by way of ^{the person's} ~~their~~ conscience. We, in turn, when dealing with the most advanced of our clients, ^{look} ~~do our best~~ to extirpate conscience altogether. Once accomplished, we then proceed to build up a good substitute, ~~for conscience~~, ready and able to justify most of the passions that the Cudgels seek to repress: greed, lust, envy, ~~gluttony~~ —no need to list the sacred seven. The point is that when ^{the} ~~a~~ facsimile of a working conscience is properly developed by us, our clients' ability to justify ^{exceptionally ugly} ~~their ugliest~~ acts becomes ~~exceptionally~~ strengthened. We have then succeeded in releasing conscience from the shameful memories that obliged it to develop in the first place, and I can add that we are most successful when the all-but emptied remains of the old conscience are stubborn enough to vie with one's new sense of strength, and so are felt to be a useless scourge, an enemy to one's well being. (Murderers who take pride in their daring have

usually succeeded in banishing all conscience.) Or, to put it otherwise, a good deal of the dread that humans feel when the angels wish to punish them, can now be obviated by violent acts, particularly by killing others. So we benefit from war. Our work is easier then. It is calm periods that call upon the skills of advanced devils like myself. I will say that it is not at all routine to convince a man or woman to slay another. Left to themselves, they worry that murder may be the most selfish of the acts. Primitives certainly know that to be true. Ready to sacrifice an animal for one of their feasts, they are wise enough to ask forgiveness before they raise the knife.

In turn, I was now ready to fortify Adi's sense of the power that murder can offer the murderer. Of course, he was too young for our developed techniques, but I did work up a dream-etching where Adolf was a hero in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. This entailed the suggestion that he had been there in his previous life almost two decades before he was born in 1889. It was not difficult to bring him to believe he had massacred a platoon of French soldiers who had made the signal mistake of attacking his lonely outpost. Of course, such a dream-etching was gross, but it did prepare a base on which to

lay more sophisticated impulses later. Standing by itself, the Franco-Prussian dream-etching was a pure wish-fulfillment.

May I say that we knew all about wish-fulfillment long before Doctor Freud had anything to say on the matter. Our approach to human psychology must of necessity go far beyond all those good Viennese doctors. Indeed, we smile at the superficiality of so many of Dr. Freud's analyses. That is his fault. He wanted nothing, after all, to do with angels or demons, and was willfully determined not to recognize the engagement of the Dummkopf and the Maestro in large or small human matters.

On the other hand, a small portion of praise can still be given to Freud for his delineation of the ego. That concept has become one of the tools by which humans have become almost as adept as we are at assessing shifts of self-worth within.

Be it said that the state of Adolf's ego had become the focus of my attention. It would do no good to keep raising his estimate of his own worth if, at the same time, he was terrified that he had helped to kill Edmund. Because he did not wish to believe it, he most certainly did feel guilty and the worst of it was that I hardly knew the answer. Had he, or had he not?

The facts were simple—which is to say that the deed was clear, but the consequences were not. On a morning when Angela was working with Klara and Paula in the garden and Alois was out for his walk, Adolf found Edmund playing alone in the room that they had shared until Adolf's illness.

Adolf walked over and kissed Edmund. Simple as that. I must admit that I was impelling him. If, personally, I certainly did feel something comparable to affection for Edmund, there was little I could do about it in this situation. In those days, I was not prepared to defy any order given directly by the Maestro.

"Why are you kissing me?" asked Edmund.

"Because I love you."

"You do?"

"I love you, Edmund."

"Is that why you scalped me?"

"You must forget that. You must forgive me. I think that is why I caught the measles."

"Can that be the real reason?"

"I think so. Yes. And that is why I must kiss you now. That is the way I can give you back the scalp I took."

"You do not need to do that. So far I have no headaches"

"We cannot take a chance. Let me kiss you again."

"Isn't that bad to do now that you have these measles?"

"Between brothers and sisters, yes, but not between brothers. It has been established medically that brothers can kiss even when one has measles."

"Momma said we must not kiss you. None of us."

"That is because she is a woman and does not understand that it is all right between brothers."

