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DONE
for Fred.
2/2/04

Judith
One more time
Double space all the way
244-262

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By July, life ^{became} ~~was~~ somewhat different for Alois. Klara, for one example, was most definitely pregnant. In seven months, if the baby was born without incident, there would be a total of eight kids who had come into existence because of him, eight, if you include the three who now were gone. Of course, if he so desired, he could add some kinder not exactly accounted for—quite a number of cooks and chambermaids who had managed to conceive with what might be called mixed male parentage, much mixed. Yes, when one of them told him she was pregnant, he had agreed that it was possible. He could be the true father, but then, hadn't she also been with Hans and Gebhardt and Hermann and Wolf? With rare exceptions (like Fanny) those women were not in a position to argue who was the true father. It was enough to give them a decent gift.

Here in Hafeld, he was face to face with the other side of such achievements. Through the heat of July, in his farm-house up on the hill, he had to look at five faces every meal, from Klara down to Edmund, sixteen

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months old and walking, even trying to talk. And by January, there would be another. He was used to living with peoples' faces in front of him, more new faces than most people had to meet up with every day, but now it was always the same mugs. He was not used to dwelling with such questions as whether Edmund, for example, had come up with a new phrase or was just gurgling as usual, blobs of sound, no real words.

Managing the farm was another matter. He could take pleasure in Angela's work. For a twelve-year-old who had been putting cold cream on her hands ever since she was eight—a little city girl, ready to be spoiled!-- she was now, to his surprise, good help. She was always currying the two horses, and washing down the cow even when that hefty lady didn't need another bath. Moreover, Angela was deft at milking and got Adolf and even Edmund to laugh at the hearty contentment to be heard in the full-gutted sound of the sow every time they approached with food. Rosig was large for a pig, large even for a prize pig, yes, happy in that smelly wallow with a pink rosette tacked above her stall, an old prize rosette from the summer before they came to the farm. By next summer, when all this new work wouldn't be weighing on them, and there might be a little time, Angela wanted to prepare Rosig for local competition again. Yes, his girl, Alois decided, was a prize herself. Angela even took the pains to separate out the manure of the farm

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animals before carrying each collection to a different pile. Why? Because ^{declared to Klara} she thought ⁽ "My father would want it that way. Nice and neat." She even succeeded in getting Adi to take up a part of the slack. While he could be counted on to throw a tantrum, Angela would ride it out. Then ^{the loss} ~~he~~ would follow her, his nose up to heaven in horror, but nonetheless carrying a second manure pail.

His school year over in Passau, Alois, Jr., came to the farm at the beginning of July. For a short period, no one could surpass him at work. Right off, he was splendid with the horses, particularly the younger one, Ulan, a stallion five years old. Alois was ^{proud of} ~~almost~~ at a loss at how quickly Alo took to the saddle. He was also ready for the joy of a quick canter bareback up the hill and down, accompanied by full screams of excitement from Angela and Adi. Yet, he also seemed content to work the plow for hours in the sun with the dray horse, Graubart. Before too long, they had turned up three acres of ~~hard soil~~ pasture for the potatoes, the same sprouting potatoes Klara had bought and stored in the root cellar a week after her arrival. Alois, Junior, worked harder for two weeks than his father would have believed. Then, all this splendid flurry of hard labor was cursed by bad news. A letter came from Passau. Alo had failed half of his courses at the Realschule this last semester, and would have to take those studies over again.

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"I won't go back," he told his father. ^{u the} ~~That school is full of teachers~~ ^{are} ~~so~~
 stupid we laugh at them."

Yes, Alo must have been living with what he knew the school news
 would bring, living with it for ~~all of~~ ^{all of} these two weeks, and had not said a
 word, just kept working hard. They had tilled ten inches deep into the three
~~a cres, a stubborn resistant soil~~
~~aeres,~~ then laid the seed potatoes in shallow trenches and covered them
 lightly, each of the sprouters a foot apart, each row of furrow less than a yard
 away from the next, but that had been only the beginning. Now, came ~~all~~ the
 labor that went into weeding, and ~~was~~ fertilizing. Bad memories, more than
 forty years old, came back to Alois. Disasters might yet be out there waiting
 for him. He now encountered white grubs and wire worms, saw the earliest
 potato leaves nibbled into green lace by aphids and flea beetles. Every day
 one had to go back ^{for} ~~to~~ more weeding. Then, drainage became the ongoing
 problem. One could only dig the irrigation canals down a few inches, or else
 too many potato roots ^{would} ~~could~~ be slashed by the hoe or the shovel. But then the ~~canals~~ ^{drainage}
 canals filled with silt. Hours had to be spent carrying pail after pail of well
 water up the slope to the meadow. On one of those afternoons, Junior
 disappeared. He was out riding Ulan. Alois put Angela to work in his stead,
 and for the rest of the working day, she carried the water, ^{heavy duty for} but it proved
~~a girl her size,~~
~~exhausting.~~

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That night, Alois gave his son a ^{It was memorable to all of the family} memorable tongue-lashing. "You are," he said, "very much like your crazy mother. Except with you, it is worse. You have no excuse. By the end, your mother might have been out of her head, but ^{mind} ^{at least} ^{had a long been} she was intelligent, she was hard-working. Unlike her, you are lazy. To mix your intelligence with such laziness? The worst! Foul laziness!" If the episode had happened even a year earlier, Alois would have given him a beating, exactly the apocalyptic variety that leaves a scar on the heart, but now the boy was big, and wild enough in the ^(occasional expression of his) eyes to make Alois pause. So, he did not strike him. Which, he came to decide in the days that followed, ^{was} had been a mistake. He should have given him one hell of a wallop. Now, Junior ^{might think} knew ^{maybe} (his father was maybe a little afraid of him, even a little, yes. Thereafter, Alo, Jr. worked at pinching away the edges of his ^{at} hours at work, ^{reducing one way or another the total of his hours,} He was no longer acting like a farmer's son, more like some boy from the city doing summer labor at a job he did not like. Often, short of sundown, ^{even} quite a bit before the ^(fast of the) day's effort was done, he would ^{ask} ^{to} coax Alois ^{into} letting him take Ulan for a ride over the hill into the twilight.

The trouble, Alois told himself, was that as a father, he was false. He had too soft a palate under all the hard bite. The truth was that he adored Alois, Jr. The boy was so attractive. Restless, yes, prey to terrible moods like his mother, much too prideful, and at present in full flight from

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education, yet he could be as charming as Fanni when he chose to be. He reminded Alois of how well she used to move. He even felt pride at how quickly his son had gotten on good terms with the stallion. Alois himself hesitated to ride him. It was truly a long way to the ground for a heavy man! But Alois Junior could saddle up with all the éclat of a prize cadet—the sort who used to promenade ^{along} on the best streets of Vienna wearing ^{kind of} the boots that Alois had made for cadets in those years, all the way back then when he had so admired those well-turned-out young men. Memories came back of those young officers ^{strutting} ~~promenading~~ on the Ringstrasse with their handsome ladies, while he, the apprentice, had dreamed of finding an elegant and lovely young milliner ^{for himself} ~~whom he could~~ ^{would} persuade to keep a shop with him where only the finest hats and most exceptional boots would be ^{put} ~~allowed~~ up for sale, a stupid dream, but now his ^{own son} ~~young son~~ reminded him of those cadets. Such a striking young man. He was not at all like Adolf, full of hysterical temper, or tiny Edmund, full of snots.

So, Alois could not bring himself to refuse when Alois, Jr. would ask for an hour off. Ulan, after all, had to be exercised. And the horse did love him! But not Alois! The beast would paw the floor of his stall when Alois approached, showing his large horse teeth in an unmistakably evil grin. He

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might just as well have been stating that he did not like the father, but was much taken with the son.

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On one warm evening in August, Alo took another unpleasant liberty. This time, Klara was infuriated. Alo was at table ready for their evening supper, but Angela was not. She was in the barn currying Ulan's wet hide after Alo had ^{put} ~~taken~~ ^{into} the charger ^{on the west} on a gallop ~~as he came~~ back from the woods and then provided a walk-down which was neither long enough nor slow enough to allow the hard-breathing animal to cool. Klara could not believe ^{such} ~~it~~ ^{a selfish behavior} ~~it~~ was one of the few times in their marriage when she spoke sharply to her husband. After six pregnancies, he was no uncle to her now, not at this moment. "You allowed Alo to leave such work to Angela? That is certainly not right."

