

BOULLER

Please sit down, Herr Professor. Make yourself comfortable. Please, if you wish to smoke, be at ease to do so.

HALDER

Thank you, Over-Leader. I don't smoke.

BOULLER

Before we begin, I wish this to be clearly understood. Everything that is discussed between us in this room is absolutely top secret. This is understood?

HALDER

Absolutely, Over-Leader.

BOULLER

Apart from knowing something of your work and your record since you joined us, your superiors have recommended you without reservation as a person of total loyalty to the state and National Socialism. Would you consider this an accurate description of your position and commitment?

HALDER

I've written about this, Over-Leader. I am committed to use whatever abilities and talents I might have for the betterment of the lives of the people around me.

BOULLER

Are you warm, Herr Professor? It's a hot day.

HALDER

Slightly. Yes.

BOULLER

Please . . . take your jacket off. Make yourself comfortable. We have called you here in the role of a consultant . . . a comrade who we can trust and who is, at the same time, something of a figure in the academic world. We have been reading your novel. As you see . . . about life in a home for the aged . . . You raise very interesting moral questions in it, Herr Halder. Some of your conclusions . . . fascinating . . . profoundly . . .

HALDER

It was a subject close to me . . . at the time . . .

BOULLER

I have coffee at two-thirty. Would you like coffee?

HALDER

Please . . . yes.

BOULLER

I'll arrange to have an extra cup brought in. In the meantime, this is a letter I would like you to read. It was sent direct to the Chancellory for the attention of The Leader. It's from the father of a deformed child. Even your wife, Herr Professor . . . not a hint of what is discussed here must be communicated to even your wife . . . not a word . . . this is a direct order from the top leadership. You understand this?

HALDER

Fully, Over-Leader. Yes.

BOULLER

Halder, would it surprise you if I said Doctor Goebbels himself had suggested your name to us? He drew our attention to your novel . . . he was profoundly moved by it . . . "objectivity," he said, "combined with compassion and humanity." You read the letter?

HALDER

You read the letter? I've read it. Yes . . . moving.

BOULLER

The Leader himself has looked over this. Do you know that? Would you like to read his comment? Look . . . in his own writing . . .

HALDER

God forgive me . . . The human bloody being! The surge of pride in me! Reading that scrawled sentence in Adolf's shaky hand. It said: "Written from the heart!"

EICHMANN

Sit down, Herr Professor. I've just been going through your papers . . . joined us in nineteen thirty-three . . .

HALDER

Early nineteen thirty-three, Over-Leader.

EICHMANN

And been an excellent comrade, Halder, since your first days . . . as an officer and a university man. I think we can all work well together . . . the ingredients are all there . . . for an excellent working relationship. What do you think?

HALDER

If the leadership believe we can.

EICHMANN

You haven't written specifically on the Jewish question . . . Halder?

HALDER

My field, as you'll see, is German Literature.

EICHMANN

I mean on the question from a racial point of view. At the same time, some of your papers here . . . and reports on some of your lectures . . . This paper on the reactionary, individual-centered emphasis of the Jewish influence on Western literature . . . very good, true, deep comment . . . first class.

HALDER

I have to warn you, Over-Leader, I have had very little personal contact with Jews.

EICHMANN

There's a note here referring to some kind of friendship with a Gluckstein . . . Maurice Gluckstein.

HALDER

Mainly a professional relationship . . . as a doctor.

EICHMANN

That's right . . . he was a doctor . . . I have it down here. But your paper on the corrupting influence on our literature . . .

EICHMANN

Basically, your usual, clear, objective reports . . . that's what we want from you, Halder . . . on leadership, morale . . . amenities . . . the general situation of the camps I've listed. I'll follow this up by a personal visit.

HALDER

This order, Over-Leader, to resettle all the Jews by the end of the year . . .

EICHMANN

Sooner, if possible . . .

HALDER

Since we're going to be working closely together . . . could I ask you how you feel about this direction of resources . . . personally . . . I'm thinking of us fighting the war on so many fronts . . .

EICHMANN

Russia, we'll soon finish off . . . that'll be one front less . . . in any case . . . that's our orders . . .

HALDER

I was curious about the need for such urgency . . .

EICHMANN

Your point about fighting the war on so many fronts . . . all the more reason to keep the enemy within under tight control . . . you can see that, can't you . . . from the question of security alone . . . You'll make the arrangements then . . . You'll need to base yourself in Berlin during your assignment with me . . .

HALDER

I'll make the arrangements . . . yes.