"You swear?"

"I swear."

"Let me see your fingers when you swear."

Adolf was impelled most definitely by me then. He held up his hands, fingers out-stretched. "I swear," he said, and kissed Edmund repeatedly, a boy's kiss full of slobbering, and Edmund kissed him back, full of his own slobbering. He was so happy that Adi did love him after all.

Edmund came down with the measles. And the disease did prove fatal. We were responsible for his death or we were not. I knew no more than Adolf. So I buried such questions under the powers of wish-fulfillment. Night after night a new platoon of French soldiers ^{were} ~~was~~ massacred in Adolf's sleep, and if there had not been all the other problems with which he had to contend, I think he might have been ready to move his psychic strengths over to rigorous belief that murder offers power to a murderer.

FAXED

Thurs. 24?

Returned

Friday

Tribble space

6.

1
Jolson
~~Love~~
Continuation
can be
unrelated
as 15

~~It was~~ ^{to move} at this time that I had to depart from Austria to Switzerland,

There

~~where~~ I was occupied for the next few months in overseeing the

(impassioned
~~revelations~~)

transmogrification of a petty criminal into a wholly determined assassin.

I had to leave who remained

Naturally, given the variety of clients left behind who were also a part

of my responsibilities, I was back in Austria ^{more than once} several times each month to

not only with their conditions

acquaint myself with ~~the~~ ^{their new} condition of the clients I had left with my small

~~but the effectiveness as well of my cohort of~~
~~devils still there so I did to a reasonable degree~~
cohort of devils, and in the course of that, did keep up with events at the

grain-mill in Lambach, but I will choose to summarize these matters after I

~~it~~ until I ~~can~~ ^{not speak of those matters} expatiate ~~(on the)~~ on the
relate the purpose and the success of my temporary assignment in Geneva.

~~of my~~ ^{are by now and} To those readers who have become wary of my occasional expeditions off to

venues,
~~venues~~
 other narrative matters, I will add there is no need to fear that I will be away ^{not}
 from young Adolf for so long a period this time, ^{nearly} ~~but no~~ ^{for} not a Book, just an
 interesting chapter ^{for two.}

To some small degree, it concerns Mark Twain. He was never my
 client—I would not have dared to make that attempt! In truth, if there ^{such} had
^{such} been a possibility ^{had existed} of that order, the Maestro, given his large admiration for
 the very best novelists, ^{teach} "They do ~~touch~~ us so much," he has often said, ^{he}
~~that he~~ might have looked to bring off that seduction himself.

In any event, Twain, who was ^{of 1870s} naturally a most complex man, was not
 suitable material. Some of his close associates were, however, and so I

knew enough about him to respect ^{the passion with which he was} his credentials for writing well about the
^{to write so well about the} assassination in Geneva on September 10, 1898, of the Empress Elisabeth ^{of Austria.}

Married in 1854

With Franz Josef, Emperor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, she had ~~been seen for all of her~~ ^{reigned over} ~~thirty-two~~ ^{years} ~~been for fifty years~~ [OK] (the most beautiful queen in Europe, and was also

renowned in ~~many~~ liberal, advanced, and cosmopolitan centers as the most

cultivated and poetic monarch of ^{her time.} ~~the century.~~ (Heinrich Heine) Indeed, her favorite poet was,

← what added to ^{her} such exotic status was that Heinrich Heine ~~she had~~ remained dressed always in black after the double

~~after the double~~ suicide in 1889 at Mayerling of her beloved son, Crown Prince Rudolph, ^{Baroness Vetsberg}

and his most beloved young mistress, an event at which I had played no ^{That tragedy known to} ~~all of Europe by the state world stage - I~~ ^{where it took place} ~~was an event in which I had played no~~ small part (which may have been ^{the} prime reason for my selection as the lead

to work upon ^{him} after ^{him} a devil for Luigi Lucheni whom the Maestro had sighted as the putative assassin ^{assassin with the highest murderous ambitions} ~~assassin to attack the Empress.~~ ~~embodiment of masculinity,~~

"He's a dreadful piece of work," said the Maestro, "but you will enjoy

his mind. He is made to order for us. A most unbalanced little malefactor,

He who sees himself as an untutored but nonetheless serious philosopher, and he is most sincere in his belief that are required to great believer in exceptional deeds that will leave a lasting influence on

the public.
others. So, go to it!"