"Angela likes wiping Ulan down," said Alo. "I can do without it."

"I may not know horses so much as some people," said Klara, "but I am still ready to say that he who rides a horse has his duty to it afterward. The horse sees the difference. Even if you don't."

"You know nothing about horses," said Alo, "nothing. Ten degrees less than zero."

"Silence!" said Alois. "You will keep your mouth shut for the rest of the meal. Not one word more."

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Coming into the fray these several steps behind Klara, he had to be masterful. "Yes, silence," he repeated. "I call for it."

"Yessir."

The boy did know how to pick little pieces off the edges of every proposition. Now, Alois had to ask himself whether he had just been ^{mocked or} obeyed, or ~~disobeyed~~? "I told you," said Alois, "You are to be silent for the rest of the meal." ^{not one word, not even "yessir."}

Alois, Jr., stood up and left the table.

"Come back," said Alois, "come back, sit down, and be silent. ~~Not again~~
^{I repeat not one word.}
~~word.~~"

There was a pause, and then he did come back, but in the pause was a suggestion of ^{what might be yet} ~~disobedience~~ yet (to come).

They finished the meal in silence. Angela came in, flushed from currying, started to speak, and then did not. She sat down, her face still moist from the quick wash she had taken with the dipper, and put her face to the food. Adi, sitting next to her, full of excitement and foreboding, was now living in the fear that he would wet himself. And Klara? She ate slowly, pausing often with her spoon in the air. She was filled with an unruly desire to upbraid Alo, Junior, again and then—no small impulse—upbraid her own Alois as well. She said nothing, however. She did not dare. To interfere

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with two men in such a rage with each other was unknown territory to her. The air between them looked ready to quiver. Edmund, pale, pasty-faced, lip-dribbling Edmund, began to cry.

That offered a solution. Klara was able to pick him up and leave the table. Then Alois rose and quit the room. Angela and Adi gathered the plates for washing, and Alo, Junior, continued to sit at the table, ~~speechless~~, poised within his own silence, gravely poised, as if he had converted his father's order ~~to be silent~~ into a species of ^{silent} reverence addressed ^{altogether} toward himself.

That night, Alois, Senior, could not sleep and by the end of the next afternoon, he quit work early. For the first time since he had come to Hafeld, he went to the only tavern in the area, ~~which was~~ ^{just} a good mile away at Fischlham.

He had hesitated whether to go. The company would certainly be less to his taste than his ~~good~~ gang of beer cronies in Linz. Besides, he knew enough about farmers to anticipate ~~the~~ ^{step} nature of his reception. They would be ready, if they could, to mock him in their ~~own way~~ ^{own developed manner}. Given his natural predilection to lord it over his fellow drinkers, he was not looking forward to the ~~rough~~ ^{sly} edge of their attitude. He could hear their thoughts in advance. "The peasant who tries to act like a millionaire," they would say behind his

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back. Or, as easily, the opposite—"this rich idiot who wants to play at being a peasant."

He had met a few of his much-dispersed neighbors in January when he first visited the house he was to buy, and ~~he~~ had asked them a few questions. They had not trusted him too much. He knew ^{as much} that in advance ^{as well}. They were not about to ^{often} ~~spill~~ the truth to a stranger who could pass on buying the farm, ^{yet} but might repeat enough of what gossip he had heard to get the owner offended at them. So Alois ~~had~~ only heard the best of remarks, yes, everything good, ^{just a} the land good, ^{but livestock} the few animals, excellent, the prize sow, ^{your} the walnut orchard—^{that itself could be} easy money once a year.

Alois had not bothered to believe them. Nor to disbelieve them. He had wanted the farm. He had assumed it would not be as good as it looked, and, of course, it couldn't be. Already the fine big cow who had been giving good milk every day had come down with udder trouble.

He did bring ^{just that water} ~~that~~ up at the tavern in Feischlham. He needed to ^{he was looking} ~~hear a~~ ^{for a} ~~(few)~~ ^{respective} opinions on the merits of the two ~~competing~~ veterinarians in the district, ^{and used} ~~and used~~ ^{as} ~~it was~~ a calculated opening to the farmers ^{now} ~~who were~~ drinking with him. He had decided to be mild, and most modest. Nothing could be worse than to be perceived from the outset as a retired fool trying to throw his city weight

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around. So, he listened with care, and did feel a little closer to ^(their guarded opinion) ~~the truth~~ of what they knew about his land.

When he told them that he had planted potatoes, they looked uneasy. He came out ^{it did come out} in the most indirect manner ^{that he might have been wiser to} ~~think of~~ beets.

"I planned to put one acre in like that, but not this first year, I decided. Too much at once."

^{yes} ~~Yes~~. They nodded. ~~Yes~~. Farming and work. ^{yes} The oldest marriage of them all. One must never do too much at once if one could help it.

They were much more slow-spoken ^{become} ~~people~~ than he had been ^{for years} ~~used to~~ ^{yes} ~~lately, which is to say, very lately~~ (the last forty-five years! It took an hour of staring at the unadorned wooden walls of the tavern, feeling all the while one ^{spike of a} ~~fat~~ splinter in his behind (a gift of the dried-up wood of the tavern bench) before any of them would come forward with the muffled hint that this land on which he had planted potatoes might have been better off in beets. That was because last year's crop had been wheat. Now, they spoke of a variety of wheat whose genus was unfamiliar to him, but that was what the previous owner had been planting these last three years. Such repetition ^{was not so likely to} ~~wouldn't make good ground~~ ^(the best) ~~now.~~ ^{who knew?} ~~(The soil had to be depleted by~~ ^{you'd have been} ~~the wheat. They did not say as~~ ^{quite that)} much; they just drew on their pipes and drank

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been right. He knew it in the pit of his stomach ^{he knew it} whenever he dug up a potato ~~this morning~~ to take a look. He had felt a few twinges in that same gut during the last few days of August and his heart was definitely acting full of high pressure now. Whenever Alo took Ulan for a ride, Alois could feel the boy nibbling at the edges of his authority, and ^{once again} ~~was~~ ^{that} guaranteed to get ^{his own} Alois' heart to race. Sometimes he even felt as if that long-trusted organ was now ^{heart} ~~so~~ ^{companion} ~~was now~~ ^{forcing} so overcharged that he could feel it ~~shoving~~ ^{forcing} itself right up under his brain.

Which is to say ~~that~~ he was having headaches ~~as well~~.

Given the work ^{to be done digging} ~~there would be to dig up~~ the potatoes and ~~then~~ carting them to the market in Fischlham, he ended by hiring a day laborer for a week, a stupid fellow working for his beer at night and not much else, yet, on balance, the man probably served up as much useful labor as Alo with his Ulan. How was that boy going to end? Would he yet be a criminal, ^{and have to} ~~who had~~ ^{Alois could conceive of him leaving} run away to something like the French Foreign Legion? Evil thoughts, dark thoughts, but they had their appeal to Alois. When he was young, he would have made a good soldier of that variety, ready for anything. Or was that nonsense? There was something in the boy that was wilder than himself. Was that why, these days, they always had to speak to each other as if they were in ballet shoes? Up on tiptoe!

Ulan, Alo with the Inland on which the French Foreign Legion was first formed

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The day laborer was stupid, but he was not so incapable of thinking when it came to putting a number of those potatoes aside for himself, and Alois could not even be certain there was such a theft. He had been ill one afternoon and the laborer had to take the produce to market for him, and returned with something less in the way of kronen than Alois had estimated. Just a little less. More nibbling at the edges.

Alois was sick for more tangible reasons. There had been a miserable end to the pride ^{the Angela} they had been taking in the prize sow. It got sick and died. ^{The girl} Angela was disconsolate. He was amazed at how much and how long a twelve-year-old ^{female} girl could cry.