EICHMANN

The leadership, of course, have ordered me that on no account are you to cut yourself totally off from your university. Some sabbatical is being arranged for you . . . but it is vital you are in Berlin within the next week . . . I look forward to us working together.

HALDER

I'll put some more coal on the fire. Are you soaked through? Take my dressing gown.

ANNE

I don't mind being wet.

HALDER

I'm going to give you some cognac. Will you take it?

ANNE

Yes, please. Thanks.

HALDER

Frau Halder's gone to bed. That doesn't mean you're late. She goes to bed early. One of her pleasures is reading in bed.

ANNE

Frau Stagl kept me back. She had an accident . . . nothing much. She burned her arm . . . cooking. I took her to the hospital to get it dressed. She's fine now, but it took up all the evening . . . waiting around.

HALDER

Would you like some smoked ham . . . and bread? I was going to have some myself . . . just before you came.

ANNE

Actually, I am hungry. Please . . . shall I help you?

HALDER

I've got everything here . . . Listen, you can't go all the way back to your digs tonight. It's still pouring. I'll bring you down some blankets. That couch is very comfortable. I've slept on it myself.

ANNE

Herr Doctor, I couldn't sleep *here*.

HALDER

And a pillow . . . We haven't got to the core of the problem yet, anyway.

ANNE

You see, I don't believe in evil. Not like Goethe seems to. Do you?

HALDER

That's what we have to talk about. It could be a way into Faust for you.

ANNE

If you get me the blankets . . . I'll make up the bed, Herr Doctor.

HALDER

Yes . . . I'll get them for you. Do you like two pillows or just one?

ANNE

I'd like two, please.

ANNE

John . . . relax . . . all right, love?

HALDER

I had the picture in my mind, out there in the garden. Germany's been turned into one great prison. You don't think we should run away? It mightn't be too late . . .

ANNE

Too late for what? Run away where? Why do you have to make such a dramatic thing out of everything?

HALDER

No . . . just sometimes I panic. In the garden, after Bok went off, I had this wave of panic and guilt . . . I'd destroyed your whole life.

ANNE

How have you done that? If it is destroyed . . . the words you use, love! If it is, I did it myself. It was my choice. You . . . I wish you hadn't a wife and family that keep pulling you from me . . . but you have. I love you. It would've been easier if I loved somebody without all these weights on them . . . but I love you. What exactly are you going to do tonight? Think about it . . . you are going out on a police action. That's all. You're not going to shoot Jews . . . do any violence to them. Your orders are to keep things under control. Stop people burning down Frankfurt . . . that's all, for God's sake . . . Just try and think calmly about what you are really doing . . .

HALDER

I am. You've got a good, logical mind. That's good. You're right.

ANNE

Somebody in the family needs to have one. Are you going to stop beating your breast now about things you don't need to beat your breast about? You've got plenty of real things to feel guilty about.

HALDER

You're right. What real things?

ANNE

In any case, for God's sake . . . if I was Jewish, I'd have got out of here years back . . . the first year Hitler was in power. Any Jew with sense is out by now. The ones that are left must be utterly stupid or desperate to hang onto their property . . . What are they doing staying in Germany?

HALDER

Listen. You're so clever. You're right. Everything you say is so logical and true.

ANNE

You look lovely in that uniform! I think Elizabeth is after you. Do you know that?

HALDER

So we won't run away, then? To California.

ANNE

All right. We'll run away. I'll pack and you can phone your children and tell them you'll write to them every week.

HALDER

I'd better go.

ANNE

Is the revolver loaded?

HALDER

I think so.

ANNE

I'll see you when I see you, love.

HALDER

I love you.

ANNE

I love you . . . And no prisons or yawning chasms in front of you.

HALDER

God, I love you, sweetheart.

ANNE

I know you do.

FREDDIE

I'm going to let you into this to show you I trust you, Johnnie. Both of us . . . our records . . . we don't need to goosestep around the square, shouting "Heil Hitler," to prove we're good party people, do we? Look, here, there's an order come through for you. I'd rather we didn't make it an order . . . you know that . . . this particular order especially . . . because I can understand how you'll feel about it . . . we all have our vices . . . our private secrets . . . not a man hasn't something he doesn't want anybody else to know about . . .

HALDER

If it's an order, give it to me. It's all right, Freddie.

FREDDIE

I'm letting you into my vice! Grammophone records . . .

HALDER

Grammophone records?

FREDDIE

That's right.

HALDER

Military marches.

FREDDIE

That's what it says on the labels.

HALDER

Jazz . . .