I did. I worked a good deal with Luigi Lucheni before he committed

the deed. I inflated his sense of himself to the size of a huge lighter-than-air high-altitude expansion in the volume of his spirit, (balloon, a necessary enlargement to give sufficient driving force into the arm and) provide drive for his point of his knife, just enough to accomplish the act, which is another way

of saying that assassins, (more even) than most murderers, need many orders

magnifications of their ego, (leave) of magnitude magnifying their psyche in order to make a small but incisive

hole in the flesh of a beautiful old woman. (Such are the equations between the materiality of the flesh and the gaseous irresolutions of the average human the flesh and the psyche or, if you will, between the material and the unbalanced human psyche (psychic) spiritual.)

which - another way of it

In any event, I succeeded. Lucheni, born poor and remaining ^{poor} ~~so~~

chose to become

became an anarchist after he ~~had~~ immigrated to Switzerland. In Geneva,

where he came to live, he found ~~few~~ ^{accepted him} fellow anarchists who ^{with many}

~~misgivings, did succeed in converting him. They thought him inept as an~~

Italian chose to call

anarchist, and his fellow Italians called him Il stupido (which doubled the

daily compression of his spirit and the concomitant expansion of his ego),

Yet

since he was ~~not only~~ ^{so} destined (as I ^{so} convinced him) to put an end to the life

of some very high member of the very highest and most oppressive classes,

I believe it helped that

but there he was being ridiculed by those who should have been ready to

applaud him. "Spread belief by way of your actions," I kept telling him

over and over again, driving this adage through

fall through the deflations and in-spirings of his ego, and, indeed, he ^{did} brought it

bring it off.

~~off~~

Poor Empress Elisabeth! She was so proud and so poetic that she
 allowed only a few bodyguards to escort her, ^{even} ~~then~~ ^{(they had to stay}
 at a remove of ten
^{from her person even)}
 paces. They had learned not to come nearer ^{when strangers approached, / her}

~~She accepted~~ ^{in Geneva. After all,} such intrusions on her thoughts ~~for~~ ^{usually} invariably the request was

^{usually} for an autograph. So, as she stood by herself at ^{on a promenade} the balustrade of a bridge ^(etc)
^{along the banks of the Rhone, as}
 Geneva, Lucheni approached, took out ^{quickly} his knife and stabbed her ^{through it}
~~into her heart~~

^{apprehended} He was immediately ^{were} subdued, arrested, his quarters searched, and his

diary examined. ^{soon knew} ~~Soon~~ all the world would know ^{that he had written}

~~(during a period when I was dictating certain phrases to him as a species of~~

~~reinforcement)~~ "How I would like to kill someone—but it must be someone

important so it gets in the papers."

a rat-tail file
 and thrust it into her heart.

He might have chosen Philippe, Duke of Orleans who was in Geneva
then on a visit, but so was the beautiful Sisi—Empress Elisabeth. ~~She, I~~

knew, would count for more. Even as I had ~~directed~~ ^{led} the anathematic priest

^{by his)} with the long nose to the gateway where Adi was smoking, so did I ^{direct)} ~~steer~~ the

~~perishable~~ intensities of my ~~much-influenced~~ ^{putative} assassin toward the

~~exploded on the Rhone~~
bridge where Elisabeth was looking at the water, ~~[CK-river]~~ and mourning

once again for
Rudolf, her ~~son~~ lost son.

← ~~AFTERWARDS~~ → # INSERT A A A

~~I dared to be most~~ impressed with myself. The immediate effect of

the deed was exceptional. I will, however, leave the description of that to

Mark Twain himself.

Insertion

AAA — to p. 7.

If it is a matter of discomfort to the reader that I can, on the one hand, seem a calm, reasonably sane and perceptive observer, capable of a balanced narrative, and yet am also able to aid and abet the most atrocious acts without a moment of regret, let that ^{not} come as ^a surprise. Like most good devils, I ~~am~~ ^{need to say} possessed of two natures. ~~A~~ ^{therefore} part of me is highly civilized.