It started with that big, pretty pig being a little sick, and then, day to day, it got worse. Angela was so upset that Alois broke into his own reservoirs of pride and actually turned to his three nearest neighbors for advice. It was then he had to recognize all over again that he had forgotten what he was now remembering too late. One of the laws of his childhood ~~that he had~~ received from Johann Nepomuk before he was even ten years old was that when it came to farming, there were no laws you could count on ^{if you had the bad luck} when you happened to meet an unexpected problem. Even your lifetime friends could disagree with you on the solution. Of course! Every farmer, he now learned, had his own idea of how to cure a sick pig. Of course!

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their beer and looked sad. Worst of all, he could tell, the sadness was hardly for him, but was ^{not it} ~~given~~ ^{offered up} to the ~~sad~~ outrage done to the earth now owned by him, a rich man, an interloper trying to be a peasant.

The smell of the tavern became unpleasant. He could not locate the odor that mingled with the beer, but it was impure—sour milk? Old manure? A compost pile outside the door that had gone wrong? What he resented most about this quiet dun-brown wooden den was that there was not even a hint of schnapps in the air, no, not even one good town drunkard.

The evening, however, proved not altogether a loss. He learned the names of a couple of apiculturists who lived in Hafeld. Veterans who knew bees were nearby. To console himself further, he had good walk home. The late summer moon was out, a harvest-orange moon, he finally felt the pleasure beer usually gave him as quickly as he could quaff it, but tonight, ~~all~~ those pints had merely been banked in his stomach, stored there to dispense his pleasure now, now at last to be able to find himself alone. He had a long splendid urination by the side of the road.

^{Next} ~~By~~ morning he was back in ^{his} ~~the~~ gathering gloom. He had to live with the disappointment of his three acres of potatoes. He had ended with a crop where not much more than half ^(so had to be) ~~was~~ salable. His drinking companions of last night, who ^(now) ~~in~~ memory smelled as dank as the Fischlham tavern, had

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The three neighbors to whom he turned in this case offered three different solutions, an emetic, a binder, and a diarrhetic. All were wrong. The sow stopped breathing and died. Because it was a pig, all three men had assumed the trouble could only be in the stomach or the bowels. Who had ever heard of consumption in such a heavy porker? Perhaps it was something else. Even the veterinarian he called in after the demise was unsure.

Nothing could have aggravated Alois more. To pay good money after the animal had died! Why? Because he had to know the cause. What an idiocy! He wasn't going to raise any more pigs, not now! but still he had to know. And then he found out that the specialist—if you could call him that—was not even sure of the cause. It would take, he told Alois, the further expense of lab tests in Linz, or maybe, even Vienna. Well, to hell with that! Such an expenditure would be obscene. On top of it all, he even had to bury the animal whole. He was tempted, but he did not dare to carve away any good part of it for the family. Left to himself, Alois would have looked for some choice cuts—how much did the hams have to do, after all, with the lungs? But, no, the vet was definite. "Do not take a chance, Herr Hitler, on any part of this animal."

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Yes, that is what he told him, but only after he had been paid! And there was Angela going on and on with the weeping and the droning, "Ach, ach, ach!" Not to mention the labor of digging that goddamn trench for the carcass.

Yes, these were losses to calculate. What kind of profits could he point to from that mediocre potato crop? When he added the cost of the seed potatoes, the compost he had bought for the three acres, and then subtracted the wages of the hired hand, the loss of the sow, and the fee of the vet as well, how could he claim to have made ^{any respectable sum at all?} ~~anything~~? If he divided the total that came back from the sale of the potatoes by the hours put in, could he say that he had earned any more by the day than in his first years with the Finanzwatch? Worse. The real calculation was ^{humiliating.} ~~even less good.~~ But for an ~~occasional expense of maintenance,~~ ^{payment) piece,} he was living here rent-free. No mortgage ^{to worry about.} The house had been bought outright, after all. But ^{to give money quarterly} if he had ~~mortgage payments to make~~ to the bank, could he claim any profit at all? Yes, a token profit. The walnuts. They had brought in a little easy money, money off the ground. For the rest, it had been a ^{good deal} ~~lot~~ of work for very little. He couldn't even complain to Klara for the shame of it.

He had to reassure himself. It wasn't that he was in real financial trouble. Never yet! His pension alone was six times the income of a day

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laborer like the poor dumb fellow he had hired, who, dumb or not, was also able to nibble away at him, but all right! In the old days, in the best years of his earning power at Passau and Linz, he had been situated in what you could call the well-salaried layers of the middle class. Why, he had made more than any principal in an elementary school, not bad when you consider that he, more respected, economically speaking, than the principal, had never even finished elementary school.

Alois could talk to himself in such a way but it did not dig the ^{real} (thorn) out of his gut. He could ^{not} ~~not~~ even enjoy ~~his~~ ^{the} ~~been any more~~ ^{who came} ~~One of his~~ strengths with ^{being good} younger officers from good families had always been that he, at least, ~~having come from~~ (peasant stock, knew at least when people were cheating him. And now he had discovered that the land he had bought was ^{at all} ~~not~~ as good as it looked. ^{Once upon a time, he} ~~He might have been a peasant, once upon a time,~~ ^{call himself} but now he might just as well ~~have been~~ one more middle class fool. To ^{foiled} have been ~~taken~~ on a deal involving land? He felt all the shame a peasant could know. Could ^{it be} ~~he feel~~ any worse if Klara had taken up with a farm boy? That was impossible, but then, how had it been so possible for himself, Alois Hitler, to be gulled on ^{this} ~~a~~ land deal?

He went into a depression. By October and November, he was settled in gloom. The Hound was one sick puppy these days. How ^{was he to} ~~could he~~ look at

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himself—a man in his late middle age who dangled a sick pup between his legs?

Klara, seven and a half months pregnant, tried to explain it to him. Now that the potato crop was in, so much ~~good~~ hard work was finished. It was natural to be unhappy. Women, she could tell him, felt that way after a child was born. So much had gone into the womb, so much hope and effort, but now one was empty again. The baby might be there and beautiful, but for a time the woman had to feel empty, even awful. For a little while. It was natural.

She had never waxed so philosophical before, not to him, but he almost took her head off. "What am I, a woman?" he wanted to shout.

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*Judith:
One more time
Dad's space all the way
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18

By July, life ^{became} was somewhat different for Alois. Klara, for one example, was most definitely pregnant. In seven months, if the baby was born without incident, there would be a total of eight kids who had come into existence because of him, eight, if you include the three who now were gone. Of course, if he so desired, he could add some kinder not exactly accounted for—quite a number of cooks and chambermaids who had managed to conceive with what might be called mixed male parentage, much mixed. Yes, when one of them told him she was pregnant, he had agreed that it was possible. He could be the true father, but then, hadn't she also been with Hans and Gebhardt and Hermann and Wolf? With rare exceptions (like Fanny) those women were not in a position to argue who was the true father. It was enough to give them a decent gift.

Here in Hafeld, he was face to face with the other side of such achievements. Through the heat of July, in his farm-house up on the hill, he had to look at five faces every meal, from Klara down to Edmund, sixteen

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months old and walking, even trying to talk. And by January, there would be another. He was used to living with peoples' faces in front of him, more new faces than most people had to meet up with every day, but now it was always the same mugs. He was not used to dwelling with such questions as whether Edmund, for example, had come up with a new phrase or was just gurgling as usual, blobs of sound, no real words.

Managing the farm was another matter. He could take pleasure in Angela's work. For a twelve-year-old who had been putting cold cream on her hands ever since she was eight—a little city girl, ready to be spoiled!-- she was now, to his surprise, good help. She was always currying the two horses, and washing down the cow even when that hefty lady didn't need another bath. Moreover, Angela was deft at milking and got Adolf and even Edmund to laugh at the hearty contentment to be heard in the full-gutted sound of the sow every time they approached with food. Rosig was large for a pig, large even for a prize pig, yes, happy in that sinelly wallow with a pink rosette tacked above her stall, an old prize rosette from the summer before they came to the farm. By next summer, when all this new work wouldn't be weighing on them, and there might be a little time, Angela wanted to prepare Rosig for local competition again. Yes, his girl, Alois decided, was a prize herself. Angela even took the pains to separate out the manure of the farm

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animals before carrying each collection to a different pile. Why? Because ^{declared to Klara} she ~~thought~~ ("My father would want it that way. Nice and neat." She even succeeded in getting Adi to take up a part of the slack. While he could be counted on to throw a tantrum, Angela would ride it out. Then ^{he} ~~he~~ would follow her, his nose up to heaven in horror, but nonetheless carrying a second manure pail.