FREDDIE

I changed all the labels. Took we weeks. You know the party line on decadent Negroid swamp jungle music. Opium . . . I tell you something . . . I know this for a fact. The Great Man . . . up in Berlin . . . you know his favorite film . . . Jew Charlie Chaplin . . . watching Charlie Chaplin till midnight . . . every night. I can't help it. I've been playing jazz since I was called up . . . used to have a sergeant in my squad . . . got killed in Verdun . . . he played the fiddle . . . he played that . . . St. Louis Blues . . . soothed me.

HALDER

I'm trying to listen to the music.

FREDDIE

Soothes me, that music . . . Christ knows you need soothing in this bastard job at times. Building a country from fuck all.

FREDDIE (cont'd)

What did those Social Democrat shits leave us? A fucking shit heap . . . I'm sorry . . . I don't usually talk like that . . . but it's true.

HALDER

It's a nice tune . . . What else can you say?

FREDDIE

I haven't any real friends. I haven't . . . have you? . . . apart from your woman, I mean. Between you and me . . . most of the comrades . . . they're good lads . . . but they piss me off, after an hour or so . . . only one who doesn't seem to piss me off's you . . . probably because you're educated . . . I don't know. At times, you piss me off, too, of course.

HALDER

Mutual.

FREDDIE

I know I piss you off. No question about that. That's the list.

HALDER

Oh . . . I like him . . . I like everybody . . . it's just books . . . it's a list of books. I see . . . I'm ordered or organize the book-burning at the university.

FREDDIE

When the order came through, you see . . . I said to myself, "Johnnie's got deep feeling about books and this is going to cut him badly" . . . I know that.

HALDER

Long list . . . Thomas Mann . . . Remarque . . .

FREDDIE

I read that. All Quiet on the Western Front. Don't ask me why they've done a downer on that. That's exactly how it was at the front, wasn't it?

HALDER

[Aside] There's a positive aspect to all this. You've got to make a supreme effort and look positively. One of the basic defects of university life is learning from books. Not from experience . . . life . . . involvement . . . commitment . . .

FREDDIE

Mind, I can see what they're getting at, burning Freud's filthy shit. Pervert, isn't he? Tried to make out everybody's as twisted and perverted as he is!

HALDER

[Aside] If you look at it from the philosophical standpoint, that the burning is symbolic of a new healthy approach to university learning . . . Man does not live by books alone.

FREDDIE

All right, Johnnie? Can I leave that to you?

HALDER

As long as I can keep my copies, Freddie.

FREDDIE

I've got my jungle music, haven't I?

HELEN

Darling, I want to talk to you seriously. Your mother phoned, very disturbing. And my father, we had a long conversation. I hate nagging you, and pushing you, but really you can't hang on any longer. You'll have to shake yourself out of this apathy.

HALDER

WILL YOU HAVE IT AT THE FIRE, IF I CLEAR THE NEWSPAPERS AND SCORES? I THINK I CAN GET DOWN TO THE CARPET. I QUITE LIKE EATING ON THE FLOOR.

HELEN

I had Mother pick up the children from school and take them home for a meal.

HALDER

SHOULD WE TRY A MAID ONCE MORE? I KNOW YOU FIND IT HARD HAVING STRANGERS LIVING WITH US.

HELEN

Johnnie . . . I'm useless . . . I spent all afternoon trying to play these triplets against duplets in that Beethoven sonata . . . my whole life . . . everything . . . Look at the state this house is in. I didn't even clean my teeth this morning. I'm a slut. I've no idea why you love me. Do you, love?

HALDER

Yes, I love you.

HELEN

John, I'm sorry . . .

HALDER

Why should you be sorry? I don't mind living in chaos. It's all right. The children are used to it.

HELEN

You come back from a hard day at work, and I overwhelm you with self-pity.

HALDER

Yes.

HELEN

You shouldn't stand this. Me turning your house into a shithouse, Johnnie.

HALDER

Tell you what. After tea, we'll clean it up.

HELEN

I wish you wouldn't buy pastries anymore. It's just indulging my greed and making me fat.

HALDER

Don't eat them.

HELEN

For Christ's sake, why do you love me?

HALDER

I don't know why I love you. Have you got to?

HELEN

I can't even look after your bloody kids . . . Father phoned . . . He wants to speak to you. Tonight. He says the time is long past for being pure and self-righteous. For the sake of your children and me . . . you must make a definite decision to join the National Socialists . . . with your army record, they'll welcome you with open arms . . . Actually, he heard from somebody very high up. Goebbels has read your *Faust and Goethe in Weimar*.

HALDER

I was thinking about Hitler, on my way home.

HELEN

He's right. You'll get nowhere in the university now, unless you join the party, Johnnie. Father says you could even lose your lectureship . . .