What may be less visible on most occasions is that ~~I am~~ ^{as} a servant to the

~~Maestro, and his name, as we may have gathered, is to destroy civilization,~~
^{our aim is to}
 and that enterprise ~~of~~ ^{must be able} to call on my readiness to ~~perform~~
~~at~~ "do what it takes" — a Rine expression I did not know about until years later when I had a minor client on a film crew.
 In any event, no need to disguise the murder of Sisi left me most

8

-7-

last section in Hafeld was 5, the preceding pages would be 6, making this

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Twain was resting (then in Kaltenlautzen, a
Czech town)

At the time, he was living in a small Austrian town forty miles from Vienna.

In America, he had gone bankrupt ~~by way~~ ^{by way}

Vienna. Bankrupted in America by the failure of his investment in a new

Compositor, a ~~new~~ ^{new} Linotype machine. ~~which failed~~ ^{which failed}

kind of Linotype machine, he had left Hartford and traveled through Europe

As he had left Hartford to travel through

Europe giving lectures to ~~pay for~~ ^{take care} of his debts.

numerous

The murder of Elisabeth left
him distraught. He dashed off a
letter to ~~his~~ ^{as soon as he heard} friend that said,
"The Empress is killed by a madman,
and I am living in the midst of

P9

1

Assassination of Empress ElizabethMark Twain to Rev. Jos. H. Twichell:

"The Empress is killed by a madman and I am living in the midst of world history again. . . . This murder will still be talked of and described and painted a thousand years from now."

I cannot begin to speak of the elation with which I read these words, My own opinion of the importance of the deed had ~~been~~ ^{been} confirmed by a great writer. Indeed Twain was so affected by the matter that he soon wrote an ~~essay~~ ^{essay} full of his masterful ~~use of his language~~ ^{use of his language} which later ~~for~~ ^{for} a myriad of reasons ~~for~~ ^{for} the more one thinks of the assassination the more imposing and

tremendous the event becomes. ~~The destruction of a city is a large event, but~~ ^{Twain wrote}

it is one which repeats itself several times in a thousand years; the destruction

of a third part of a nation by plague and famine is a large event, but it has → p10

Jalc - I think bold-face indent for Twain's material. Same as used for the Russian material

of the pages
he was of one
of his servants,
push it to
publish it.

entry we chose not to
publish but in possession

happened several times in history; the murder of a king is a large event, but it has been frequent.

The murder of an empress is the largest of all events. One must go back about two thousand years to find an instance to put with this one. . . . The assassination of Caesar himself could not electrify the world as this murder has electrified it. For one reason, there was then not much of a world to electrify: ~~the~~ the news traveled so slowly that ~~by~~ by the time it reached the remoter regions, ^{it} it was no longer a fresh event, ~~it~~ it was history. But the world is enormous now, and prodigiously populated—that is one change; and another is the lightning swiftness of the flight of tidings, good and bad. "The Empress is murdered!" When those amazing words struck upon my ear in this Austrian village last Saturday, three hours after the disaster, I knew that it was already old news in London, Paris, Berlin, New York, San Francisco, Japan, China, Melbourne, Cape Town, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, and that the entire globe with a single voice was cursing the perpetrator of it.

. . . And who is the miracle-worker who has furnished to the world this spectacle? All the ironies are compacted in the answer. He is at the bottom

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of the human ladder, as the accepted estimates of degree and value go; a soiled and patched young loafer, without gifts, without talent, without education, without morals, without character, without any born charm or any acquired one that wins or beguiles or attracts; without a single grace of mind or heart or hand that any tramp or prostitute could envy him; an unfaithful private in the ranks, an incompetent stone-cutter, an inefficient lackey; in a word, a mangy, offensive, empty, unwashed, vulgar, gross, mephitic, timid, sneaking, human polecat. And it was within the privileges and powers of this sarcasm upon the human race to reach up—up—up and strike from its far summit in the social skies the world's accepted ideal of Glory and Might and Splendor and Sacredness! It realizes to us what sorry shows and shadows we are. Without our clothes and pedestals we are poor things and much of a size; our dignities are not real, our pomps are shams. At our best and stateliest we are not suns, as we pretended, and teach, and believe, but only candles; and any bummer can blow us out.