His school year over in Passau, Alois, Jr., came to the farm at the beginning of July. For a short period, no one could surpass him at work. Right off, he was splendid with the horses, particularly the younger one, Ulan, a stallion five years old. Alois was ^{proud of} ~~almost at a loss at~~ how quickly Alo took to the saddle. He was also ready for the joy of a quick canter bareback up the hill and down, accompanied by full screams of excitement from Angela and Adi. Yet, he also seemed content to work the plow for hours in the sun with the dray horse, Graubart. Before too long, they had turned up three acres of ~~hard soil~~ pasture for the potatoes, the same sprouting potatoes Klara had bought and stored in the root cellar a week after her arrival. Alois, Junior, worked harder for two weeks than his father would have believed. Then, all this splendid flurry of hard labor was cursed by bad news. A letter came from Passau. Alo had failed half of his courses at the Realschule this last semester, and would have to take those studies over again.

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"I won't go back," he told his father. ^{u the} ~~That school is full of teachers~~ ^{are} ~~so~~
stupid we laugh at them."

Yes, Alo must have been living with what he knew the school news would bring, living with it for ~~all of~~ ^{all of} these two weeks, and had not said a word, just kept working hard. They had tilled ~~ten~~ ^{ten} inches deep into the three ~~acres~~ ^{acres, a stubborn resistant soil}, then laid the seed potatoes in shallow trenches and covered them lightly, each of the sprouters a foot apart, each row of furrow less than a yard away from the next, but that had been only the beginning. Now, came ~~all~~ the labor that went into weeding, and ~~and~~ ^{and} fertilizing. Bad memories, more than forty years old, came back to Alois. Disasters might yet be out there waiting for him. He now encountered white grubs and wire worms, saw the earliest potato leaves nibbled into green lace by aphids and flea beetles. Every day one had to go back ^{for} to more weeding. Then, drainage became the ongoing problem. One could only dig the irrigation canals down a few inches, or else too many potato roots ^{would} ~~could~~ be slashed by the hoe or the shovel. But then the ~~shallow~~ ^{shallow} canals filled with silt. Hours had to be spent carrying pail after pail of well water up the slope to the meadow. On one of those afternoons, Junior disappeared. He was out riding Ulan. Alois put Angela to work in his stead, and for the rest of the working day, she carried the water, ^{heavy duty for} ~~but it proved~~ ^{a girl her size,} ~~exhausting.~~

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That night, Alois gave his son a ^{It was memorable to all of the family} ~~memorable~~ tongue-lashing. "You are," he said, "very much like your crazy mother. Except with you, it is worse. You have no excuse. By the end, your mother might have been out of her ^{mind at least} ~~head~~, but ^{had always been} ~~she was intelligent~~, she was hard-working. Unlike her, you are lazy. To mix your intelligence with such laziness? The worst! Foul laziness!" If the episode had happened even a year earlier, Alois would have given him a beating, exactly the apocalyptic variety that leaves a scar on the heart, but now the boy was big, and wild enough in the ^(occasional expression of his) ~~eyes~~ to make Alois pause. So, he did not strike him. Which, he came to decide in the days that followed, ^{was} ~~had been~~ a mistake. He should have given him one hell of a wallop. Now, Junior ^{might think} ~~knew~~ his father was ^{maybe} ~~maybe~~ a little afraid of him, even a little, yes. Thereafter, Alo, Jr. worked at pinching away ^(it) ~~the edges of his~~ ^{reducing one way or another the total of his hours,} ~~hours at work~~. He was no longer acting like a farmer's son, more like some boy from the city doing summer labor at a job he did not like. Often, short of sundown, ^{even} ~~quite~~ a bit before the ~~fast of the~~ ^(from it) day's effort was done, he would ^{ask to} ~~conv~~ Alois ~~into~~ letting him take Ulan for a ride over the hill into the twilight.

The trouble, Alois told himself, was that as a father, he was false. He had too soft a palate under all the hard bite. The truth was that he adored Alois, Jr. The boy was so attractive. Restless, yes, prey to terrible moods like his mother, much too prideful, and at present in full flight from

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education, yet he could be as charming as Fanni when he chose to be. He reminded Alois of how well she used to move. He even felt pride at how quickly his son had gotten on good terms with the stallion. Alois himself hesitated to ride him. It was truly a long way to the ground for a heavy man! But Alois Junior could saddle up with all the eclat of a prize cadet—the sort who used to promenade ^{along} on the best streets of Vienna wearing ^{kind of} the boots that Alois had made for cadets in those years, all the way back then when he had so admired those well-turned-out young men. Memories came back of those young officers ^{strutting} ~~promenading~~ on the Ringstrasse with their handsome ladies, while he, the apprentice, had dreamed of finding an elegant and lovely young milliner ^{for himself} (whom he ^{might} ~~could~~ persuade to keep a shop with him where only the finest hats and most exceptional boots would be ^{put} ~~allowed~~ up for sale, a stupid dream, but now his ^{own son} ~~young son~~ reminded him of those cadets. Such a striking young man. He was not at all like Adolf, full of hysterical temper, or tiny Edmund, full of snots.

So, Alois could not bring himself to refuse when Alois, Jr. would ask for an hour off. Ulan, after all, had to be exercised. And the horse did love him! But not Alois! The beast would paw the floor of his stall when Alois approached, showing his large horse teeth in an unmistakably evil grin. He

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From: jmw@cornell.edu Fax: 716-624-3702 Voice: 716-459-0892

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Page 7 of 19 Monday, February 02, 2004 2:42:33 PM

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might just as well have been stating that he did not like the father, but was much taken with the son.

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On one warm evening in August, Alo took another unpleasant liberty.

This time, Klara was infuriated. Alo was at table ready for their evening supper, but Angela was not. She was in the barn currying Ulan's wet hide after Alo had ^{put} ~~taken~~ ^{into} the charger ^{on the (wood)} on a gallop as he ~~came~~ back from the woods

and then provided a walk-down which was neither long enough nor slow

enough to allow the hard-breathing animal to cool. Klara could not believe ^{such}

^(selfish behavior)

It was one of the few times in their marriage when she spoke sharply to her husband. After six pregnancies, he was no uncle to her now, not at this moment. "You allowed Alo to leave such work to Angela? That is certainly not right."

"Angela likes wiping Ulan down," said Alo. "I can do without it."

"I may not know horses so much as some people," said Klara, "but I am still ready to say that he who rides a horse has his duty to it afterward. The horse sees the difference. Even if you don't."

"You know nothing about horses," said Alo, "nothing. Ten degrees less than zero."

"Silence!" said Alois. "You will keep your mouth shut for the rest of the meal. Not one word more."

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Coming into the fray these several steps behind Klara, he had to be masterful. "Yes, silence," he repeated. "I call for it."

"Yessir."

The boy did know how to pick little pieces off the edges of every proposition. Now, Alois had to ask himself whether he had just been ^{mocked or} obeyed, or ~~disobeyed~~? "I told you," said Alois, "You are to be silent for the rest of the meal." ^{Not one word, not even "yessir."}

Alois, Jr., stood up and left the table.

"Come back," said Alois, "come back, sit down, and be silent. ~~Not one word.~~" ^{I repeat. Not one word.}

There was a pause, and then he did come back, but in the pause was a suggestion of ^{what might be got} ~~disobedience~~ yet (to come).

They finished the meal in silence. Angela came in, flushed from currying, started to speak, and then did not. She sat down, her face still moist from the quick wash she had taken with the dipper, and put her face to the food. Adi, sitting next to her, full of excitement and foreboding, was now living in the fear that he would wet himself. And Klara? She ate slowly, pausing often with her spoon in the air. She was filled with an unruly desire to upbraid Alo, Junior, again and then—no small impulse—upbraid her own Alois as well. She said nothing, however. She did not dare. To interfere

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with two men in such a rage with each other was unknown territory to her. The air between them looked ready to quiver. Edmund, pale, pasty-faced, lip-dribbling Edmund, began to cry.