HALDER

Listen, you are not to leave me. You understand. Whatever it is. You and the kids. They're the whole basis of my life.

HELEN

Yes. I know . . . I know that, dear. I'll never leave you. You'll never leave me.

HALDER

I thought I'd tell you that.

HELEN

I'm sorry . . . I'm tired, Johnnie.

HALDER

I'll come up soon. I'm waiting for this student . . .

HELEN

I love you.

HALDER

I love you.

HELEN

I woke up and couldn't get to sleep again. Did I wake you?

HALDER

That student turned up, last night. Soaking wet. It was pouring. So she's downstairs. In the lounge. I gave her some blankets.

HELEN

That's all right. Will she be warm enough?

HALDER

I gave her some blankets. Helen, I want to talk to you. I've decided to join the party. I had a long talk with your father. He's right. Basically . . .

HELEN

You told me that. Who's going to give her breakfast?

HALDER

I'll give her breakfast. I didn't tell you about my decision.

HELEN

I assumed, in the end, you'd be sensible.

HALDER

I'm doing it because I love you . . . you know that. If it was just myself, I'd take a chance. I'm not one hundred percent sure about Hitler . . . you understand that . . . I love you and the children ...

HELEN

I know that.

HALDER

That's the whole foundation of my life.

HELEN

That's good.

HALDER

I'll never leave you.

HELEN

Why should you?

HALDER

You won't leave me?

HELEN

Why should I?

HALDER

Plenty of people leave each other.

HELEN

Plenty of people get knocked down by buses.

HALDER

That's a good observation.

HELEN

Well, they do. I'm glad. Father'll be glad, you joining the party. It's a real commitment. You're not just joining to keep your job or get on in life.

HALDER

Am I not?

HELEN

You see . . . I don't do anything well . . . do I? I'm useless.

HALDER

You're a good wife.

HELEN

I don't think I am.

HALDER

You are. You're the best wife in the world. I love you.

HELEN

Do you?

HALDER

You're my sweetheart, aren't you?

HELEN

Am I?

HALDER

You are. What are you?

HELEN

Your sweetheart.

HALDER

I'm standing in the square by the fountain, paralyzed. Not physically. Whatever part of me is responsible for decision-making. That seemed to have gone out of action . . . on my way to join the party.

HITLER

Understandable. Totally understandable. You make a deal with yourself one minute, you totally repudiate the next. Quite right. Absolutely naïve to think you can guarantee the minute you set yourself on a course that you're going to hold it over the next sixty seconds. The complexity of the human central nervous system alone. All the forces playing on the human organism . . . Basically, what have we in a human being? A complex electrical network. No. Even more complex . . . a complex electrical and chemical network. Can you have chemical networks?

HALDER

He's a victim of the failure of the Social Democrats. What the Socialists promised the workers, the Nazis gave them . . . society needs them.

HITLER

Man does not live by bread alone.

HALDER

I'm not sure about that.

HITLER

I'm not sure about anything. That's the human condition. "Man, you are born to uncertainty. You can be sure of nothing." For the first time in my life, I am breaking free from the emotional umbilical cords that tied me to my mother. Breaking through to manhood. Completing myself as a human being . . . establishing new emotional umbilical strands with a woman I have chosen in my manhood. Yes. I'm being pretentious and heavily profound. But it does happen. From time to time, you are confronted by profundities. I have to get out of this . . . apologizing for any profound universal statement that comes to me . . . watching my thoughts and language so that they're continually muted, tied to the earth . . . when you fly, you fly . . .

HALDER

When you walk on the earth . . .

HALDER and HITLER

. . . you walk on the earth.

HITLER

But now I am moving to a soul union. What the fuck else is it, for Christ's sake? That's what it is. That's what I'm looking for. A soul union. Now I am moving to a soul union.

HALDER and HITLER

Joining the Nazis is no longer a simple case of my own electrical and chemical state.

HITLER

It is hers, too.

HALDER

That's what I'm telling you. I have to see Anne, first. Before I can make a definite decision.

HITLER

Yes. Now, I understand why I have to see her.

HALDER

Do I?

BOK

Herr Professor . . . it's Bok.

HALDER

I'm here . . . out in the garden

BOK

What a house you've got. A mansion. Look at the garden. Acres. You deserve it. I'm delighted for you. Do you know that? That you've got a good woman like Frau Halder . . . and a house like this.

HALDER

I've got some beer. Would you like some beer, chilled in the fridge?

BOK

They sent me up with orders for you. I've got them here. I wouldn't mind a cold beer.