And now we get realized to us once more another thing which we often forget—or try to; that no man has a wholly undiseased mind; that in one way

or another all men are mad. . . . There are no healthy minds, and nothing saves any man but accident—the accident of not having his malady put to the supreme test.

One of the commonest forms of madness is the desire to be noticed, the pleasure derived from being noticed. . . . It is this madness for being noticed and talked about which has invented kingship and the thousand other dignities. . . it has made kings pick one another's pockets, scramble for one another's crowns and estates, slaughter one another's subjects; it has raised up prize-fighters and poets, and villages' mayors, and little and big politicians, and big and little charity-founders, and bicycle champions, and banditti chiefs, and frontier desperadoes, and Napoleons. Anything to get notoriety; anything to set the village, or the township, or the city, or the State, or the nation, or the planet shouting, "Look—there he goes—that is the man!" And in five minutes' time, at no cost of brain, or labor, or genius, this mangy Italian tramp has beaten them all, outstripped them all, for in time their names will perish; but by the friendly help of the insane newspapers and courts and kings and historians, his is safe and will thunder all down the ages as long as

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human speech shall endure! Oh, if it were not so tragic, how ludicrous it would be! "

I rushed to present this to the Maestro. I had never taken myself so seriously before. I knew that I was, at last, exactor in history, and ~~an invaluable~~ ~~and~~ a devil worthy at last of the highest commemoration by my commander.

To my surprise, to my ~~was~~, he was scathing. "I put too much into great writers," he said. "Every ~~man~~ ^{shape} Mark Twain ~~has~~ ^{shapes} their worst biased tendencies. At bottom, they are hysterical, they exaggerate. A thousand years! ^{Sisi} That's absurd. It will ~~be~~ ^{be} lucky to be remembered in Austria. She will be forgotten by all but a few in ^{the world} in twenty years. ~~twenty years.~~"

~~I dared to ask, "Are you~~
I did not dare to ask, "Will it ^{large} serve no purpose?"
"Oh," he said, "It's a bit of help, ~~just a little.~~ But you, like Twain, are

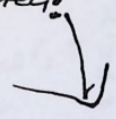
much too impressed by mighty names,
they count for ~~a~~ little once they
are gone. I'd like to clean the
snooshery out of all of you
who think ~~they can do good~~
~~work for me~~. It's not the name.

One truly exceptional client is
~~farther more than~~ but that we
~~transform into~~ develop out
of the raw human ~~aka~~ ex nihilo,
or close to that, can ~~become~~ at
~~long~~ affect history to our
serious and continuing advantage.
Anything less is much less."

I had to agree with him. I
could not agree with him
altogether. In truth I had a poor
idea of what he was talking
about.

"There was one nice advantage
to it all," he said. "And ~~that was~~
I have some little sense of that."
He pointed to the end of the
essay. There, Twain had written:

Our
great
author
did



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(15)

"Among the inadequate attempts to account for the assassination, we must concede high rank to the many which have described it as "ordained from above." I think this verdict will not be popular "above." If the deed was ordained from above, there is no rational way of making this prisoner even partially responsible for it, and the Genevan court cannot condemn him without manifestly committing a crime. Logic is logic, and by disregarding its laws, even the most pious and showy theologian may be beguiled into preferring charges which should not be ventured upon except in the shelter of plenty of lightning-rods."

"Yes," said the Maestro, "when it comes to being aware of any, that good fellow, Mark Twain, does have his nose pressed against the glass. I think he was very close to ~~seeing~~ ~~the~~ ~~truth~~."

Saying, 'Ordained from below'."

Et How the Maestro could laugh on those rare occasions when he ~~found~~ that he found ~~nothing~~ ~~was~~ ~~nothing~~.

leave him here, very.
(Send to clompton)
sufficiently small to