That offered a solution. Klara was able to pick him up and leave the table. Then Alois rose and quit the room. Angela and Adi gathered the plates for washing, and Alo, Junior, continued to sit at the table, ~~speechless~~, poised within his own silence, gravely poised, as if he had converted his father's order ~~to be silent~~ into a species of reverence addressed toward himself.

That night, Alois, Senior, could not sleep and by the end of the next afternoon, he quit work early. For the first time since he had come to Hafeld, he went to the only tavern in the area, ~~which was~~ ⁵⁻⁴ a good mile away at Fischlham.

He had hesitated whether to go. The company would certainly be less to his taste than his ~~good~~ gang of beer cronies in Linz. Besides, he knew enough about farmers to anticipate the ~~stiff~~ nature of his reception. They would be ready, if they could, to mock him in their ~~own way~~ ^{own developed manner,}. Given his natural predilection to lord it over his fellow drinkers, he was not looking forward to the ~~rough~~ ⁵⁻⁴ edge of their attitude. He could hear their thoughts in advance. "The peasant who tries to act like a millionaire," they would say behind his

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back. Or, as easily, the opposite—"this rich idiot who wants to play at being a peasant."

He had met a few of his much-dispersed neighbors in January when he first visited the house he was to buy, and ~~he~~ had asked them a few questions. They had not trusted him too much. He knew ^{as much} ~~that~~ in advance as well. They were not about to ^{offer} ~~spill~~ the truth to a stranger who could pass on buying the farm, ^{yet} ~~but might~~ repeat enough of what gossip he had heard to get the owner offended at them. So Alois ~~had~~ only heard the best of remarks, yes, everything good, ^{just a} ~~the~~ land good, ^{but} ~~the~~ few animals, excellent, the prize sow, ^{your} ~~the~~ walnut orchard—^{that itself could be} ~~easy~~ money once a year.

Alois had not bothered to believe them. Nor to disbelieve them. He had wanted the farm. He had assumed it would not be as good as it looked, and, of course, it couldn't be. Already the fine big cow who had been giving good milk every day had come down with udder trouble.

He did bring ^{just that matter} ~~that~~ up at the tavern in Fischlham. He needed to ^{he was looking} ~~hear a~~ ^{respectful} ~~few~~ opinions on the merits of the two ^{now} ~~competing~~ veterinarians in the district, ^{and used} ~~and used~~ ^{as} ~~it was~~ a calculated opening to the farmers ^{now} ~~who were~~ drinking with him. He had decided to be mild, and most modest. Nothing could be worse than to be perceived from the outset as a retired fool trying to throw his city weight

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around. So, he listened with care, and did feel a little closer to ^(their guarded opinions) the truth of what they knew about his land.

When he told them that he had planted potatoes, they looked uneasy. It came out ^{it did come out} in the most indirect manner ^(that he might have been wiser to consider think of beets.)

"I planned to put one acre in like that, but not this first year. I decided.

Too much at once."

~~Yes~~. They nodded. ^{Yes}. Farming and work. ^(Yes) The oldest marriage of them all. One must never do too much at once if one could help it.

They were much more slow-spoken ^{become} people than he had been used to ^{for years} lately, which is to say, very lately ^(yes) — (the last forty-five years! It took an hour of staring at the unadorned wooden walls of the tavern, feeling all the while one ^{spike of a} splinter in his behind (a gift of the dried-up wood of the tavern bench) before any of them would come forward with the muffled hint that this land on which he had planted potatoes might have been better off in beets. That was because last year's crop had been wheat. Now, they spoke of a variety of wheat whose genus was unfamiliar to him, but that was what the previous owner had been planting these last three years. Such repetition ^{was not so likely to (the best)} wouldn't make good ground for potatoes now. ^{who knows?} (The soil ^{has to be} depleted by the wheat. They did not say so much; they just drew on their pipes and drank

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their beer and looked sad. Worst of all, he could tell, the sadness was hardly for him, but was ^{not of} ~~given~~ ^{infused up} to the ~~and~~ outrage done to the earth now owned by him, a rich man, an interloper trying to be a peasant.

The smell of the tavern became unpleasant. He could not locate the odor that mingled with the beer, but it was impure—sour milk? Old manure? A compost pile outside the door that had gone wrong? What he resented most about this quiet dun-brown wooden den was that there was not even a hint of schnapps in the air, no, not even one good town drunkard.

The evening, however, proved not altogether a loss. He learned the names of a couple of apiculturists who lived in Hafeld. Veterans who knew bees were nearby. To console himself further, he had good walk home. The late summer moon was out, a harvest-orange moon, he finally felt the pleasure beer usually gave him as quickly as he could quaff it, but tonight, ~~all~~ those pints had merely been banked in his stomach, stored there to dispense his pleasure now, now at last to be able to find himself alone. He had a long splendid urination by the side of the road.

~~Next~~ ^{his} morning he was back ~~in the~~ gathering gloom. He had to live with the disappointment of his three acres of potatoes. He had ended with a crop where not much more than half ^(as had to be) was salable. His drinking companions of last night, who now in memory smelled as dank as the Fischlham tavern, had

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been right. He knew it in the pit of his stomach ^{he knew it} whenever he dug up a potato ~~this morning~~ to take a look. He had felt a few twinges in that same gut

during the last few days of August and his heart was definitely acting full of

high pressure now. Whenever Alo took Ulan for a ride, Alois could feel the

boy nibbling ^{once again} at the edges of his authority, and ^{that} was guaranteed to get Alois ^{has only}

heart to race. Sometimes he even felt as if that long-trusted organ was now

^{heart's companion was now} so overcharged that he could feel it ^{forcing} ~~showing~~ itself right up under his brain.

Which is to say ~~that~~ he was having headaches as well.

Given the work ^{to be done digging} there would be to dig up the potatoes and then carting

them to the market in Fischlham, he ended by hiring a day laborer for a

week, a stupid fellow working for his beer at night and not much else, yet, on

balance, the man probably served up as much useful labor as Alo with his

Ulan. How was that boy going to end? Would he yet be a criminal, ^{and have to} who had

~~Alois could conceive of him leaving~~ run away to something like the French Foreign Legion? Evil thoughts, dark

thoughts, but they had their appeal to Alois. When he was young, he would

have made a good soldier of that variety, ready for anything. Or was that

nonsense? There was something in the boy that was wilder than himself.

Was that why, these days, they always had to speak to each other as if they

were in ballet shoes? Up on tiptoe!

Ulan, Alo with the Inland
on when the French Foreign
Legion was first formed

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The day laborer was stupid, but he was not so incapable of thinking when it came to putting a number of those potatoes aside for himself, and Alois could not even be certain there was such a theft. He had been ill one afternoon and the laborer had to take the produce to market for him, and returned with something less in the way of kronen than Alois had estimated. Just a little less. More nibbling at the edges.

Alois was sick for more tangible reasons. There had been a miserable end to the pride ^{the Angela} they had been taking in the prize sow. It got sick and died. ^{The girl} Angela was disconsolate. He was amazed at how much and how long a twelve-year-old ^{female} girl could cry.

It started with that big, pretty pig being a little sick, and then, day to day, it got worse. Angela was so upset that Alois broke into his own reservoirs of pride and actually turned to his three nearest neighbors for advice. It was then he had to recognize all over again that he had forgotten what he was now remembering too late. One of the laws of his childhood ~~that he had~~ received from Johann Nepomuk before he was even ten years old was that when it came to farming, there were no laws you could count on ^{if you had the bad luck} when you happened to meet an unexpected problem. Even your lifetime friends could disagree with you on the solution. Of course! Every farmer, he now learned, had his own idea of how to cure a sick pig. Of course!

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The three neighbors to whom he turned in this case offered three different solutions, an emetic, a binder, and a diarrhetic. All were wrong. The sow stopped breathing and died. Because it was a pig, all three men had assumed the trouble could only be in the stomach or the bowels. Who had ever heard of consumption in such a heavy porker? Perhaps it was something else. Even the veterinarian he called in after the demise was unsure.