HALDER

If they won't let me alone, they won't . . .

BOK

It's a big show tonight. You heard? The Jew cunts murdered Von Rath.

HALDER

Was he a friend of yours, Bok?

BOK

I like that, that's to the point, isn't it? That's a wonderful thing about you, Herr Professor. You can get it straight up the hole . . . Who gives a shit for Von Rath. You're right. It's the idea of a Jew having the cheek to shoot a German.

HALDER

Your beer all right? We move into action three p.m. this afternoon.

BOK

That's the orders. You should see the excitement in the university. The students are making banners . . . organizing torches . . . nobody's doing a stroke of work.

HALDER

I was looking for a peaceful day in the garden. I wish they'd get these bloody Jews out of their system. Why didn't they all get to hell out of here years ago, while they still had a chance.

BOK

Get the cunts out now, Professor.

HALDER

Would that make you really happy, Bok? When there is not a single Yid left in the universe?

BOK

I'll put it to you this way. Hitler, now . . . he comes up with this stuff about the Jews. He's thought about it, worked it out. The Jews are sucking the fucking lifeblood of the country . . . Now . . . look at us . . . now . . . he's begun to shake the cunts out. Everybody's got jobs . . . holidays . . . couple of years time and everybody'll have their own cars . . . ordinary workers. Some people used to say he doesn't know what the fuck he's talking about, Hitler . . . just farts out of his mouth instead of his arsehole. What do they know? He's delivered the goods, hasn't he? He knew what he was talking about all along. Herr Professor . . . you didn't like living in a Jew Germany . . . did you? Now . . . you walk about in the streets. And you feel it . . . you know. This is our place now . . . don't you? He's got us back our own country . . . Look at you, if you don't mind me saying. You're laughing now, Professor . . . you've taken over that Jew shit Mandelstam's job . . . big house . . . the whole university's back to a German university . . . You've got no complaints, what Hitler's done for you . . . have you?

HALDER

I am very happy . . . I am . . .

HALDER

In the morning of the Night of Broken Glass . . . I didn't have to go into the university . . . I went to the garden to dig the last of the potatoes. The air was sharp and all the scents of autumn were still fresh to me. Giving me the feeling I was in a different country . . . The last few days, my stomach's not been right . . . state of my stomach's always going up and down. When my stomach was bothering me . . . it didn't look good. This Jew operation tonight. It weighed on me . . . along with the food I couldn't digest properly . . . I enjoyed the duck . . . at the same time . . . I am very happy. I love her. She loves me. I've got enough money. People recognize me for the brilliant man I am . . . *[To MAURICE]* You're quite right . . . listen . . . this Jewish operation tonight . . . If you try to look at it in perspective. Yes . . . of course . . . it's not a good thing . . . for tonight . . . and next week . . . coming down on a racial group like arresting Jews . . . breaking into their houses and synagogues . . . no doubt . . . I'll be honest with you, Maurice . . . kicking in quite a number of Jews' teeth and balls . . . You know what the roughnecks in the party are like . . . excesses are bound to happen . . . I am not deluding myself . . . am I? Maurice? This is a regime in its childhood . . . It's social experiment in its earliest stages . . . You know what a child is like . . . self-discipline isn't formed, yet a large element of unpredictability . . . it could be . . . if the Jews stayed here much longer . . . You see what I'm getting at? Some of the extreme elements in the regime could get out of hand . . . Christ knows what they would do to the Jews next . . . I see tonight . . . as a basically humane action . . . it's going to shock the Jews into the reality of their situation in Nazi Germany . . . tomorrow morning . . . they'll be running for their lives out of the country. A sharp, sudden shock . . . that is going to make those who still delude themselves they can stay here in peace to face reality . . . and . . . Keep out of it . . . as much as possible. You can do fuck all about it. Tonight . . . what can I do about it? All over the country, they'll be marching against the Jews. It's a bad thing. No question about it. Work it out . . . me . . . if I died. That would worry me . . . the idea of being snuffed out . . . If I got cancer. That would worry me. Or if they stuck me in one of those concentration camps and one of Himmler's perverts got at me . . . that worries me . . . If Anne stopped loving me and ran off with another man . . . that would worry me. I've got a whole scale of things that could worry me . . . the Jews and their problems . . . yes, they are on it . . . but very far down, for Christ's sake . . . way down the scale. That's not so good, the Jews being so low down on my anxiety scale. Emotionally. Intellectually . . . as an intellectual concept it's fairly high as a moral problem. The thing is, I am fundamentally a happy person . . . that's what it is . . . That's the problem. I'm a happy person . . . absolutely