Nothing could have aggravated Alois more. To pay good money after the animal had died! Why? Because he had to know the cause. What an idiocy! He wasn't going to raise any more pigs, not now! but still he had to know. And then he found out that the specialist—if you could call him that—was not even sure of the cause. It would take, he told Alois, the further expense of lab tests in Linz, or maybe, even Vienna. Well, to hell with that! Such an expenditure would be obscene. On top of it all, he even had to bury the animal whole. He was tempted, but he did not dare to carve away any good part of it for the family. Left to himself, Alois would have looked for some choice cuts—how much did the hams have to do, after all, with the lungs? But, no, the vet was definite. "Do not take a chance, Herr Hitler, on any part of this animal."

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Yes, that is what he told him, but only after he had been paid! And there was Angela going on and on with the weeping and the droning, "Ach, ach, ach!" Not to mention the labor of digging that goddamn trench for the carcass.

Yes, these were losses to calculate. What kind of profits could he point to from that mediocre potato crop? When he added the cost of the seed potatoes, the compost he had bought for the three acres, and then subtracted the wages of the hired hand, the loss of the sow, and the fee of the vet as well, how could he claim to have made ^{any respectable sum at all?} ~~anything~~? If he divided the total that came back from the sale of the potatoes by the hours put in, could he say that he had earned any more by the day than in his first years with the Finanzwatch? Worse. The real calculation was ^{humiliating.} ~~even less good.~~ But for an occasional expense of maintenance, ~~he~~ ^{he} was living here rent-free. No mortgage to worry about. ^{payment) over,} The house had been bought outright, after all. But if he had ^{to give money quarterly} mortgage payments to make to the bank, could he claim any profit at all? Yes, a token profit. The walnuts. They had brought in a little easy money, money off the ground. For the rest, it had been a ^{godsend!} ~~lot~~ of work for very little. He couldn't even complain to Klara for the shame of it.

He had to reassure himself. It wasn't that he was in real financial trouble. Never yet! His pension alone was six times the income of a day

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laborer like the poor dumb fellow he had hired, who, dumb or not, was also able to nibble away at him, but all right! In the old days, in the best years of his earning power at Passau and Linz, he had been situated in what you could call the well-salaried layers of the middle class. Why, he had made more than any principal in an elementary school, not bad when you consider that he, more respected, economically speaking, than the principal, had never even finished elementary school.

Alois could talk to himself in such a way but it did not dig the ^{real} thorn out of his gut. ~~He could not~~ ^{the} ~~his beer any more.~~ ^{who came} One of his strengths with younger officers from good families had always been that he, at least, ^{being 9 and} ~~having come from~~ peasant stock, knew at least when people were cheating him. And now he had discovered that the land he had bought was ^{at all} ~~not as good as it looked.~~ ^{Once upon a time, he} ~~He might have been a peasant once upon a time,~~ ^{call himself} but now he might just as well have been one more middle class fool. To have been ^{foolish} ~~taken~~ on a deal involving land? He felt all the shame a peasant could know. Could ^{it be} ~~he feel~~ any worse if Klara had taken up with a farm boy? That was impossible, but then, how had it been so possible for himself, Alois Hitler, to be gulled on ^{this} ~~a~~ land deal?

He went into a depression. By October and November, he was settled in gloom. The Hound was one sick puppy these days. How ^{was he to} ~~could he~~ look at

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himself—a man in his late middle age who dangled a sick pup between his legs?

Klara, seven and a half months pregnant, tried to explain it to him. Now that the potato crop was in, so much ~~good~~ hard work was finished. It was natural to be unhappy. Women, she could tell him, felt that way after a child was born. So much had gone into the womb, so much hope and effort, but now one was empty again. The baby might be there and beautiful, but for a time the woman had to feel empty, even awful. For a little while. It was natural.

She had never waxed so philosophical before, not to him, but he almost took her head off. "What am I, a woman?" he wanted to shout.

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By July, life became ^{considerably} somewhat different for Alois. Klara, for one example, was most definitely pregnant. In seven months, if the baby was born without incident, there would be a total of eight kids who had come into existence because of him, eight, if you include the three who now were gone. Of course, if he so desired, he could add some kinder not exactly accounted for—quite a number of cooks and chambermaids who had managed to conceive with what might be called mixed male parentage, much mixed. Yes, when one of them told him she was pregnant, he had agreed that it was possible. He could be the true father, but then, hadn't she also been with Hans and ^{Gerhardt} ~~Gerhardt~~ and Hermann and Wolf? With rare exceptions (like Fanny) those women were not in a position to argue who was the true father. It was enough to give them a decent gift.

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Here in Hafeld, he was face to face with the other side of such achievements. Through the heat of July, in ^(this) farm-house up on the hill, he had to look at five faces every meal, from Klara down to Edmund, sixteen months old and walking, even trying to talk. And by January, there would be another. He was used to living with peoples' faces in front of him, more new faces than most people had to meet up with every day, but now it was always the same mugs. He was not used to dwelling with such questions as whether Edmund, for example, had come up with a new phrase or was just gurgling as usual, blobs of sound, no real ^{sense of language} words.

Managing the farm was another matter. He could take pleasure in Angela's work. For a twelve-year-old who had been putting cold cream on her hands ever since she was eight—a little city girl, ready to be spoiled!—she was now, to his surprise, ^{decent} good help. She was always currying the two ~~horses~~ ^{that happy lady} horses, and washing down the sow, even when ~~she didn't need~~ ^{she would even get a bit of} another bath. Moreover, Angela was deft at milking and got Adolf and even Edmund to laugh at the hearty contentment to be heard in the full-gutted sound of the sow every time they approached with food. Rosig was large for a pig, large even for a prize pig, ^{and so} ~~was~~ happy in that smelly wallow with ^{its} a pink rosette tacked above her stall, an old prize rosette from the summer before they came to the farm. By next summer, when all this new work wouldn't be

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weighing on them, and there might be a little time, Angela wanted to prepare Rosig for local competition again. Yes, his girl, Alois decided, was a prize herself. Angela even took the pains to separate out the manure of the farm animals before carrying each collection to a different pile. Why? Because she declared to Klara, "My father would want it that way. Nice and neat." She even succeeded in getting Adi to take up a part of the slack. While he could be counted on to throw a tantrum, Angela would ride it out. Then the boy would follow her, his nose up to heaven in horror, but nonetheless carrying a second manure pail.

His school year over in Passau, Alois, Jr., came to the farm at the beginning of July. For a short period, no one could surpass him at work. Right off, he was splendid with the horses, particularly the younger one, Ulan, a stallion five years old. Alois was proud of how quickly Alo took to the saddle. He was also ready for the joy of a quick canter bareback up the hill and down, accompanied by full screams of excitement from Angela and Adi. Yet, he also seemed content to work the plow for hours in the sun with the dray horse, Graubart. Before too long, they had turned up three acres of hard soil pasture for the potatoes, the same sprouting potatoes Klara had bought and stored in the root cellar a week after her arrival. Alois, Junior, worked harder for two weeks than his father would have believed. Then, all

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this splendid flurry of hard labor was cursed by bad news. ^{came in a letter} A letter came from Alois' school ^{in Passau, (H)} ~~in Passau, (H)~~ ³ from Passau. Alo had failed half of his courses ^{at the Realschule} ~~at the Realschule~~ this last semester, and would have to take those studies over again.

"I won't go back," he told his father. "The teachers are so stupid we laugh at them."

Yes, Alo must have been living with what he knew the ^{Realschule} school news would bring, living with it for these two weeks, and had not said a word, just kept working hard ^{in his father's field} ~~in his father's field~~ ^{chosen, a} They had tilled ten inches deep into the three acres, a stubborn, resistant soil, then laid the seed potatoes in shallow trenches and covered them lightly, each of the sprouters a foot apart, each row of furrow less than a yard away from the next, but that had been only the beginning. Now, came the labor that went into weeding, and fertilizing. Bad memories, more than forty years old, came back to Alois. Disasters might yet be out there waiting for him. He now encountered white grubs and wire worms, saw the earliest potato leaves nibbled into green lace by aphids and flea beetles. Every day one had to go back for more weeding. Then, drainage became the ongoing problem. One could only dig the irrigation canals down a few inches, or else too many potato roots would be slashed by the hoe or the shovel. ~~But~~ then the shallow canals filled with silt. Hours had to be spent carrying pail after pail of well water up the slope to the meadow. On

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one of those afternoons, Junior disappeared. He was out riding Ulan. Alois put Angela to work in his stead, and for the rest of the working day, she carried the water, heavy duty for a girl her size.

That night, Alois gave his son a tongue-lashing. It was memorable to all of the family. "You are," he said, "very much like your crazy mother. Except with you, it is worse. You have no excuse. By the end, your mother ^{was} might have been out of her mind, but at least she had always been hard-working. You are lazy. ^{You} To mix your intelligence with ~~such~~ laziness? ~~The~~ ~~worst~~ Foul laziness!" If the episode had happened even a year earlier, Alois would have given him a beating, exactly the apocalyptic variety that leaves a scar on the heart, but now the boy was big, and wild enough in the occasional expression of his eyes to make Alois pause. So, he did not strike him. Which, he came to decide in the days that followed, was a mistake. He should have given him one hell of a wallop. Now, Junior might think his father was a little afraid of him, maybe ~~even~~ a little, yes. Thereafter, Alo, Jr. worked at pinching away at the edges of his work, reducing one way or another the total of his hours. He was no longer acting like a farmer's son, more like some boy from the city doing summer labor at a job he did not like. Often, short of sundown, even quite a bit before the day's effort was done, he would ask Alois to let him take Ulan for a ride over the hill into the twilight.

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The trouble, Alois told himself, was that as a father, he was false. He had too soft a palate under all the hard bite. The truth was that he adored Alois, Jr. The boy was so attractive. Restless, yes, prey to terrible moods like his mother, much too prideful, and at present in full flight from education, yet he could be as charming as Fanni when he chose to be. He reminded Alois of how well she used to move. He even felt pride at how quickly his son had gotten on good terms with the stallion. Alois himself hesitated to ride him. It was truly a long way to the ground for a heavy man! But Alois Junior could saddle up with all the eclat of a prize cadet—the sort who used to promenade along the best streets of Vienna wearing the kind of boots that Alois had made for cadets in those years, all the way back then when he had so admired those well-turned-out young men. Memories came back of those young officers strutting on the Ringstrasse with their handsome ladies, while he, the apprentice, had dreamed of finding an elegant and lovely young milliner for himself whom he might persuade to keep a shop with him where only the finest hats and most exceptional boots would be put up for sale, a stupid dream, but now his own Junior reminded him of those cadets. Such a striking young man. He was not at all like Adolf, full of hysterical temper, or tiny Edmund, full of snots.

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So, Alois could not bring himself to refuse when Alois, Jr. would ask for an hour off. Ulan, after all, had to be exercised. And the horse did love him! But not Alois! The beast would paw the ^{straw} floor of his stall when Alois approached, showing his large horse teeth in an unmistakably evil grin. He might just as well have been stating that he did not like the father, but was much taken with the son.

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On one warm evening in August, Alo took another unpleasant liberty. This time, Klara was infuriated. Alo was at table ready for their evening supper, but Angela was not. She was in the barn currying Ulan's wet hide after Alo had put the charger into a gallop on the way back from the woods and then provided a walk-down which was neither long enough nor slow enough to allow the hard-breathing animal to cool. Klara could not believe such selfish behavior. It was one of the few times in their marriage when she spoke sharply to her husband. After six pregnancies, he was no uncle to her now, not at this moment. "You allowed Alo to leave such work to Angela? That is certainly not right."

"Angela likes wiping Ulan down," said Alo. "I can do without it."

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"I may not know horses so much as some people," said Klara, "but I am still ready to say that he who rides a horse has his duty to it afterward. The horse sees the difference. Even if you don't."

"You know nothing about horses," said Alo, "nothing. Ten degrees less than zero."

"Silence!" said Alois. "You will keep your mouth shut for the rest of the meal. Not one word more."

Coming into the fray these several steps behind Klara, he had to be masterful. "Yes, silence," he repeated. "I call for it."

"Yessir."

The boy did know how to ^{nibble} pick little pieces off the edges of every proposition. Now, Alois had to ask himself whether he ^{was being} ~~had just been~~ mocked or obeyed? "I told you," said Alois, "You are to be silent for the rest of the meal. Not one word. Not even 'Yessir.'"

Alois, Jr., stood up and left the table.

"Come back," said Alois, "come back, sit down, and be silent. I repeat, Not one word."

There was a pause, and then ^{Al} ~~he~~ did come back, but in the pause was a suggestion of what might be yet to come.

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They finished the meal in silence. Angela came in, flushed from currying, started to speak, and then did not. She sat down, her face still moist from the quick wash she had taken with the dipper, and put her face to the food. Adi, sitting next to her, full of excitement and foreboding, was now living in the fear that he would wet himself. And Klara? She ate slowly, pausing often with her spoon in the air. She was filled with an unruly desire to upbraid Alo, Junior, again and then—no small impulse—upbraid her own Alois as well. She said nothing, however. She did not dare. To interfere with two men in such a rage with each other was unknown territory to her. The air between them looked ready to quiver. Edmund, pale, pasty-faced, lip-dribbling Edmund, began to cry.

That offered a solution. Klara was able to pick him up and leave the table. Then Alois rose and quit the room. Angela and Adi gathered the plates for washing, and Alo, Junior, continued to sit at the table, poised within his own silence, gravely poised, as if he had converted his father's order into a species of silent reverence addressed altogether toward himself.

That night, Alois, Senior, could not sleep and by the end of the next afternoon, he quit work early. For the first time since he had come to Hafeld, he went to the only tavern in the area, a full mile away at Fischlham.

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He had hesitated whether to go. The company would certainly be less to his taste than his ^{folk} ~~gang~~ of beer cronies in Linz. Besides, he knew enough about farmers to anticipate the nature of his reception. They would be ready, ^{provincial} ~~but well~~ ^{if they could}, to mock him in their own ~~developed~~ manner. Given his natural predilection to lord it over his fellow drinkers, he was not looking forward to ^{what was} ~~be~~ the sly edge of their attitude. He could hear their thoughts in advance. "The peasant who tries to act like a millionaire," they would say behind his back. Or, as easily, ^{exactly} ~~the~~ opposite—"this rich idiot who wants to play at being a peasant."

He had met a few of his much-dispersed neighbors in January when he first visited the house he was to buy, and had asked ~~them~~ a few questions. They had not trusted him too much. He knew as much in advance. They were not about to offer the truth to a stranger who could pass on buying the farm, yet repeat enough of what gossip he had heard to get the owner offended at them. So Alois only heard the best of remarks, yes, everything good, land good, just a few animals, excellent livestock, the prize sow, your walnut orchard—that, itself, could be easy money once a year.

Alois had not bothered to believe them. Nor to disbelieve them. He had wanted the farm. He had assumed it would not be as good as it looked,

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and, of course, it couldn't be. Already the fine big cow who had been giving good milk every day had come down with udder trouble.

He did bring just that matter up at the tavern in Flischlham. He needed to. He was looking for a few opinions on the respective merits of the two veterinarians in the district, and used ^{it} as a calculated opening to the farmers now drinking with him. He had decided to be mild, and most modest. Nothing could be worse than to be perceived from the outset as a retired fool trying to throw his city weight around. So, he listened with care, and ~~did feel a little closer~~ ^{most} to their guarded opinions of what they knew about his land.

When he told them that he had planted potatoes, they looked uneasy. In the most indirect manner, it did come out that he might have been wiser to consider beets.

"I planned to put one acre in like that, but not this first year. Too much at once."

They nodded. Farming and work. Yes. The oldest marriage of them all. One must never do too much at once if one could help it.

They were ~~much~~ ^{most of the voices he had} more slow-spoken than he ~~had become used to for~~ ^{years - yes, the last forty-five years!} It took an hour of staring at the unadorned wooden walls of the tavern, ^{fretting over the} ~~feeling~~ all the while ^{one} spike of a

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splinter in his behind (a gift of the dried-up wood of the tavern bench) before any of them would come forward with the muffled hint that this land on which he had planted potatoes ^{really should have been} ~~might have been better off~~ in beets. That was because last year's crop had been wheat. Now, they spoke of a variety of wheat whose genus was unfamiliar to him, but that was what the previous owner had been planting these last three years. Such repetition was not so likely to make the best ground for potatoes now. Who knew? The soil could have been depleted by the wheat. They did not say ~~quite~~ that much; they just drew on their pipes and drank their beer and looked sad. Worst of all, he could tell, the sadness was hardly for him, no, it was offered to the outrage done to the earth now owned by him, a rich man, an interloper trying to be a peasant.

The smell of the tavern became unpleasant. He could not locate the odor that mingled with the beer, but it was impure—sour milk? Old manure? A compost pile outside the door that had gone wrong? What he resented most about this quiet dun-brown wooden den was that there was not even a hint of schnapps in the air, no, not even one good town drunkard.

The evening, however, proved not altogether a loss. He learned the names of a couple of apiculturists who lived in Hafeld. Veterans who knew bees were nearby. To console himself further, he had ^a good walk home. The

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late summer moon was out, a harvest-orange moon, ^{and} ^{on this night} he finally felt ^{just so} the pleasure beer usually gave him as quickly as he could quaff it, but tonight, ^{however} those pints had merely been banked in his stomach, stored there to dispense his pleasure now, now at last to be able to find himself alone. He had a long splendid urination by the side of the road.

Next morning he was back in his gathering gloom. He had to live with the disappointment of his three acres of potatoes. He had ended with a crop where not much more than half ^{what they dug up} looked to be salable. His drinking companions of last night, ^{who in memory now smelled as dank as the Fischlham tavern,} had been right. He knew it in the pit of his stomach, knew it whenever he dug up ^{another} potato ^{to take a look}. He had felt a few twinges in that same gut during the last few days of August and his heart was definitely acting ^{up, yes,} full of high pressure now. Whenever Alo took Ulan for a ride, Alois could feel the boy ^{chipping away} nibbling once again at the edges of his authority, and that was guaranteed to get his own heart to race. Sometimes he even felt as if that long-trusted organ—such a hearty companion—was now ~~so overcharged~~ ^{up, yes,} ~~that he could feel it~~ forcing itself right up under his brain. Which is to say he was having headaches.

Given the work to be done of digging up the potatoes and carting them to the market in Fischlham, he ended by hiring a day laborer for a week, a

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stupid fellow working for his beer at night and not much else, yet, on balance, the man probably served up as much useful labor as Alo with his Ulan. How was that boy going to end? Would he yet be a criminal? Alois could conceive of him having to run away to something like the French Foreign Legion. Dark thoughts, but they had their appeal to Alois. When he was young, he would have made a good soldier of that variety, ready for anything. Or was that nonsense? There was something in the boy that was wilder than himself. Was that why, these days, they always had to speak to each other as if they were in ballet shoes? Up on tiptoe!

The day laborer was stupid, but he was not so incapable of thinking when it came to putting a number of those potatoes aside for himself, and Alois could not even be certain ^{that had been} ~~there was such~~ a theft. ^{Feeling} ~~He had been~~ ill one afternoon, ^{he had let} ~~and the laborer had to~~ take the produce to market for him, and returned with something less in the way of kronen than Alois had estimated. ^{Disagreeing} Just a little less. More nibbling at the edges.

Alois was sick ~~for more tangible reasons~~. There had been a miserable end to the pride Angela had been taking in the prize sow. ^{Died.} ~~It got sick and~~ died. The girl was disconsolate. He was amazed at how much and how long a twelve-year-old female could cry.

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It started with that big, pretty pig being a little ^{7/6}sick. Then, day to day, it got worse. Angela was so upset that Alois broke into his own reservoirs of pride and actually turned to his three nearest neighbors for advice. It was then he had to recognize all over again that he had forgotten what he was now remembering too late. One of the laws of his childhood received from Johann Nepomuk before he was even ten years old was that when it came to farming, there were no laws you could count on if you had the bad luck to meet an unexpected problem. Even your lifetime friends could disagree with you on the solution. Of course! Every farmer, he now learned, had his own idea of how to cure a sick pig. Of course!

The three neighbors to whom he turned in this case offered three different solutions, an emetic, a binder, and a diarrhetic. All were wrong. The sow stopped breathing and ^{was gone}died. Because it was a pig, all three men had ^{where else in a pig?}assumed the trouble could only be in the stomach or the bowels (Who had ever heard of consumption in such a heavy porker? Perhaps it was something else. Even the veterinarian he called in after the demise was unsure.

Nothing could have aggravated Alois more. To pay good money after the animal had died! Why? Because he had to know the cause. What an idiocy! He wasn't going to raise any more pigs, not now! but still he had to

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know. And then he found out that the specialist—if you could call him that—was not even sure of the cause. It would take, he told Alois, the further expense of lab tests in Linz, or maybe, even Vienna. Well, to hell with that! Such an expenditure would be obscene. On top of it all, he even had to bury the animal whole. He was tempted, but he did not dare to carve away any good part of it for the family. Left to himself, Alois would have looked for some choice cuts—how much did the hams have to do, after all, with the lungs? But, no, the vet was definite. "Do not take a chance, Herr Hitler, on any part of this animal."

Yes, that is what ^{the vet} he told him, but only after he had been paid! And there was Angela going on and on with ^{that} the weeping and the ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~droning~~ ^{the} ~~droning~~. "Ach, ach, ach!" Not to mention the labor of digging ^a ~~that~~ ^a goddamn trench for the carcass.

Yes, these were losses to calculate. What kind of profits could he point to from ^{his} ~~that~~ mediocre potato crop? When he added the cost of the seed potatoes, the compost he had bought for the three acres, and then subtracted the wages of the hired hand, the loss of the sow, and the fee of the vet as well, how could he claim to have made any respectable sum at all? If he divided the total that came back from the sale of the potatoes by the hours put in, could he say that he had earned any more by the day than in his first years

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with the Finanzwatch? Worse. The real calculation was humiliating. He was living here rent-free. No mortgage payment to worry over. The house had been bought outright, after all. But if he had ^{had} to give money quarterly to the bank, could he ^{have claimed} ~~claim~~ any profit at all? ^{no more than} Yes, a token profit. The walnuts. They had brought in a little easy money, money off the ground. For the rest, it had been a good deal of work for very little. He couldn't even complain to Klara for the shame of it.

He had to reassure himself. It wasn't that he was in real financial trouble. Never yet! His pension alone was six times the income of ^{any} ~~a~~ day laborer like the poor dumb fellow he had hired, who, dumb or not, was also able to ^{cheat} ~~make away at~~ him, but all right! In the old days, in the best years of his earning power at Passau and Linz, he had been situated in what you could call the well-salaried layers of the middle class. Why, he had made more than any principal in an elementary school, [≡] not bad when you consider that he, more respected, economically speaking, than the principal, had never even finished elementary school.

Alois could talk to himself in such a way but it did not dig the real thorn out of his gut. One of his strengths with the younger officers who came from good families had always been that he, at least, being good peasant stock, ^{could know} ~~knew~~ (at least when people were cheating him. And now he

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had discovered that the land he ~~had~~ bought was not ~~at all~~ as good as it ~~had~~ looked. Once upon a time, he might have been a peasant, ~~but~~ Now he might just as well call himself one more middle class fool, ~~to have been~~ fooled on a deal involving land. ^{He} He felt all the shame a peasant could know. ^{would it} ~~Could it~~ be any worse if Klara had taken up with a farm boy? That was impossible, but then, how had it been so possible for himself, Alois Hitler, to be gulled on this deal?

He went into a depression. By October and November, he was settled in gloom. The Hound was one sick puppy these days. How was he to look at himself—a man in his late middle age who dangled a sick pup between his legs?

Klara, seven and a half months pregnant, tried to explain it to him. Now that the potato crop was in, so much hard work was finished. It was natural to be unhappy. Women, she could tell him, felt that way after a child was born. So much had gone into the womb, so much hope and effort, but now one was empty again. The baby might be there and beautiful, but for a time the woman had to feel empty, even awful. For a little while. It was natural.

She had never waxed so philosophical before, not to him, but he almost took her head off. "What am I, a woman?" he wanted to shout.